

PRINCE VON BISMARCK.

THE FOUNDING
OF THE
GERMAN EMPIRE

BY WILLIAM I.

BASED CHIEFLY UPON PRUSSIAN STATE DOCUMENTS

BY HEINRICH VON SYBEL

TRANSLATED BY

MARSHALL LIVINGSTON PERRIN, Ph.D. (Gött.),
OF BOSTON UNIVERSITY.

ASSISTED BY

GAMALIEL BRADFORD, JR.,

VOL. II.

"He possessed in a high degree the power of discovering almost immediately the wanting term by the intuition of his own nature."—THUCYDIDES.

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BOOK V.

REVIVAL OF THE CONFEDERATE DIET.

FOUNDING OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE.

CHAPTER I.

COUNT BRANDENBURG IN WARSAW.

EVEN in the middle of the critical nineteenth century the mission of Count Brandenburg to Warsaw, and its results, gave rise to remarkable, almost dramatic stories. Such mythical legends are usually supposed to be found only among the traditions of most ancient times, or at the latest in the romantic Middle Ages. We forget that the modern races are also gifted with imagination, and that they like as much as ever to see their theories and fancies expressed concretely. The generation that watched the events of 1850 was filled with the idea that Prussia's honor demanded a war with Austria and Russia; and when this expectation was frustrated, the age created for its own satisfaction a hero who should suffer a tragic end in the direful catastrophe.

The accepted account, which was published immediately after Brandenburg's death, and rumored abroad with many modifications, is well known. According to this version, Brandenburg had been received in Warsaw

with uncivil arrogance. The first word of the Czar had been, "I ordered my brother-in-law to come;" to which Brandenburg had replied, "Such a remark is not proper for Prussian ears to hear." In this fashion the interview had continued. Wounded to the quick and physically exhausted, Brandenburg had returned to Berlin. Against his own convictions he had represented the pacific inclinations of the King, and upon his return had at once sunk into a serious illness, during which in his delirium he had repeatedly begged for his helmet and sword, until after a few days of suffering he died of a broken heart.

This mythical fabrication has remained for a whole generation uncontradicted, although the story in the main and in its coloring is exactly contrary to historical circumstances. For as a matter of fact, Count Brandenburg was the very man who at the critical moment gave to Prussian politics the turn which they took in favor of yielding to the proposed terms of peace.

The office of the Count had been, in general, to convince the Czar Nicholas of the justification of the Prussian policy, and so to win Russia's approval of the Prussian proposals with regard to the question of the German Constitution. A ministerial memorial which he took with him asserted above all things the impossibility of Prussia's recognizing the assembly then in session at Frankfort as the German Confederate Diet, inasmuch as the same after its dissolution in 1848 could be revived only by the unanimous vote of all the

German Governments. This point was to be maintained at all hazards. Then Brandenburg was further to announce Prussia's demand that the German Constitution should be decided upon in open conferences, and to make known the chief propositions that Prussia would there bring forward. These were the following six points, the most important of which quite agreed with the latest programme of Schwarzenberg, which he had confidentially offered and then quickly withdrawn : —

1. In the presidency of the Confederation, Prussia shall share equally with Austria.

2. There shall be a Confederate Council of seventeen votes, having the same functions as the old Confederate Assembly.

3. The duties of the executive proper shall devolve upon Prussia and Austria in common.

4. A popular representation shall not exist for the present in the Confederation.

5. Austria shall be admitted with all her provinces into the Confederation.

6. Individual states shall have the right to form a Union among themselves, provided its conditions shall not conflict with the conditions of the German Confederation.

In respect to the Hessian and Holstein questions, Brandenburg's instructions were limited to repeating the demand that these should not be determined by the Confederate Diet, but by commissioners from the two Great Powers sanctioned by all the German Govern-

ments. As to the manner of this settlement nothing was said. We have, however, already noted that the Berlin Cabinet was as anxious for the restoration of the sovereign authority in both countries as were the two Imperial Courts. The King had, as we have seen, long ago assured Emperor Nicholas of this with regard to Holstein; and he had no misgivings about expressing himself quite as freely to the Emperor of Austria in relation to the contest over the Constitution in Hesse.

Just as Count Brandenburg was about to leave Berlin with these instructions, the news came that the Emperor Francis Joseph and Prince Schwarzenberg, upon their return from the meeting in Bregenz, intended to repair to Warsaw. The King, then, immediately instructed Brandenburg by all means to await there the arrival of the Austrians. He also announced this to the Emperor Francis Joseph in an autograph letter, which, in sharp contrast with the warlike spirit manifested at Bregenz, was filled with words of warm friendship, calling upon the Emperor, at its close, to give up the idea of the Confederate Diet, which would occasion only strife, and to turn to his Prussian friend and ally, whose interests in Hesse-Cassel were the same as his own; namely, that that bad example which had been given to the world by the Hessian officers and functionaries might be effectually obliterated.

Count Brandenburg arrived in Warsaw on the afternoon of the 17th of October. Before the lapse of more than an hour, the Emperor invited him to an audience,

at which Nicholas welcomed him most graciously, received from him a letter from the King, and after the first greetings allowed the count at once to discourse upon the current topics. Brandenburg declared Prussia's inability to recognize the so-called Confederate Diet, her willingness to work for a reform of the Confederation in open conferences, and her suggestion that the Danish and Hessian questions should be settled by special commissions. "The Emperor," reported Brandenburg to the King, "listened to me attentively during the whole of the discourse, which lasted several hours. He said that he understood our wishes, and had himself recognized the need of reform in the Constitution of the Confederation, having often spoken of this matter himself. He believed, however, that under the present circumstances it would be best to recognize the Constitution that had been in force for the last thirty years, and then to proceed to the reforming of it."

When Brandenburg laid before the Emperor the six propositions, he purposely observed that in settling these points with Austria, the Czar's mediation might have a great effect. But Nicholas immediately took up the remark, and protested repeatedly and decidedly that he did not intend to mediate at all. He had the best wishes for both parties, and desired above all things order and quiet; but he should not meddle in any way. Brandenburg did not fail to understand that Nicholas refused to interfere in the German question, only because he wished to leave the Austrians entirely free in their decision of the matter. So that,

strictly speaking, there could be no negotiations held in Warsaw with the Russian Emperor, but only with Prince Schwarzenberg.

In the further course of the conversation, the Emperor praised the determination of the Hessian elector to look to the Confederate Diet for aid, and especially emphasized the necessity for an immediate disarming of Holstein. It was evident that his whole attitude turned upon this point. "If," wrote Brandenburg, "these two questions can be settled by commissions, the Emperor will probably quietly acquiesce. It is less certain, however, what would happen in the contrary case, and whether he would be satisfied with being convinced of Prussia's barren good-will.

The Russian chancellor, Count Nesselrode, proved to be more tractable in his conferences with Brandenburg than the Emperor. He considered the six propositions a very suitable basis for an understanding between the two German Powers, and succeeded in obtaining from the Emperor the permission, given somewhat reluctantly, to recommend them as such to Prince Schwarzenberg. The Russian ambassador in Vienna, Baron Meyendorff, likewise urged them upon the attention of the Prince, although the latter had repeatedly asserted after the meeting at Bregenz that a war was the only possible means of bringing Prussia to reason.

To this Meyendorff replied, that, inasmuch as peaceable means had not yet been exhausted, any offensive movement on the part of Austria would find Russia on

the side of the enemy. Thereupon Schwarzenberg's cry for war was pitched in a somewhat lower key. He expressed his willingness to come to terms, provided that Prussia would disband the Union, and would send a deputy provisionally to the Confederate Diet with the understanding that he might be recalled in six months, if within that time no result had been reached about a Confederate Constitution. Meyendorff brought these terms on the 23d of October to Warsaw, where the Prussian Prime Minister rejected them as being utterly inadmissible.

Meanwhile, the Czar Nicholas kept reverting to the Holstein question. "Your proposal," said he to Brandenburg, "about settling it by a commission which shall confer with a Danish plenipotentiary, would consume altogether too much time. The simplest and the quickest way would be for Prussia herself to send troops at once against the Holsteiners." Brandenburg answered, "As to the obligations which Prussia has herself individually assumed, she has either discharged them already or is ready to discharge the remainder whenever the necessary conditions shall be fulfilled by the other side. As to her obligations as a member of the German Confederation, she will always be ready to do anything requested of her by a universally recognized Confederate authority. At present, however, no such authority exists. It is precisely in order to accomplish the desire of the Czar for a speedy pacification that measures are now being urged which may effect a reconciliation with Austria. It is also certain

that the Ducal Government in Holstein is ready to abide by the decision of such a commission as Prussia proposes."

The Emperor remained fixed in his opinion. "It is Prussia's duty," he said, "to put an end to the war, which she has kindled and carried on. She must do this by effecting an actual peace, i.e. by the pacification of Holstein, and she must not oppose measures to secure this end, that may be decided upon in Frankfort. If an order is sent from Frankfort to Kiel prohibiting all hostilities, and commanding immediate disarming of the troops, what is to hinder you," he asked, "from issuing a similar order from Berlin?" Brandenburg promised to consider the matter, but gave very little hope of securing the royal approval of a course of conduct that implied concurrence with the action of the Confederate Diet, and that would thus mean, in effect, the recognition of that body. His caution only increased the importunity of the Emperor. To General Rochów, with whom he had been for years accustomed to converse familiarly, the Czar said, "You ought to despatch an army against the Holsteiners, scatter them to the winds, and then hang General Willisen."

Sorrowfully, but firmly, the Emperor, on the 22d of October, announced to Count Brandenburg his final decision. He said that he should be obliged to regard Prussia's continued opposition to measures determined upon by the Confederate Diet for the pacification of Holstein as a personal insult to himself, and should be

obliged to resort to arms. He himself would feel it his duty to recognize the Confederate Diet so soon as that body should take the first step toward the desired object. He afterwards said again to Herr von Rochow, "I shall be perfectly willing to see Prussia at the head of her Union, and Austria with her allies in session at Frankfort. But, he continued, "neither of them may claim the right to prescribe laws for the other, nor to trespass upon her territory. Whoever does that will have to count on being my enemy." Rochow sighed, as he reflected that the Emperor unfortunately considered Hesse and Holstein as belonging to the territory of the Confederate Diet.

All of these remarks of the Emperor were not to be looked upon as official. Nicholas remained true to his first declaration that he would in no way interfere, and that consequently negotiations were not to be carried on with him, but only with Austria. Yet his attitude produced a great impression upon Brandenburg; and when, on the 24th of October, Nesselrode represented to the latter that a reconciliation with Austria was not at all impossible, but that it would certainly become so in the event of a collision between the Prussian and Bavarian troops in Hesse-Cassel, Brandenburg wrote to Berlin that he also shared this opinion, and offered his advice that instructions should be given to the Prussian troops in Hesse-Cassel not to attack any Bavarians whom they might encounter in the electorate, but temporarily to remain inactive in their vicinity.

Brandenburg could not, to be sure, express these

private sentiments to Count Nesselrode, but was obliged still to affirm that Prussia would not suffer the so-called Confederate troops to enter Hesse-Cassel; yet he concurred the more heartily with the proposals of the Russian minister, especially with his suggestion to get entirely rid of the Holstein question before entering upon the work of reforming the German Confederation. Brandenburg in his reports to Berlin pressed the question whether it would not be better, at the same time that Prussia's unwillingness to recognize the Confederate Diet should be emphasized, to take steps — as a matter of fact, simultaneously with those taken at Frankfort — towards the pacification of Holstein, i.e., the subjection of the land to the Danish king.

But the feeling in Berlin just at this time was far from favorable to the entertainment of such ideas. Indignation at the arbitrary convocation of the Confederate Diet and its unauthorized doings outweighed every other consideration. Radowitz averred that he did not believe that their opponents seriously meditated war. Since 1848 the Austrians had not seemed to him to be so very formidable. As to the Russians, it was said that it would take them six months to prepare for an attack. Thus he became the exponent of the conviction that peace would be the more certainly insured, the less Prussia showed fear and hesitancy, and the more strongly fortified and ready she seemed to be at the critical points. If she had only been actually fortified and ready! But we have seen how paltry were the results of Stockhausen's precautionary measures.

Nevertheless, the King was still unable to endure the thought that an unlawful body, and one that he abhorred as he did the Frankfort assembly, should, in spite of his remonstrances, send its armies into the midst of Prussian provinces, and even allow them to manœuvre on the north coast of the kingdom itself. On the 22d of October, upon the unanimous vote of the Ministry, he sanctioned the sending of the following instructions to General Count Gröben, who had been appointed to the command in Hesse: namely, that at the approach of Bavarian troops, he should first try all possible peaceable measures before resorting to armed force; but if the former failed, he should then act only in accordance with military regulations, and drive back the Bavarians wherever he found them.

Radowitz communicated this to Count Brandenburg, and wrote to him on the 25th that the Minister of War had declared it impossible for Prussia to assume the obligation to respect any occupation of Hessian land by Bavarian troops, or on that account to abstain from offensive movements. Radowitz said everything indicated that the Hessian affair was intended by the enemies of Prussia to serve only as a pretext for subjecting her to foreign domination and to a shameful humiliation. He rejected decidedly Brandenburg's suggestion to take measures against Holstein similar to those taken by the Confederate Diet, and simultaneously with them, and declared that even an accidental co-operation with that body must be avoided.

On the 25th of October, the same day upon which

Radowitz sent this despatch, the Emperor Francis Joseph and Prince Schwarzenberg arrived in Warsaw. Shortly before, Schwarzenberg had declined the Prussian proposition to settle the Hessian affair by a commission; and at the same time that Schwarzenberg began the negotiations for peace on the 26th at Warsaw, the Confederate Diet at Frankfort passed the vote to instruct the Bavarians to march into Hesse, whereupon corresponding orders were sent from Berlin to General Count Gröben. So that in Warsaw the distinguished gentlemen conversed, as it were, with revolvers in their hands.

In Vienna, as in Frankfort, the diplomatists from the Lesser States were in a state of feverish excitement. They urged their Austrian colleagues not to make the least concession to that overbearing Prussia. They could not forget the imperial election of 1849, and were eager for war in the hope of putting an end once for all, with Russia's help, to the disproportionate power of Prussia. Prince Schwarzenberg sympathized with the feelings of his South German friends, but was more cautious in his movements than they, since he well knew that it would be chiefly he that would have to bear the burden of the war. For this reason, too, he was especially anxious to retain the good-will of Russia.

The Emperor Nicholas, however, was as little desirous as ever of a war, and wished that a reconciliation might be effected between the two German powers. He agreed with Austria in the principal points, and sent on the 26th of October a sharp monition to Berlin,

not to interfere with the Confederate troops in Hesse ; yet at the same time, he continually importuned Austria to build bridges at any expense for the enemy to retire over, and, in every matter of honor and diplomacy, to exhibit a compliant spirit.

On the forenoon of October 26th, Brandenburg had his first audience with the Austrian monarch. The Emperor treated the Count in every way with respect and courtesy, but entered into no political discussion. He confined himself to formulating his position into a few sentences, beyond which he did not go even in later conversations. "I am exceedingly anxious," said he, "that an understanding may be reached, and earnestly wish that some satisfactory form for the same might be hit upon ; yet I believe that I stand with my Government upon the legal basis of the treaties, and this I cannot under any circumstance abandon."

Immediately upon this audience there followed a short conversation between Brandenburg and Schwarzenberg, in which there was just time enough before its interruption for Schwarzenberg to say that it was not sufficient for Prussia to declare the Union Constitution to be impracticable : she must promise its abandonment in so many words. In the evening, the two Ministers held a long conference together. Brandenburg afterwards reported that the discussion was carried on without the least exhibition of passion, in the most cordial tone, and with all the friendliness of a meeting between old acquaintances, that sincerely wished to come to an understanding with each other.

Brandenburg remarked that he was not empowered to change at all the wording of the decision of the 8th of October about the infeasibility of the Union Constitution. But what could occasion Austria any anxiety in the matter, he asked, if Prussia pledged herself to avoid in the final Constitution everything that could conflict with the formation of the more comprehensive alliance? In reply to Schwarzenberg's remonstrances, he explained further that the object of the Union was to provide a legislative organ for the Governments thus united; that this should be established with the least possible parliamentary machinery; and that consequently the possibility of executing the Constitution of the 26th of May seemed to him in any case most unlikely. "Accordingly," said Brandenburg at the close, "let us not delay over this, but proceed with our deliberations. When I return to Berlin, I shall see whether a more satisfactory interpretation cannot be applied to the protocol of the 8th of October."

Schwarzenberg could not help recognizing that this plan for the Union differed very little from the goal towards which the efforts of the spring of 1849 had been directed. He said that he could readily agree to such a definition of the Union; and after the above-mentioned promise to reconsider the matter in a more favorable light in Berlin, they proceeded in their discussion.

Brandenburg then brought forward his six propositions about the future Confederate Constitution. Schwarzenberg's response was very short and concise.

With gratification he accepted those points that contained concessions to Austria: the formation of a Confederate Council of seventeen votes, the similarity of its functions with those of the old Confederate Diet, no popular representation, and the admission of the whole of Austria into the Confederation. But he rejected the measures that involved concessions to Prussia: the equal authority of Prussia and Austria in the presidency, and the assignment of the executive power to Austria and Prussia exclusively. The first of these he wished to refer to the arbitration of all the members of the Confederation; instead of the latter, he proposed the "establishment of a powerful executive," without naming the incumbents.

These were, however, very vital points for Prussia. If both Great Powers were together to control in the future the German army and German diplomacy, that would be of itself exceedingly perilous for Prussia; yet she might even then be successful in a negative way, by hindering any dangerous measure. But if, as Schwarzenberg proposed, a third party were to be admitted into the executive, making of it a "Directory," in which matters could be determined by a majority-vote, then it was all over with Prussia's independence. Brandenburg contented himself with saying that he would make a further report upon this subject.

Against the sixth point, the right of the states to form unions among themselves, the Prince had no objection to make, since, as he observed, this was already sanctioned by Article XI of the Act of Con-

federation. But in this way his recognition of the existing Union lost all its significance; for hitherto he had asserted that its assumptions were contrary to the conditions of Article XI, and that it was therefore unlawful and must be abolished. Brandenburg passed over this uncertainty, and counted the sixth point as won.

The question was now taken up that most interested the Prussian king, one might almost say which alone interested him; namely, by whom, and acting in what capacity, shall the proposed reform of the Confederation be determined and instituted?

On this point especially, Russian influence had had its effect upon Schwarzenberg. He had originally, as Emperor Nicholas told Brandenburg in the interview the week before, demanded as the preliminary condition to any negotiations whatever, Prussia's recognition of the existing Confederate Diet, and the understanding that this body should then proceed to decide upon the reform of the Confederation. Meyendorff and Nesselrode had, however, afterwards convinced him how harmless it would be in this case to gratify the feelings of Frederick William, and to allow the proposed reforms to be determined upon, not in Frankfort, but, as Prussia desired, in independent congresses, — provided only that the Prussian Government would then, as it might be hoped she would, agree to the proposals made in the congresses by the imperial courts with regard to Hesse, Holstein, and the German Constitution.

This was so unanswerably true, that Schwarzenberg,

however much he would have liked to see Prussia humiliated as well in technical points, could not very well maintain his objections. Therefore he did not now demand Prussia's express recognition of the Confederate Diet, provided she would leave it unmolested. He declared that he was ready to advocate a reformation of the Confederation by independent congresses to be held in Vienna, similar to those which in 1819 had instituted the Vienna Final Act. To these congresses deputies should be sent by the eleven Governments whose representatives were now in session at Frankfurt, but they should not be looked upon as composing the "Confederate Diet," and by the twenty-one united States, but not as representing the "Union." Brandenburg agreed to the proposal in the main, but demurred against Vienna as the place of meeting. He also reserved his criticism of the reference to the doings of 1819.

Next in order were the questions relating to Hesse and Holstein. On these, the Prussian minister found his Austrian colleagues inaccessible. Schwarzenberg persevered in his rejection of the Prussian proposal to let both of these questions be settled by commissioners appointed from both Powers, and unswervingly insisted on the right and duty of the Confederate Diet to render assistance to two sovereigns that counted themselves among its members. In the Holstein affair the well-worn arguments and counter-arguments were repeated with as little result as ever. The geographical position of this country did not, however, demand an immediate settlement of the difficulty, as was the case with Hesse.

In the discussion of the troubles in this latter country, Brandenburg worked hard, but in vain, to convert Schwarzenberg to the Prussian doctrines. "We cannot," said the Prince, "recognize as valid the Prussian objections to the entry into the electorate of those troops that may be required by the sovereign of the land. The entry will take place." Count Brandenburg mourned that this should occur just at the moment when they were in other respects so near a settlement. "We do not protest against the entry of foreign troops in itself, and should not do so at all, if it were necessary, and if it took place as a measure dictated jointly by us both. If it should happen now, it would evidently take place only in order to give your Confederate Diet something to do, and in order to force us indirectly to recognize this body's existence. The Hessian troops are quite adequate to the requirements of keeping the peace, which has been nowhere disturbed. What, then, is the need of foreign troops? Why not settle the quarrel over the Constitution in a constitutional way, or by arbitration?"

Brandenburg's arguments were irrefutable, and the Prince did not attempt to gainsay them. His reply was monosyllabic in the extreme: he was sorry for the consequences, but he could not do otherwise. This produced upon Brandenburg the impression of a final, irrevocable decision.

With this the interview ended. Later, in the audience-chamber of the Empress, it was agreed that for the sake of future reference and negotiations,

Brandenburg should make a note of the results upon paper.

Thus far the Prussian representative had not won much. He had as good as abandoned the Union: to be sure, Austria had in return consented to the holding of independent congresses for the reform of the Confederation. But if in Berlin it had been hitherto regarded as a matter of course that during these sessions the Confederate Diet would be adjourned or even suspended, there was certainly no suspicion entertained that the Confederate Diet was about to take immediate and summary measures with regard to Hesse. That meant, according to all the votes recently passed in Berlin, war — and, as Nesselrode had just given them to understand, war with Russia as well.

Brandenburg weighed the matter carefully, and came again to the conclusion that the object to be attained was not worth such a sacrifice. This was strengthened by the emphatic assertion of Nesselrode, that Schwarzenberg was ready to give Prussia any desirable guaranty that the occupation of Hesse by Confederate troops had no other end in view than the restoration of the sovereign authority of the land, and that after this result should be attained, the troops would immediately quit the electorate.

So Brandenburg wrote to Berlin on the 27th of October: "The burning question, especially since the Russian declarations, is and will be the Hessian. My advice is, in case the Bavarians actually march into the country, to regard the matter from a practical stand-

point, and by avoiding hostilities to occupy the land together. It seems to me that this would practically obviate the danger lest from the fact that Prussia permitted the punishment of Hesse her recognition of the Confederate Diet should be inferred." Again he extolled the condescension and courtesy of the Emperor of Austria, although the latter continually insisted that he stood upon the legal basis of the treaties.

The repeated interviews with Schwarzenberg resulted in a so-called "temporary agreement," arrived at on the 28th of October, which, however, as a matter of fact, was nothing more than the recognition by Prussia of the three Austrian demands — the Confederate Council of seventeen votes, no popular representation in the Confederation, and the admission of the whole of Austria with her dependencies — and the enumeration of the three points urged by Prussia with Austria's corresponding counter-propositions, as we have detailed them above, and in addition, Austria's exaction that Prussia should dissolve the Union, and not molest the Confederate Diet.

Furthermore, it was stated in this agreement that under these conditions, and after the six points should be settled, Austria would consent to lay the same, as propositions made by herself in common with Prussia, before all the other German Governments, and then to invite them all to take part in congresses to be held for the revision of the Act of Confederation. As the place for holding these, Prussia proposed Dresden, and Austria, Vienna. Austria assumed as a model for these the

ministerial congresses of 1819; and consequently she insisted that the result of these congresses should, by a definite vote of the Confederation, receive all the sanction and validity of a Confederate act, and be regarded as one of the fundamental laws of the Confederation.

To all this, Brandenburg remarked that a further decision with regard to the Union Constitution would be announced later, which should be consistent with the sixth proposition; that a recognition of the existing Confederate Diet was neither to be intended nor implied, if Prussia should leave the same unmolested; that against the analogy drawn between the proposed congresses and those held by the ministers in 1819, Prussia had nothing to say, but only reserved the questions of the place of meeting and of the presidency to further negotiations; and lastly, that Prussia was willing to let the result of these congresses be regarded as a fundamental law of the Confederation, although, of course, a definite vote upon it could only be passed by the new central Confederate organization, which should result from these congresses.

Schwarzenberg expressed neither assent nor objection to these observations of the Prussian Prime Minister. On the following day, the 29th of October, the august assembly broke up; and on the morning of the 31st, Brandenburg returned with his "temporary agreement" to Berlin.

On his arrival, the Prime Minister found Berlin in a state of increasing excitement and eagerness for war.

Among the people the sentiments already known to us, contempt for the Hessian Elector and Hassenpflug, resentment at the revival of the Confederate Diet, and especially their furious rage at Austria's presumption and Bavaria's audacity, had been fanned into a flame by the news of the movements of the troops toward Hesse; and as strong a patriotic feeling of indignation was reported to exist in all the provinces.

Nor had the determination of the King and the Government slackened, not to endure the effrontery of the so-called Confederate Diet and its penal measures against Hesse. On the 29th of October, two days before Brandenburg's return, the Ministerial Council, in a full session, had carefully considered the question, whether it would be advisable to hold this ground even at the risk of a war with Austria. Radowitz asserted the affirmative, and moved that instructions be sent to General Gröben to proceed, and that upon the receipt of the news of the entry of the Bavarians the whole Prussian army be mobilized at once, unless perhaps with the exception of the corps in Königsberg and Posen, for which it would be possible to await Brandenburg's return. Without a single dissenting voice, it was voted that Radowitz should lay these suggestions before the King as the unanimous vote of the Ministry.

But Count Brandenburg did not, in the face of all this, suffer his resolution to waver. He had come back from Warsaw with the firm conviction that these misunderstandings must not be allowed to lead to a war—a war in which Prussia would have united

against her South Germany, Austria, and Russia, no ally at her side, and France, whose attitude would be entirely uncertain and unreliable, at her back.

The grounds for his conviction are perfectly clear, in view of the preceding events; but it is quite as evident that a hard and bitter fight must await the Count in his endeavor to carry it out. The hesitating and inconsistent conduct of Prussia after the close of the Erfurt Parliament had made her position every week more untenable. Although Austria had just granted the chief demand of Prussia, namely, that the reform of the Confederation might be discussed in general congresses, the two Powers stood with their hands on their hilts, and opposed to each other as directly as possible in the questions of the Union and of the overthrow of the Constitution in Hesse-Cassel.

Yet the actual difference was exceedingly slight between the final aims of the two Courts. The King repudiated the Constitution of the 26th of May quite as decidedly as the court of Vienna, and declared that it could not be carried out; but Prince Schwarzenberg demanded its formal abolition, though this would have rendered him no safer in the future than the Prussian formula. In the affair of Hesse-Cassel, too, the King as well as the Emperor desired to see the land subjected to the will of the Elector; the quarrel was only as to who should assist Austria in overthrowing the Constitution, — the Confederate Diet, or Prussia.

For the sake of such points of controversy to involve Prussia in a tremendous war seemed to Brandenburg

absurd. But unfortunately the Prussian Government looked upon the execution of its wishes as a matter of honor, and the failure to see them carried out as a humiliation to Prussia; how could she now, when her enemies threateningly began to brandish their weapons, withdraw like a coward? Thus she was forced to decide between the two mournful alternatives of a useless war and a shameful peace. No wonder that there was a sharp difference of opinions!

On the forenoon of November 1st, Brandenburg made his official report to the Ministry concerning his visit to Warsaw. He closed with the recommendation, that, upon the basis of what had been there accomplished, negotiations should be continued with Vienna. Radowitz arose on the spot to express his decided disapprobation. He called attention to Schwarzenberg's hostile attitude to the Union, and to the six propositions; and then passing on to the consideration of the Hessian affair, he declared that so soon as Prussia allowed the Confederate Diet to carry out its penal measures toward Hesse-Cassel, the supremacy of that hated body would be established throughout entire Germany. Accordingly, the entry of the Bavarians into the electorate must be followed at once by the entry of Prussian troops, repulsion of the enemy, mobilization of the entire army, proclamation of a manifesto to the nations, and convention of the Chambers. If this course should be considered too dangerous, then it was high time to change the tactics and to *unite* with Austria and Russia, to send word to Vienna that

Prussia would take part in the congresses upon the basis of the negotiations in Warsaw, and would agree to the proposed execution of penal measures in Hesse in the name of the Confederation. He should himself, however, be unable to join in following out this latter course.

The Ministers, Von Ladenberg and Von der Heydt, seconded him energetically. On the other hand, Baron Manteuffel, who had drawn a long breath at Brandenburg's appearance upon the scene, arose in the interests of conservative principles, and advocated the permission of the Confederate measures in Hesse. Herren von Rabe and Simons sided with Manteuffel.

At the end of the session, Brandenburg stated quite as bluntly and decidedly as Radowitz had done, that his continuance at the head of the Ministry depended upon the decision of this matter. Under the existing circumstances he could not, he said, assume the responsibility of a war. If a war was to be avoided, the Bavarians in Hesse-Cassel must not be attacked: otherwise, the mobilization of the troops must take place speedily as possible.

Just at this moment, the news was received by telegraph that the Bavarian troops had crossed the Hessian frontier and had begun the execution of penal measures in Hanau. Thereupon General Count Gröben, who already had instructions in that event to occupy Fulda, now received further orders to send a garrison to Cassel. Thus Prussia's military as well as political honor was at stake. The decision could not longer be postponed.

In the afternoon, accordingly, the Ministerial Council again assembled. The King presided, and the Prince of Prussia was also present.

Count Brandenburg, at the opening of the discussion, asserted categorically, that when once Schwarzenberg relinquished his demand that Prussia should recognize the Confederate Diet and send deputies to it, Prussia's chief reason for protesting against the punishment of Hesse was removed. It was also to be hoped, he said, that when Prussia was willing to declare not only the impracticability but also the abolition of the Union Constitution, Austria would concede to her a share in the presidency of the Confederation. A battle in Hesse, however, would be the signal for a tremendous and dangerous war.

When the King then arose to speak, it was evident that Brandenburg's reports and arguments had not failed to produce a certain effect upon him. He sought some middle way, in which, by making a few concessions to the enemy, a part of his own fond projects might be saved. "The Union Constitution," said he, "can for the time be given up, and then revived after the more comprehensive alliance has been established. Moreover, when Austria has once admitted the plan of holding the much-desired congresses, a concession on our part in the Hessian matter is justifiable. We should be called upon to garrison both of the Prussian military roads having halting-stations in Hesse-Cassel, and to occupy the intervening country, so that the Bavarians may spread themselves out in the south, and

the occupation of the country would be accomplished in common. In that case, the sovereign authority of the land could not be restored without Prussia's aid, and the Elector would be forced to turn from the Confederate Diet to Prussia. Meanwhile, Prussia would be gaining time to offset Austria's preparations by the mobilization of the whole Prussian army."

Brandenburg took the liberty of observing, at this point, that although Austria had not agreed to such a joint occupation of Hesse-Cassel, he felt sure that, if the acquiescent course intimated by His Majesty should be pursued, there would then be no need of any mobilization.

Hereupon, Radowitz excitedly interrupted him and cried, "Very true! There would be no need of mobilization if we should satisfy all of Austria's demands, withdraw from Hesse-Cassel, and abandon Schleswig-Holstein, — but we must immediately call all the troops into active service if we wish to defend Prussia's honor and independence." He explained then at length that mobilization did not by any means imply an immediate war; that simultaneously with the mobilization, the negotiations begun at Warsaw might be continued in Vienna; that, without attacking the Bavarians in Hesse, the Prussians might get possession of as large tracts of land as possible; that this method of procedure offered far greater advantages than the one proposed by Brandenburg, although it ran, to be sure, a greater risk of immediate war, and for that reason made the mobilization indispensable as a precautionary measure.

The Prince of Prussia, too, spoke in favor of the plan of Radowitz, because, aside from all other considerations, a formal abolition of the Union, such as Schwarzenburg demanded, meant the subjection of Prussia to Austria.

On the other side, Manteuffel emphasized the dangers to which the beginning of a war would give birth, by arousing revolutionary passions among the people. He declared roundly that Prussia had no right whatever to interfere with Hessian affairs, but that, on the other hand, Austria had good reasons for demanding the complete dissolution of the Union.

The Minister of War, Stockhausen, confined himself to the short but weighty remark, that, as things were now, mobilization of the troops would occasion at once a war with Austria and Russia, and that Prussia was by no means equal to these antagonists.

At this point the King dismissed the council with the order to meet on the following forenoon with a view to continuing the discussion.

On this day, the 2d of November, 1850, a day fraught with mighty consequences, the die was cast by the announcement of His Majesty's royal will. Immediately after the opening of the session, in a lengthy and comprehensive address, he expressed his view of the situation as follows:—

To the entry of the Bavarians into Hesse-Cassel, Prussia has responded by a similar order, so that these moves offset each other. From Austria's warlike preparations, to which Prussia gave no occasion, it

must be supposed that Austria desires war. Prussia must therefore, by mobilization of her army, put herself in a condition to accept the challenge, although she may at the same time offer to continue the negotiations begun at Warsaw. If Prussia, thus thoroughly equipped, takes part in negotiations, she can then, without danger to her honor, modify her claims, and show a disposition to conciliate that under other circumstances would be a weakness. It has never been so necessary as now for Prussia to win for herself the hearts of the whole people. This will be accomplished by the mobilization of the army. All parties in the land, with very few insignificant exceptions, will joyfully stand by the Government. An enthusiasm will spread throughout the kingdom, which cannot fail to have its effect upon its enemies and its influence upon the pending negotiations.

According to all this, it was in the King's judgment advisable,

1. To mobilize the army at once.
2. At the same time to continue negotiations with Austria, and to declare that Prussia would not execute the Constitution of May 26th, but on the contrary considered it nullified.
3. To refrain from hostilities in Hesse-Cassel, and in case the proposed guaranty should be given by Austria, to promise to limit Prussia's occupation of the land to the military roads with halting-stations and the country lying between them.
4. In Holstein, simultaneously with the inhibition

of the Confederation, to give notice to the Ducal Government that Prussia's protection would be withdrawn if the Duchy did not cease from all hostilities against the Danes.

5. To send word to Vienna that the mobilization of the army was to take place solely for the purpose of defending the Prussian frontiers from any hostile attack.

By these measures he believed that the Government would have the people upon its side.

A most surprising circumstance then followed. The King requested the Ministry to state whether it was ready to carry out his plan with him. He added that if not, if the Ministry preferred to follow Brandenburg's proposition to continue amicable negotiations with Vienna and not mobilize the troops, then he would not hold himself aloof from the course determined upon by the Ministry. They should then be free to pursue the course that they considered the best; but they must then alone assume the responsibility for the consequences.

Inasmuch as the King had never been accustomed to think and act in accordance with the principles of parliamentary government and of ministerial responsibility, we must conclude that in his own mind he had already decided in favor of Brandenburg, only he was unwilling to confess it.

But if Brandenburg was unwilling to undertake a war for ends which he considered worthless, the Prince of Prussia on the other hand, with his straightforward,

soldierly spirit, protested against any cessions whatever. Whether the demands made by Prussia were reasonable or not, he was opposed to yielding one inch of ground when Prussian troops were standing face to face with the enemy, and when the Imperial Courts were haughtily crying their ultimatum: Submission or war.

Even before Brandenburg had the time to reply to the question of the King, the Prince arose, and in a passionate outburst of patriotism demanded immediate mobilization, and the continuance of negotiations under arms, which, he declared, was the only course that could keep Prussia's banner unspotted, the only honorable and practicable course, and the only one which would gain the sympathy of the people and the army: in short, the only line of conduct that would maintain Prussia's honor untarnished.

He evidently did not see, as did his royal brother, in the mobilization of the army a means of excusing still greater concessions.

Count Brandenburg was by no means indifferent to the attitude of the Prince, yet remained unshaken in his convictions, and proceeded, as a reply to the royal propositions, to expound his own in the form of an outline of a despatch which should be sent to Vienna. The train of thought in this outline was as follows:—

Prussia hopes that a successful result will be attained in the general congresses which it had been agreed shall be soon held for a revision of the Confederate Constitution. A complete abolition of the Union Consti-

tution does not lie in the competence of Prussia, but can take place only with the consent of the allied Governments. Prussia, however, as president of the Union, declares that she will not try to execute the Constitution, and considers the same, for her part, entirely given up. After what Schwarzenberg has expressed, Prussia's sufferance of the entry of foreign troops into Hesse-Cassel cannot any longer be construed as a recognition of the assembly at Frankfort. She can accordingly permit their entry so soon as she has received all the necessary guaranties with regard to the duration and purpose of the occupation of the electorate, and with regard to the security of the Prussian military roads, which would otherwise be endangered. Meanwhile, the Prussian troops in Hesse-Cassel shall receive instructions to refrain from making any offensive move. The Holstein affairs can also be adjusted quite as peaceably. Prussia proposes as a place for holding the congresses either Dresden or Nuremberg. It would be desirable for the two Powers, at the very beginning of the congress, to propose jointly the six propositions discussed at Warsaw. If this cannot be done, then both the Powers may take part in the congresses bound by no obligations. Inasmuch as, after what has been said, there is no longer any difference that threatens a rupture between the Powers, it is expected that the warlike preparations, which the other side has been making, will now cease. Otherwise, it would be necessary for Prussia also to put herself into a condition of readiness for a conflict;

and this would be a measure that under the present circumstances would not only be superfluous, but would create apprehension on all sides.

It is clear that the sending of this despatch involved both the abolition of the Union Constitution and assent to the punishment of Hesse. Nothing could imply this more plainly than the mention of the conditions upon which these two concessions were temporarily made to depend. For, without doubt, Austria would at once reply that the allied Union princes would of course agree to anything proposed by Prussia, and that the desired guaranty with regard to the stipulated use of the military roads would be granted by the Confederate Diet, and be as binding as possible,

After having read this document to the Council, Brandenburg remarked that he was well aware this course of procedure might lead to the downfall of the Union, and to the dissolution of the Chambers; but the opposite policy would surely bring upon Prussia a war which she could not successfully carry on. "A mobilization of the troops," he said, "would at this juncture certainly enkindle the war; but if Austria should attack us in spite of our concessions, it would be an act of depredation, and we should have Russia upon our side."

At the request of the King, the Ministry then withdrew to an ante-chamber to decide the question put to them by His Majesty. They returned after a very few moments, and Brandenburg announced their decision, which was as follows: the majority of the Ministry

had not been able to change their convictions and to advocate the mobilization; on the contrary, they considered it imperatively necessary that Prussian movements should be stopped in Hesse-Cassel, that the proposed despatch should be sent to Vienna with the request that Austria's preparations for war should cease, and that, unless Austria should reply to the despatch in an unfriendly manner, no mobilization should take place; they were convinced that the immediate mobilizing of the troops would put a stop to negotiations and provoke a war, to which Prussia's strength was not equal.

Radowitz thereupon reported that the minority held quite as firmly to their previous convictions; and he then set forth an outline of the message which in their opinion should be sent to Vienna, and which in the main accorded well with the five principles propounded by the King.

The King then made the final and decisive speech. "I concur in every point," said Frederick William, "with the opinions of the minority. But since the majority persist in their verdict, I hereby repeat the declaration that I see myself forced, since I am fully determined to retain the Ministry, to grant them freedom to act as they choose. I hope that the members of the majority may never see the day when they shall repent the step — to my mind so ruinous — which they have taken to-day."

This closed the session.

General von Radowitz immediately resigned. Herren

von Ladenberg and von der Heydt followed his example. After the protestations of November 1st, this was a surprise to no one. But very unexpected was the fate which suddenly broke in upon the victors of November 2d.

So far as we have been able to gather information upon the matter, Count Brandenburg had at no time during the recent negotiations given any signs of a diminution or any interruption of his physical powers ; nor did he show any unusual symptoms during the following night, in the course of which he was twice awakened that he might give orders concerning certain matters which the King, by the mouth of the royal counsellor Niebuhr, referred wholly to the Minister's judgment. At both of these times he seemed to be quite well and ready for work.

On the morning of the 3d he felt ill, and was not able to be present at the meeting of the Ministry, although he signed and sent to Vienna the despatch which he had the day before drawn up and submitted to the Cabinet. After that his condition grew rapidly worse. On the 4th, a violent elimination of bile temporarily relieved him, but soon afterwards an intense fever, accompanied by nervous delirium, seized him ; and while Berlin was being excited and set in commotion by the threatening news of increased war-preparations on the part of the enemy, and of the consequent Prussian mobilization in spite of the verdict of the Prime Minister, this remarkable man lay dying, and expired on the 6th of November, 1850.

If the before-mentioned reports about his delirious ravings are at all founded, it is easy to explain them from the fact that in his lucid moments news repeatedly came to him of the passionate thirst for war which was filling the city with excitement, and from which he anticipated only disaster.

CHAPTER II.

OLMÜTZ.

ON the 3d of November, the most exciting news and events followed closely upon one another in Berlin. General Tietzen was on the march toward Cassel. General Gröben announced the occupation of Fulda, where he hourly awaited the approach of the Bavarians from the south. From Vienna Count Bernstorff sent word that the Emperor Francis Joseph had returned from Warsaw on the 30th of October, and that immediately afterwards orders had been sent in all directions to put the army upon a war-footing. In Bohemia, it was said, there were eighty (according to others a hundred) thousand men, who were being pushed in all directions to the northern frontiers, and who depended with confidence upon aid from Saxony. As a matter of fact, the number was seventy-six thousand.

The negotiations for peace seemed to the Ministers at Berlin for these reasons to be the more urgent, and the more pity was it that the leader of the majority, Count Brandenburg, had suddenly fallen seriously ill. Herr von Ladenberg, the Minister next in seniority, opened a hastily-summoned meeting of the Ministerial Council with the notice that since he had tendered his resignation to the King, he was not entitled to take

part in political discussions, nor to take upon himself the duties of the sick Premier. After Herr von Manteuffel upon this had assumed the office of president, Radowitz made a similar announcement, with the additional observation that the King had already promised to accept his resignation, and that he was consequently unable to attend to the current business of the Department of Foreign Affairs. Von der Heydt had also asked for his discharge at the same time with Ladenberg.

It was therefore decided to propose to the King that Brandenburg should take charge of the Department of Foreign Affairs ; and that so long as his illness lasted, Manteuffel should take his place. The despatch drawn up by Brandenburg the day before was formally approved, and, after it had been sent to the Count for his signature, forwarded to Vienna. Gröben received orders to maintain the positions already taken, but to advance no farther. At the same time, it was voted to inform the Ducal Government at Kiel, that, if the Prussian demands should be refused, the Duchies need count upon no further effort of Prussia to mediate. The Prussian troops that were still on the Holstein frontier were on the 4th withdrawn from there and moved southward. Likewise, the troops in Hohenzollern and in the southern part of Baden were ordered to retire across the Murg.

Nevertheless, the Austrian Ambassador, Herr von Prokesch, communicated on the same day a threatening note from the Imperial Cabinet demanding that the

electoral sovereignty should be respected, and that consequently the Prussian troops should be immediately withdrawn from Hesse-Cassel. Rochow sent word that Emperor Nicholas would also, on his part, look upon a refusal to comply as a signal for war. With the greatest impatience, therefore, Manteuffel awaited the Austrian answer to Brandenburg's pacifying despatch, which unfortunately could not reach Vienna before the 5th of November. He put off Prokesch by referring to this pending measure, and sent telegram after telegram to Bernstorff, pressing him to urge Schwarzenberg to make an immediate reply.

On the 5th of November, favorable news came from several quarters: from Hanover, announcing that the new Müuchhausen Ministry was little desirous of war; and from the Hague, that the Prime Minister Thorbecke declared himself ready to recall from the Frankfort Confederate assembly the deputy of Luxemburg, whereby the number of votes was reduced to eight, and no longer represented a majority of the old Confederate Diet.

But all this was of no moment in view of the attitude of Russia, Austria, and the Lesser States, about whom the most threatening tidings were received from all sides. Gröben reported that the Bavarian commander, the Prince of Thurn and Taxis, turned a deaf ear to all efforts to avoid an encounter. From Dresden came the news of preparations for the mobilization of the Saxon troops. From Bavaria came the intelligence that the Austrian army-corps in Vorarlberg, said to

number thirty thousand men, had crossed the Bavarian frontier and was hastening in forced marches towards the north. The Grand Dukes of Oldenburg and of Weimar sent urgent monitions to the Prussian King, warning the Berlin Court not to trust to false pretences of peaceful agreements, lest they should be suddenly taken by surprise and unexpectedly attacked. A despatch from Bernstorff, dated the 2d, announced that in Vienna not only Russian, but also French aid was counted upon as certain, that Schwarzenberg was without question intent upon waging a war of annihilation against Prussia, and that the ambassadors who advocated an "entire Germany" (retention of Austria in the Confederation) were extremely anxious and fearful lest Prussia should by full compliance disarm Austria, then join the Confederate Diet, and thus escape being ruined by a disastrous war. It was declared that for all this the Danish war was to blame, which had aroused so violently the Emperor Nicholas against Prussia.

Many of these facts and sentiments had become publicly known, and had raised the popular indignation to a high pitch. An oppressive sultriness pervaded all Berlin. The population was excited, and passionately wondered when the Government would at last come to any decision, and by energetic action remove this load from the hearts of the people. The rumors of Brandenburg's delirious summons to war increased the frenzy of the multitudes. Manteuffel was extremely ill at ease. He consulted with Prokesch as to how the

danger might be avoided, and begged the Russian Ambassador to assure his Emperor of Prussia's desire for peace.

But the King, always ungracious whenever he was obliged to hear about the Frankfort assembly and its doings, would listen to no proposition of further compliance, but held firmly to his ground, that, inasmuch as consent had been granted to the entry of the Bavarians into Hesse upon the condition that the required guaranties should be given, no concessions could under any circumstances be made until these were forthcoming.

Manteuffel telegraphed this fact to Bernstorff in Vienna and to General Peucker in Frankfort, accenting with strong emphasis the responsibility of those who, at a time when the prospects for peace were so auspicious, would unchain the Furies of war by their wanton conduct in Hesse. Prussian troops took possession, meanwhile, of the whole region of country between the Prussian military roads. They were everywhere received by the people as their deliverers and liberators. The leaders of the Hessian Opposition carefully concealed their well-founded doubts as to whether the Prussians had really come into the country to save the Hessian Constitution.

Upon his reception of Manteuffel's telegram in Frankfort, Peucker communicated its contents to the Austrian Ambassador, Count Thun, who remarked that the Confederate Diet wished by all means to avoid a conflict, but was, on the other hand, bound by its duty

toward the Elector to carry out the decrees it had passed, and that the latter had very justly protested against the presence of the Prussian troops in Hesse.

The Count at once summoned his colleagues together in order to discuss the matter. He spoke, himself, in favor of conciliatory measures; but Hassenpflug demanded unconditional execution of the decrees. The majority were especially influenced to side with Hassenpflug by the fact that Gröben's position near Fulda did not lie between the Prussian military roads. Consequently, no restrictive orders were sent to Taxis; indeed, it was believed that the encounter might already have taken place.

Peucker's prompt report of these transactions, and the receipt of a telegram from St. Petersburg concerning the Russian military preparations decided Manteuffel in his line of conduct: he saw before his very eyes the outbreak of the war, and considered now, himself, the mobilization as unavoidable. At once, on the evening of the 5th of November, he secured (it may well be believed, without much trouble) the King's approval of the measure.

He telegraphed immediately the news of this decision to Vienna, Frankfort, and St. Petersburg. He said that it had been necessary, in view of the universal warlike preparations on the part of Prussia's opponents, and in consideration of the fact that the uncertainty with regard to the final turn of affairs had caused a tension of feelings, especially in the army, which must be taken into account. Moreover, the Prussian Am-

bassadors were to affirm in the strongest terms possible that this measure was taken not as an offensive move, but only as a precaution: the peaceable intentions expressed in Brandenburg's despatch of the 3d were still in every point unchanged.

On the following morning, Manteuffel brought all this before his colleagues in the Ministry for official confirmation. The King, who appeared in the course of the discussion, signed the order for mobilization; and Ladenberg and Von der Heydt, whose resignation the King had not yet accepted, said that they were now ready to remain in office.

When the news of Brandenburg's death was announced, the King conferred the temporary presidency of the Ministerial Council upon Ladenberg, so that it might seem as if the minority of the 2d of November had already won the upper hand, especially since General Gröben, in consideration of the thirst for war shown at Frankfort, had received instructions anew to act without restraint.

The result of the order for mobilization was precisely what the King on the 2d had prophesied: an unbounded shout of delight arose from the people, the press, and the army. The men of the militia, whom the year before the hussar patrols were often obliged to hunt up and drag into the lines for the Baden campaign, now flocked in crowds to the standards. Even the countless manifestations of inefficiency in the administration of the Prussian army at that time did not cool down the ardor of the troops. The Austrian battalions,

though filled almost exclusively with mutinous *hönveds*, could hardly have long withstood their sanguine enthusiasm.

Meanwhile the Prussian despatch of the 3d of November had been received by Schwarzenberg on the 5th. The concessions contained therein only confirmed the Prince in his old conviction, that King Frederick William would never be able to bring himself to wage war against Austria, and that, accordingly, there was no urgent reason why the Imperial Cabinet should make any important concessions in return.

In vain Baron Meyendorff represented to Schwarzenberg the opposition which Manteuffel, as champion of the peace policy, had to contend against in Berlin; and that it was very desirable to strengthen him in this position by friendly advances. In vain did the despatches of Prokesch press the same point, and advise the support of Manteuffel, that actual facts might demonstrate the statement of Radowitz to be false which declared that Austria would answer every concession only with fresh demands. Schwarzenberg still insisted that military movements could not cease until the cause had been removed.

The Prince at once wrote an answer to Brandenburg's despatch, in which, amid a perfect shower of roses in the shape of friendly words and phrases, he refused roundly and decidedly to accede to Prussia's wishes. Whereas Brandenburg had expressed the hope that, after his explanations concerning affairs in Hesse and Holstein, the general congresses for a reform of the

Confederation might be held without delay, and that during their sessions these special subjects of controversy might be laid aside, Schwarzenberg's despatch of the 6th affirmed just the opposite: there could be no thought of convening the congresses until after the Prussian troops should have been entirely removed from Hesse, all resistance on the part of Prussia against the chastisement of Holstein withdrawn, and the abolition of the Union Constitution formally accomplished. He said that it would afford him pleasure to give the desired guaranty with regard to the Prussian military roads in Hesse, but demanded that that should not unwarrantably be made the excuse for an occupation of the land. He further asserted that until these matters were settled, Austria could not possibly desist from her preparations for war.

When the Prince received, on the same day, the telegram about the Prussian mobilization, he remarked to the Russian Ambassador that he now had not the least doubt but that peace would be preserved, since this positive move would provide Prussia with a bridge for an honorable retreat. He talked as if he had been present at the King's speech in the session of November 2d.

With the same intrepidity as that manifested by the Austrian statesman, the Prince of Taxis marched in Hesse against the Prussian position near Fuldá. On the 8th of November, the outposts of the two armies stood face to face. Messages under flags of truce went back and forth. Gröben very emphatically warned

the enemy not to come nearer. But when at one point the Bavarian vanguard pressed forward among the Prussian outposts, the latter fired a few shots, which were returned from the other side. Five Austrian men and one Prussian horse were wounded; further harm was prevented on both sides by the immediate interference of the officers, who thirsted less for blood than did the Frankfort diplomatists sitting around their green table.

At the same hour the Prussian Ministerial Council was busy framing a reply to the despatch just received from Austria. In spite of Ladenberg's presidency, the prevailing sentiment was still a very strong desire for peace. Manteuffel urged that after Prussia had said the Constitution of May 26th should not be carried out, it was a mere quibble of forms to refuse to concede to Austria's wish and propose to the allied Governments its definite abolition. Furthermore, Manteuffel considered that since Prussia had, in consequence of the conduct of the Ducal Government at Kiel, given up its attempt to mediate, there could be no harm in informing the Vienna Cabinet of this fact, and in withdrawing then Prussia's opposition to the penal measures instituted by the Confederation against Holstein.

The discussion was to be brought to a close in the evening. Then came Gröben's telegram about the skirmish at Bronzell. Its effect was no slight one. It was argued that weighty negotiations ought not to be disturbed by such a small affray among the soldiers, and that after all the advanced position at Fulda was

not at all necessary for the protection of the military road. It was unanimously decided to instruct the General to withdraw to the latter, if it was defensible.

Therefore the reply to be sent to Vienna was decided upon as quickly as possible. It began with the two concessions relating to the Union and Schleswig-Holstein. In regard to Hesse, it was requested that the proposed guaranty about the duration and purpose of the penal measures instituted by the Confederation should be given not only by Austria, but also by all her allies; and it was also desired, in view of the confused state of the executive and police authority, and the presence of foreign troops in the country, that Prussia's right to garrison her military roads during the continuance of these conditions should be recognized. On the 9th of November, the King, after making a few minor changes, approved the despatch.

The excitement aroused in Frankfort by the firing at Bronzell was greater than in Berlin. The representatives that advocated an "entire Germany" talked of violation of the Confederate oath and of a declaration of war.

Schwarzenberg preserved his cool and haughty attitude, warned the Frankforters not to be impatient, and yet sent word to Berlin on the 10th, that Prokesch must demand his passports unless satisfactory information were immediately received concerning the withdrawal of the Prussians from Hesse-Cassel. Manteuffel at once replied that he regretted exceedingly the affair at Bronzell, which he said must have been without

doubt occasioned by the precipitate pushing forward on the part of the Bavarians. He showed Prokesch at the same time the despatch which had just been sent to Vienna. This appeased the latter to a very great degree. He was delighted with the abandonment of Schleswig-Holstein; and Schwarzenberg at once, on the 11th of November, called upon the Confederate Diet to give to Prussia the required guaranty concerning the duration and object of the penal measures in Hesse.

Schwarzenberg, however, called the attention of the Prussian Ambassador to the fact that after this guaranty had been given, Prussia would have no reason whatever for holding possession of the military roads, and thus making the execution of the Confederate plans more difficult. A despatch sent to Berlin on the 13th, in which Schwarzenberg politely accepted Prussia's concessions and spoke of a speedy convention of the congresses, reiterated in the strongest terms his demand for the evacuation of Hesse-Cassel. He was strengthened in this position by the advent, on the same day, of Prince Gortschakoff in Frankfort, who had come to announce officially Russia's recognition of the Confederate Diet as the highest central authority in all Germany, and in this way to show to the world Russia's perfect sympathy with Austria's system and policy.

Thus by Prussia's compliance, one mooted point after another was gradually cleared away. A few days later, the Government fulfilled its promise of bringing before the College of Princes in the Union the formal

proposition of abolishing the Constitution of the 26th of May. This was the more a surprise to the College, since just before this the summons had been received from Prussia to prepare their troops for war, and to place them under Prussian orders.

It was a crushing and unwelcome blow to their deliberations. The deputies declared, one and all, that they were not empowered to vote for such a measure. In reply to their reports to their Governments, they received either no response whatever, or, as Radowitz had predicted, from those members that had long been "doubtful," Baden, Nassau, and Mecklenburg-Schwerin, the declaration that the abolition of the Constitution meant the downfall of the Union itself. The College of Princes did not get so far as to take a formal vote on the matter. As for a new offensive and defensive alliance, which had formerly been often spoken about as desirable in this event,—such a plan was not considered worth mentioning.

Thus far, however, and no farther, was King Frederick William ready to show a spirit of compliance; or, to state the matter more exactly, he had hitherto complied with what he in his own heart had wished for. He fully agreed with the Imperial Courts that the sovereign authority of the land must be restored in Hesse-Cassel and in Holstein, and he was truly thankful to Heaven for being at last and entirely rid of the liberal Constitution of the 26th of May.

He looked upon it as a clear and brilliant triumph of his policy, that he had persuaded Austria to accept of

the plan of holding open congresses for the reformation of the Confederation. This grand and important work had been torn from the hands of that hated assembly at Frankfort; and now he was obstinately determined not to yield to that unlawful "Club" the honor of supporting the sovereign authority in Hesse and Holstein. So glorious a task must be intrusted only to the united German Governments, and by them, according to his old proposition, to an Austro-Prussian commission.

We have already heard him assert, on the 1st and 2d of November, his conviction that this end could be best gained by his insisting upon the maintenance of Prussian garrisons along the military roads in Hesse, and the consequent limitation of the Bavarians to the southern portion of the country.

In that case, he thought, the Confederation could not execute its proposed penal measures, and the Elector would be himself forced to ask Prussia to assist in his reinstatement. If this method succeeded in Hesse-Cassel, it could be applied to Holstein as a matter of course. He should, to be sure, in his treatment of the two countries, act much more humanely and graciously than the rude, uncouth Bavarians and Hassenpflug's revengeful associates were now doing in Hanau and Fulda; but in the work of restoration itself, his own conservative principles should be seen to be not a hair's-breadth behind those of the Imperial Courts.

The Prussian troops, then, were to keep possession of

the military roads; this was the corner-stone of the royal policy. However often and however urgently Schwarzenberg demanded Gröben's retreat, however categorically Taxis announced his intended immediate advance, however fully the Confederate Diet on the 15th of November granted the desired guaranty concerning the military roads having halting-stations in Hesse, the King adhered firmly to his order that Gröben should hold his position and keep back the Bavarians from these military roads.

It was in vain that the Minister of War, Stockhausen, affirmed that Austria had already collected one hundred and thirty thousand men in Bohemia, and twenty thousand men in Bavaria, and that Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Saxony were exerting all their energies in getting ready for war; in vain he declared that the Prussian position in Hesse was untenable. The King, on the 18th of November, ordered the message to be sent to Vienna that he should be obliged to regard any attack upon his troops in Hesse as a declaration of war,—first of all, on the part of the Elector; and that he, the King, hoped Austria would not allow herself to be led into a fratricidal war by such a Government as that of Hesse-Cassel. The Confederate Diet hereupon yielded to the supplications of the Elector, and agreed to a temporary postponement of military operations.

Thus Manteuffel's fears increased, lest his work of bringing about peace should suffer shipwreck in very sight of the haven. Fresh sources of apprehension arose rapidly one after another. On the 19th, there

came a note from the little Duchy of Brunswick that almost took his breath away. It read as follows: The report had reached them that the so-called Confederate Diet was planning, after its orders should have been carried out in Hesse-Cassel, to send its army to execute a similar chastisement upon Holstein, and that this army was to cross over land belonging to Brunswick; the people of the latter Duchy, however, had no intention to submit to such presumption on the part of an illegal body, and asked whether Prussia would grant to her ally, the Duke of Brunswick, the necessary assistance and protection.

With terror, Manteuffel thought how pleasing this protest against the Confederate Diet would sound in the ears of the King, and what anger his support of it would excite in Vienna and St. Petersburg.

There followed, almost at the same moment, indications of a general European complication that would involve incalculable consequences. The French Prince-President, Louis Napoleon, had stationed an "army of observation" of forty thousand men upon his eastern frontier; and the French newspapers asserted that France would suffer neither an Austrian protectorate over Italy nor the execution of the ambitious designs of Russia and Austria in Germany. What would happen if these threats should be actually carried out, and if the Prussian war-party should depend upon such support?

All these matters came up for discussion in a session of the Ministerial Council held on the 20th November,

at which the King presided. At first, the Monarch approved the outline of the Address from the Throne prepared for the opening of the Chambers. The Address, as far as the German situation was concerned, accorded throughout with the ideas of Ladenberg, and contained the following sentiments: —

The King will take up again his plans for a Union, so soon as the Constitution for all Germany shall be reformed; in this latter, Prussia's position must be improved; in the Hessian affair Prussia's remonstrances have not met with the proper consideration; until they do, Prussia must remain under arms and thoroughly equipped. Such words could not fail, in the estimation of all Europe, to sound very much like war.

With regard to the Brunswick note, the King was delighted with this bold protest against the presumption of the so-called Confederate Diet. It was decided to send a despatch to Vienna with the declaration that the Duke was fully justified in his refusal to allow the troops to cross his territory, and in his request for Prussia's protection; and that there was, moreover, one very simple means of smoothing away all the difficulties, namely, the postponement of the execution of penal measures in Holstein until after the whole matter should be definitely settled in the congresses.

The King remarked to his Ministers that by advocating this method of procedure, he had no idea of sustaining the Holsteiners in their refractory conduct toward their King-Duke. On the contrary, he advised

the sending of a fresh monition to the Government at Kiel to show a compliant spirit and be reconciled to their sovereign.

The King's attitude toward the French threats against Austria was the same that he maintained at the time of the revolts in the spring of 1849 toward the German princes who opposed his supremacy. He was the farthest possible from entertaining the idea of taking advantage of his enemy's embarrassment. He felt an almost physical antipathy towards the Bonaparte family, as he did also towards the Revolution. Such assistance was a source of great danger, he said; it could neither be asked for nor accepted; it should rather be opposed. He wished to make an attempt to induce Austria, in view of this French move, to join with Prussia; and to persuade the Vienna Court of the necessity of a complete and immediate union of action with Berlin. The Ministers were requested to consider this matter.

However glad Manteuffel was that the King showed no inclination to form an alliance with France against Austria, he had, like his colleagues, many misgivings about saying anything to the Vienna Court about the French doings, at least to express such sentiments as those the King entertained. For the danger of a rupture with Austria had been evidently increased by the last votes that had been passed; and how would it be, if Schwarzenberg should then be in a position to communicate to the French potentate Prussia's hostile proposals?

The King, meanwhile, let the matter rest there ; but, as we shall see, he by no means gave up his ideas.

On the 21st of November, the Chambers were opened by the reading of the Address from the Throne, which, on account of the vigorous expressions it contained, was throughout the whole length and breadth of Germany interpreted as a challenge of war, and was just for that very reason accepted with hearty applause by a decided majority of the deputies.

Prokesch delivered at last, on the following day, Austria's reply to Prussia's demand for a guaranty with regard to the military roads. It had been written on the 20th in Vienna, and was based upon the Confederate vote of the 15th, with which it was in harmony. It stated concisely and without ambiguity, that the Confederate troops entered the country solely for the purpose of preserving order and of restoring the sovereign authority, and that so soon as this end should be attained they should be immediately withdrawn. The promise was given that the military roads with halting-stations in Hesse, which were built for the convenience of Prussian troops crossing the country, should be made use of only in strict accordance with the treaties ; and the hope was then expressed that Prussia would no longer render the salutary work of restoring the monarchical authority difficult by further occupation and obstruction of the roads, to which indeed the treaties gave them no right.

The despatch was written in a conciliatory tone ; Prokesch also felt authorized to add confidentially that

if Prussia should open the roads to the Confederate troops, Austria would make no objection to Prussia's leaving some few troops at the halting-stations. An immediate and satisfactory answer was urgently desired. A note written by Schwarzenberg at the same time portrayed the distress of the troops and destitution of the population in the vicinity of Fulda. "It is positively impossible," he said, "for such a state of things to continue. Is the King willing to take upon himself the responsibility of such an amount of wretchedness and misery? We cannot think so."

Prussia thus received the most satisfactory assurances of the safety of her own provinces. But the real wishes of the King, the exclusion of the Confederate troops from Cassel and consequent prevention of the execution of the proposed penal measures, were point-blank refused. The critical moment had come. Prokesch most emphatically declared that a negative answer from Prussia would be straightway followed by the beginning of a war.

Prokesch was supported in his assertion by the no less emphatic avowal of Baron Budberg, the Russian Ambassador. The latter conversed with Ladenberg, Manteuffel, and Adjutant-General Gerlach. He told them that the Emperor Nicholas was already exceedingly annoyed at Prussia's justification of Brunswick's behavior, and considered his own honor assailed in every attempt to place obstacles in the way of the execution of the penal measures proposed by the Confederation; and that he had already ordered the mobili-

zation of the grenadier corps and the Cossacks on the Don, since he saw in a quarrel over Hesse-Cassel the signal of a war for himself. This was, as was soon to be seen, no exaggeration. Prussia stood before a momentous decision.

On the 23d of November, Manteuffel laid the Austrian despatch before the Ministerial Council, remarking that although it did not contain all that had been demanded on the 9th, yet matters were in the main settled, especially after the confidential communication of Prokesch. Austria's object, he said, was simply the execution of the penal measures, which Prussia had promised not to hinder; if, then, the latter kept the military roads closed, this would be an inconsistency behind which hostile intentions might be suspected; Prussia would be unnecessarily and without good cause bringing on a war.

Stockhausen and Simon not only agreed with him, but even proposed that Prussia should withdraw her troops entirely from Hesse, since, as they said, she of course did not wish to be concerned in the internal disorders of Hesse.

None of the other Ministers, however, would advocate such a line of conduct. In the expression of their individual opinions, they attacked several points in Manteuffel's deductions. Ladenberg went so far as to aver that the whole business of the so-called guaranties was a piece of dissimulation behind which lay the design to attack Prussia unawares.

"We have already abandoned," he said, "one

principle that lay at the bottom of our sending troops into Hesse-Cassel; we must so much the more firmly insist upon the other, the security of our military roads. The Austrian explanations have proved to be entirely insufficient. Nothing is said about lessening the size of the Confederate army in Hesse, which is unnecessarily large for the professed purpose; and it is very noticeable that no mention whatever is made of the project of sending General Legeditsch to Holstein. Indeed, we should have every reason to ask in so many words the very grave question, whether beside the punishment of Hesse the troops that the Coalition have sent into that country are not perhaps designed to carry out some further purpose. The withdrawal of our divisions under such circumstances would be a defeat that could not be made good. We owe it to our Chambers not to decide upon such a measure without their consent."

Thus opinions differed. It was impossible to come to any conclusion. It was resolved to hold another session of the Cabinet forthwith, at which the present situation of things should be laid before the King.

A proposition had already been made in the session of the 19th to remove the difficulties by a personal interview between Manteuffel and Schwarzenberg. The Ministers decided at the time to refer this plan to the King. Frederick William had let the matter lie undetermined. But now, when the probability of war stood before his eyes, and he neither wished to yield

nor to make war, he fell back upon this expedient. On the 24th of November, a Count Stolberg was despatched to Vienna with the commission to portray the uncomfortable position of the Government in face of public opinion; to request Schwarzenberg to pass over temporarily the two special questions concerning Hesse and Holstein, and to proceed at once to the convention of the congresses for the settlement of the German question; at the same time to extend to the Prince the invitation of Manteuffel to meet him at any place convenient to the Prince; and to report forthwith concerning the acceptance of the same.

Yet before any reply could be obtained through this channel, Schwarzenberg had decided to put an end to the increasing complaints of Taxis and the Confederate Diet. Taxis received orders to begin his march upon Cassel on the 27th of November, and to overcome by force of arms any opposition that he might encounter from Gröben. Manteuffel also received on the 25th the following note from Prokesch: —

“ On account of the difficulties connected with the furnishing of supplies, the imperial Austrian and royal Bavarian troops, which have been led into Hesse-Cassel for the purpose of restoring the sovereign authority, can no longer remain in their present position. The undersigned has therefore been commissioned by the imperial Government to request in its name that within forty-eight hours, that is, before the noon of next

Wednesday, the 27th of November, a final answer may be given to the following questions: —

“Inasmuch as the guaranties demanded by Prussia have been granted by Austria, may the above-mentioned troops now move on, without opposition, towards Cassel?

Have the proper orders been sent to Lieutenant-General Gröben?

The undersigned most respectfully etc.

PROKESCH.”

Manteuffel hastened to report this ultimatum to the King at Potsdam, and at one o'clock in the afternoon received the following reply: —

“Telegraph at once to Vienna that I have sent you to the Prince as the bearer of friendly messages, and that I expect you will be cordially received. Then the inquiry with regard to the place of meeting. The same word may be sent to Prokesch.”

The Minister contented himself for the present with telegraphing to Bernstorff that he expected an immediate reply from Stolberg, and that he himself was ready to set out at a moment's notice. Then, in order to obtain more detailed instructions, he called a meeting of the Cabinet, at which the King presided, and the Heir-Apparent was present.

After a specific statement of the dangers connected with the opening of the military roads to the Confederate troops, the King went on to say, —

“To avoid compliance with Austria's demands, a

personal conference of Manteuffel with Schwarzenberg is necessary, whether this takes place in Oderberg, Olmütz, or Vienna. At this interview, Manteuffel must represent to the Prince the impossibility of further concessions, in view of the sentiment that exists among the people and in the army. He must then try to transfer negotiations to a new basis. He must seek to have the Hessian question referred to the general congresses; to this end he must call the attention of the Prince to the dangers which threaten from the side of France, and remind him how in 1815 the outbreak of an impending war was hindered by Napoleon's return. He shall express the hope that in Hesse the Elector may soon return with his troops to Cassel, and that then *all* foreign soldiers may leave the electorate. He shall call attention to the fact that the so-called Confederate Diet has, by the withdrawal of the deputy from Luxemburg, lost every appearance of being the authorized representative of the Confederation.

“The desired result can best be brought about in Hesse, if the Hessian officials and communities can be induced by Prussian mediation to acknowledge again the authority of the Elector, to pay the taxes, and to request the Elector's return to Cassel. The end would thus be attained by peaceable means. The Confederate troops would not need to proceed over our military roads, and Prussia could demand that she should not be interfered with in her efforts for peace. Prussian plenipotentiaries must be therefore despatched to Hesse-Cassel to prosecute this work of mediation.”

The special points were then settled upon, towards which Manteuffel in the proposed interview should direct his exertions. These were, —

1. Austria's assent to the six propositions brought forward at Warsaw.
2. The immediate convention of the general congresses.
3. The reference of the Hessian and Holstein questions to the decision of these congresses.

Thereupon Manteuffel repeated his directions to Bernstorff, to get an answer as quickly as possible from Schwarzenberg. On the morning of the 26th, in accordance with the intentions of the King, Manteuffel gave instructions to the Counsellor Niebuhr with regard to a message to the Elector at Frankfort, and also to the Privy Counsellor Delbrück with regard to negotiations with the leaders of the Opposition of the Estates at Cassel.

But just then he received through Prokesch a telegram from Schwarzenberg, which rendered everything again uncertain. The Prince wrote that he would be ready for a meeting so soon as he received satisfactory news concerning the opening of the military roads and the withdrawal of the Prussians from Cassel. Manteuffel replied in the course of the afternoon that the object of the meeting was precisely to try to decide about all these points of controversy, including the Hessian affairs, in which certain events had just taken place that materially increased the prospects of a peaceful solution. Inasmuch as the answer to the questions

proposed by Prokesch was to depend upon the result of the meeting, Manteuffel asked again whether Schwarzenberg would withdraw the condition upon which he gave his consent to an interview.

As an announcement was received from Gröben that Taxis had threatened to force his advance in the event of opposition, the Ministry requested the King to call a meeting of the Council that very day. After the three despatches had been read, the King declared with great composure that his intentions were not in the least changed in consequence.

He read to the Ministers an autograph letter to the Emperor Francis Joseph, to the effect that Prussia, in view of the mediatory plans undertaken by her, had the right to request that she be not molested in her endeavors; and that since the advance of the Confederate troops north of the military roads would consequently be unnecessary, Prussia saw no reason why she should allow this advance. At the end of the letter he referred to the threatened danger from the movements of the French.

A similar letter from the queen to her sister, the Archduchess Sophia, was enclosed. The King said that Manteuffel should forward both of these letters through the hands of Schwarzenberg to the persons addressed, and for this purpose should at all events bring about a meeting. Manteuffel expressed his readiness to obey every order of the King, but observed that he did not expect that this step would do any good; on the other hand, he feared lest, in case his

requests were not granted, his journey should compromise the honor of the Government.

The King did not, however, share his fears. "Schwarzenberg," said the King, "cannot in any way refuse an interview, if Manteuffel announces himself as the bearer of these two letters and of special messages from the King. It doesn't depend so much upon the success attendant upon this step as upon the step itself. If it is unsuccessful, then the whole responsibility of the war is thereby thrown off Prussia's shoulders." The King then closed the session.

With no very light heart did Manteuffel go from this meeting of the Council. He awaited in feverish suspense further news from Bernstorff, before he should proceed to carry out the orders of the King. At last a despatch arrived, which had been sent after eight o'clock, and the contents of which were, that Schwarzenberg had after a long discussion finally made up his mind not to decline holding the interview, but intended first to get the approval of the Emperor before fully deciding. Bernstorff hoped to receive a definite reply the same evening.

It was already ten o'clock. After the lapse of an hour, Manteuffel felt that he must not delay any longer, and telegraphed to Bernstorff that he was about to set out the next morning with a special message from the King and with autograph letters from Their Majesties, to be delivered at the proposed interview. As a place of meeting, he suggested Olmütz, and asked that a reply might intercept him the next day at Breslau.

An hour later, Bernstorff's anxiously-awaited telegram came to hand, which was worded as follows: "At the orders of the Emperor, Schwarzenberg will set out on the 28th for Olmütz. If you leave Berlin to-morrow evening, you will arrive at the same time with him."

According to the later reports of Bernstorff, Schwarzenberg had with the greatest reluctance agreed to the proposal of an interview. It had cost the Ambassador a great deal of pains to persuade him to ask the Emperor's opinion, rather than to reject the proposal at the outset. Finally he yielded; and on the 27th he sent a request to the Confederate Diet at Frankfort, to postpone the advance of the Bavarians until further notice.

Meanwhile Delbrück and Niebuhr had started for their respective destinations. Towards noon Manteuffel sent to Prokesch a short note of the following import: Since he was about to leave the city, in order to deliver to the Austrian Emperor and Prince Schwarzenberg direct messages from Their Royal Majesties, this note would imply of itself the necessity of deferring an answer to the note of the 25th until his return, and he should feel assured beforehand of the assent of the Ambassador.

Accordingly, he departed in the evening to journey towards a catastrophe in Prussian politics, towards what was to seem to him to be a threefold salvation from mortal danger, to the King almost, if not quite, a triumph, but to the rest of the world a fearful humiliation and defeat.

On the evening of the 28th of November, the two Ministers arrived at the hotel *Zur Krone* in Olmütz, and began at once their conference at six o'clock, which was continued and ended the next day. No detailed account of the course of conversation at this interview has ever yet been made public; yet, from everything that preceded and followed it, there can be no doubt left concerning its main features.

Manteuffel had long been an open enemy of Prussia's whole scheme of a Union. He felt, as a strict official of the state, a radical aversion to the estates, officers, and functionaries in Hesse-Cassel; and he was quite ready to subject Holstein to the rule of the Danish King, and to help in settling the succession according to the latter's wishes.

He might very well say to Schwarzenberg: What are we really quarrelling about? Have we not in everything the same interests and the same aims? Does anything at all stand in the way of our coming to an agreement but your unreasonable wilfulness in setting up again, in a manner very insulting to the Prussian King, the old Confederate Diet, and in now commissioning that body alone to restore order in two countries that lie within our sway? Are we not wholly at one so soon as you are willing to co-operate with us in these matters,—with us who have there the same object in view as yourself? And isn't it better that we should secure subordination in Hesse-Cassel by peaceful mediation, than that your Bavarian regiments

should continue by their dragoonades to arouse the indignation of the whole world?

From the Austrian point of view there could be found reasons enough for assenting to these sentiments, in accordance with which Austria would gain everything that she had desired in the matter, and on her part needed only to make a few technical concessions at the expense of the Confederate Diet, which Schwarzenberg, apart from this, intended to subject to a thorough reform.

Yet it appears that the Prince, who to begin with had come to Olmütz against his will and only at the command of his Emperor, took part in the negotiations with the same reluctance, and in every contested matter demanded unconditional concession. Indeed, the Prussian and French ambassadors in Vienna reported to their Governments during the following days, that Schwarzenberg had declared Manteuffel's offers insufficient, and had not until the 29th, and then only at the command of the Emperor, been willing to go on in the negotiations. So that it was due to the personal interposition of Francis Joseph that an enormous shedding of blood was at this time prevented.

So far as the particular questions were concerned, the Prince had already in Warsaw yielded to Prussia's desire to commit the duty of reforming the Confederation to general congresses in which all the German Governments should be represented. He had done so with good reason; for this method offered to a friend of reform—and the Prince had in his mind great

schemes of reform — better chances for success than could be hoped for with the inflexible formalities connected with the Confederate Diet.

If, now, Prussia should show signs of supporting the Austrian policy with regard to Holstein, then Austria might indeed, without discarding her principles, gratify the King, by putting the management of the affair into the hands of an Austro-Prussian commission, instead of one appointed by the Confederate Diet. For the latter had as yet only sent a monition to Holstein, and had not yet taken any further steps as a body. So that, in yielding to the wish of Prussia, it would not in this case seem to be backing down from any undertaking.

The case was different, however, in Hesse-Cassel. If Manteuffel, although against his own convictions and only because of the royal orders, could assert that further concessions in the electorate were impossible on account of the heated passions of the people and the army, so might Schwarzenberg with equal positiveness declare that it would never do to compromise Bavaria's military honor by stopping, at the command of Prussia, the execution of the Confederate penal measures when they were in full swing, and letting them end in nothing. How could these two impossibilities be reconciled? The way was pointed out by the conservative policy and principles to which both of these statesmen were devoted.

To the Confederate Diet had been committed the task of putting down the opposition manifested against

Hassenpflug's September decrees; after this had been done, its troops were to leave the country. But it was very evident to both Ministers that the Confederation ought not to consider its duty then ended, but should rather, by reforming the Hessian Constitution, close up forever the source of such troubles.

This matter, so weighty in its consequences, Schwarzenberg was ready to refer to the general congresses, and in accordance with Prussia's desire, to an Austro-Prussian commission appointed by these congresses. Manteuffel, in his turn, and in conformity with his utterances of the 23d, agreed to allow the Confederate troops to cross the Prussian position on the military road, and to carry out in every respect their orders. He was quite delighted with the idea that they were to bear the odium of the chastisement of Hesse alone and without Prussia, quite forgetting that, after so long a resistance, the granting of their requests would only occasion exactly the same bitterness of feeling as if Prussia had taken part. With regard to Prussian troops in Hesse, we have seen that Schwarzenberg had already said he should make no objections to the plan of leaving a small company of them upon the military road; and the point was now to be passed over in silence, so as to avoid every appearance of a retreat of the Prussian troops before the Bavarians.

The possession of the capital city, Cassel, was also a difficult question. So far Austria had suffered no Prussian troops there, and Prussia no Bavarian. It was now agreed that the future garrison should consist

of one Prussian battalion, and one composed of the troops chosen by the Elector, whereby it was tacitly implied that the latter should be Austrian. On the other hand, Schwarzenberg insisted, for the sake of the principle involved, that the consent of the Elector to this arrangement was necessary, which, then, should be solicited by both Governments together. Schwarzenberg added confidentially the promise that the troops now in Hesse should advance only slowly, and not arrive in Cassel before the consent of the Elector should have been attained.

Finally, Manteuffel brought up the six Warsaw propositions as a basis of the reform of the Confederate Constitution to be undertaken by the congresses. But in this matter Schwarzenberg held firmly to the position taken by him in Warsaw. He again accepted the propositions conceding the admission of the whole of Austria into the Confederation, the formation of a Confederate Council consisting of seventeen votes and having the functions of the old Confederate Diet, the absence of any popular representation in the Confederation, and the right to form unions according to his own interpretation, to which Manteuffel had made no objections, of Article XI. of the Act of Confederation.

On the other hand, the Prince inexorably refused to share the presidency of the Confederation with Prussia; he advocated, indeed, the formation of a strong executive, but would not bind himself to the promise of allowing this to be intrusted to Austria and Prussia. This was, however, as we have seen, for Prussia just

the most critical point; so that in this matter no conclusion was obtained. As to the details of the Confederate reform, both Powers were to attend the congresses entirely free, bound by no obligations. Schwarzenberg finally made a concession of no great importance by accepting Prussia's proposal of Dresden, as the place for holding these congresses, instead of Vienna.

Thus the Olmütz Agreement¹ was signed by both Ministers on the 29th of November, 1850. Schwarzenberg then laid before Manteuffel the following memorandum, to which the latter gave assent at once in the name of Prussia: —

His Majesty, the King of Prussia, is hereby requested to appoint some day near at hand for the announcement of his decree countermanding the order of the 6th of November for the mobilization of the troops. When this information shall be received, His Majesty, the Emperor of Austria (with the certain assurance of the consent of the other Governments represented in the Confederate assembly), will upon the same day proclaim the cessation of all preparations for war, and ordain the following measures: the granting of furloughs to the battalions of the militia and to the fourth battalion of every regiment, the reversal of the order to enlist recruits, and the immediate withdrawal of the troops that were already stationed upon the frontiers.

¹ Strangely enough, no original copy of this Agreement can be found among the Prussian state documents.

Schwarzenberg observed that the main point to be considered was that the disbanding should take place before the beginning of the congresses: Austria could not issue the invitations to these until the army should be already reduced to its peace-footing in the manner above mentioned.

When we consider the final result of the conference at Olmütz, we see that Manteuffel had not at all succeeded in putting through the first commission with which he had been charged, — the acceptance by Austria of the six Warsaw propositions. A memorial drawn up by the Privy Counsellor Abeken, on the Olmütz Agreement, says very naïvely concerning this point: Parity with Austria was in the first place not to be secured; and, in the second place, its refusal would not have meant an actual declaration of war.

To the second commission included in Manteuffel's instructions, the early opening of the general congresses, Schwarzenberg had given his assent, and had also, with regard to the place of meeting, yielded to Prussia's wishes; but he had, on the other hand, made the previous disarming of the militia a condition of their convention.

In the third point, the reference of the Holstein and Hessian questions to the congresses, Manteuffel had been wholly successful in respect to Holstein, but only partially so in respect to Hesse-Cassel: the punishment of the country was to be left to the Confederate Diet, and the question of the Constitution to an Austro-Prussian commission. Schwarzenberg allowed the

presence of Prussian troops upon the military road, concerning which the above-mentioned memorial remarks that if Prussia were now to withdraw her troops from Hesse-Cassel, it would be an act purely of her own free choice.

The King passed over the agreement about the occupation of Cassel and the assent of the Elector as an unimportant matter of courtesy; to the advance of the Bavarians across the military roads he also acceded, although with a heavy heart; but he nevertheless would not give up his endeavors to anticipate the penal measures of the Diet by a peaceful mediation between the Elector and his subjects. This did honor to his humane sentiments; but since it was not consistent with what had been decided at Olmütz, it would have put him and his commissioners in an unpleasant situation if Austria and the Confederate Diet had insisted, regardless of his endeavors, upon the execution of the penal measures as agreed upon at Olmütz.

Thus Manteuffel, for the sake of sweet peace, had sacrificed important parts of his instructions. There is not the least doubt but that he found himself unable to maintain his independence before the superior presence of Schwarzenberg. His most glaring act of compliance, even from his own political standpoint, was his assent to Schwarzenberg's memorandum about the common disarmament. For although they had agreed to refer the Hessian Constitution, the pacification of Holstein, and the reform of the German Confederation, to certain bodies named by Prussia, yet there had not been the

least understanding about the probable result of these various negotiations, and it is very clear that Prussia armed could assert her wishes with very much more emphasis than if she were disarmed.

Schwarzenberg had been very cautious in this respect. Whereas the memorandum bound Prussia to a complete return to a peace-footing, it left Austria free to maintain still three battalions of every infantry regiment, all her cavalry and artillery, the forty thousand soldiers of the armies engaged in Hesse and Holstein, and, if the Lesser States so desired, all their forces upon a complete war-footing. Manteuffel's assent to such a memorandum forces one to the belief that he wished to arrange it so that the ratification of the Agreement would render it impossible for his enemies at home to make any opposition to the policy pursued by himself and Schwarzenberg.

When, in the ministerial session of the 2d of December, the ratification of the whole Agreement was discussed, the Prince of Prussia expressed the most serious misgivings concerning the wisdom of disarming before the end of the Dresden congresses. Ladenberg, indeed, advocated the rejection of the entire Agreement. The King considered it a great victory, that Austria had now yielded assent, not only to the general congresses, but also to the plan of referring the Hessian and Holstein questions to commissions from both Powers. He quieted his fears about the disarmament with the thought that Prussia could at any time order again a mobilization, whereas the bad condition of

Austria's finances would prevent her from doing the same. Very true! If Austria had not bound herself to only an apparent disarmament. Upon the royal ratification of the Agreement, Ladenberg withdrew from the Ministry.

In the Lower House, the deputy, Bismarck-Schönhausen, declared at once that the postponement of the disarmament until the close of the Dresden congresses was most earnestly to be desired. Two weeks later General von Manteuffel himself designated the overhasty acceptance of this measure as the chief cause of the unfavorable result of the later negotiations.

In Vienna the news of the preservation of peace was everywhere hailed with delight. The people of that city were as indifferent to the Confederate Diet, Holstein, and Hesse as possible; but a Prussian war seemed to them exceedingly undesirable. Austrian paper rose, the agio sank, and their hearts were quickened by hopes of continued comfort and ease. The old man Radetzky, who had been exceedingly loath to assume the command, now thanked the Emperor in the warmest terms for avoiding a conflict with their good comrades of 1813. These were also the sentiments of Generals Hess, Welden, Clam, and Schönhals. Without reserve they expressed to the Prussian Ambassador at the same time their disapproval of Schwarzenberg's policy and their delight at the happy escape from the prospect of war.

The Olmütz settlement filled the diplomatists of the Confederate Diet and the South German Governments,

on the other hand, with genuine wrath. To be sure, Prussia's dreams of 1849 were over, and the righteous punishment of Hesse was having its proper course; but as for the rest, the Confederate Diet had been rudely set aside, Prussia, whose prestige was undiminished, had been united with Austria, and the Lesser States had been again assigned a second place. However assuringly Schwarzenberg pointed out to them a glorious future, the present disappointment was hard to bear, after all the alluring portrayals of a thorough annihilation of the power of the Hohenzollerns.

But in Prussia! How many men in the country had any remote idea of the technical questions of form, the happy solution of which had filled the King's heart with the consciousness of victory? For them the question was simply: Shall the Confederate Diet be allowed to trample the German Nation under foot? Shall Hassenpflug treat in the same way the people of Hesse-Cassel? and the King of Denmark the German duchy of Schleswig-Holstein?

The Prussian people had shouted for joy—for what reason, they had as little idea as the rest of Europe—when their King set his face against all this; and to preserve Prussia's honor and Germany's safety they had hastened to the standards with glowing enthusiasm. But now the tide had turned; the sword fell from the hand already stretched forth to strike, and bitter tears rolled down the cheeks of many a brave warrior. Prussia had given way before the oft-conquered Austria, and before a scarcely disciplined band of

Bavarians; and it was to be considered a great satisfaction that in return for this Prussia would be allowed to share in the support of Hassenpflug and the Danish oppressors. From a thousand hearts the cry arose that the work of Frederick the Great had been for the second time undone.

To-day, a generation later, the glorious revival of Prussia allows us to consider more calmly the events of that time. No one will even now deny that the Olmütz Agreement was a defeat for Prussia; but we can regard its causes in a different light.

In the first place, the position of Prussia was infinitely more difficult than at the time of a similar complication sixteen years later. In the Hessian matter, as well as in that of the Union, she had now to face Austria, the four German Kingdoms, and Russia; and in the Schleswig-Holstein question all the Great Powers of Europe opposed her. No Government could ever be blamed for yielding at the right time and in the right way to such superiority of power.

Moreover, by the withdrawal of the Kings from the Union, this had in Frederick William's mind lost the character of an imperial alliance, and had in its dismemberment become distasteful and an annoyance to him; while the resistance of the people of Schleswig-Holstein and of Hesse-Cassel to the sovereign authority of those countries seemed to him, no matter how other matters of justice and right stood, to be under all circumstances unlawful.

Consistency demanded that immediately after the

rejection of the propositions by the Erfurt Parliament, the dissolution of the Union should be proclaimed, and likewise that immediately after the Danish Peace of the 2d of July, Prussia should consult with the other Great Powers concerning the future constitution of the Duchies of the Elbe under Danish sovereignty. This would have meant, to be sure, a break with all the traditions of 1848, and Prussia's entrance into "the reactionary camp;" but since this would all have been done voluntarily, the honor of the Prussian state, so far as its relations with foreign Powers were concerned, would have remained unsullied.

Instead of this, we have seen the King, at the time of the division in the Ministry and his own anger at the insulting revival of the Confederate Diet, persisting in the maintenance of his old positions, which were daily becoming more untenable, announcing continually Prussia's resistance to the imputations of the enemy, and finally, after being threatened with war by Austria and Russia, doing now just what he himself had for months been anxious to do. It cannot be denied that this cast a dark shade across Prussia's shield of honor. Her friends' respect for her sank, and her enemies in Vienna and Copenhagen in their exultation believed that anything might be possible after that. The Prince of Prussia never forgot the impressions of that day.

It has often been asked, whether Stockhausen was right in his assertion that Prussia was not equal to a struggle with so many opponents. The enthusiasm of

the Prussian troops and the mutinous disposition of the Hónveds, who formed a large part of the Austrian army, might convince one that Prussia would have in the first instance repulsed the enemy. But even if this be granted, the question still remains: Would the victory have been so overwhelming, and the conduct of the war and the diplomacy so energetic and efficient, that after a few weeks she could have dictated the terms of peace?

King Frederick William was filled with spirit and self-consciousness; but even his warmest admirers have never held him up as a practical politician or a soldier by nature. Very soon after the conference at Olmütz, he said to the English ambassador, the Earl of Westmoreland, that Austria had consented to much more than he could have demanded, and that the greatest piece of good fortune in the matter was that Prussia's victory over Austria had been prevented, a victory which would have been inevitable in the present disunited condition of Austria. This remark accords with Manteuffel's famous saying, that a war between Prussia and Austria would be like an ancient Japanese duel, in which each of the participants ripped open his own bowels.

When the leaders cherished such sentiments, a speedy overthrow of the enemy and great benefit from the victory were hardly to be expected. If Austria could have kept up until spring, then two hundred thousand Russians would have entered the field, the Lesser States would have completed their preparations, and

the situation would have been as dangerous for Prussia as that in 1757 after the battle of Kolin.

England offered only polite phrases. A coalition with France was rendered impossible by the personal sentiments of the King; and Schwarzenberg would certainly have had no scruples in obtaining the favor of Louis Napoleon by sending to him those royal letters, and by the offer of territory on the Rhine. From a military point of view, one cannot help coming to the conclusion that it was fortunate there was a Manteuffel at hand to take upon himself the responsibility of purchasing peace in such a way as was done at Olmütz.

Meanwhile, the two German Powers got ready to settle the German, Hessian, and Holstein questions in common, agreeably to the recent mutual understanding. The hopes of Prince Schwarzenberg rose at that time very high. After he had victoriously annihilated the Prussian schemes for constitutions and a restricted union, he had no doubt but that he should be able to bring Germany as a whole under the control of united Austria, and to arrange this according to his own devices.

CHAPTER III.

THE DRESDEN CONGRESS.

ON the third of December, a furious storm of indignation arose in the Prussian Lower House against the Olmütz Agreement, and in consequence of this the Parliament was on the 4th adjourned till the 3d of January.

King Frederick William impatiently urged the opening of the "much-desired and longed-for" Dresden Congress, from which he expected for the German Constitution the most Utopian results. His wishes were still along the same lines as indicated in the instructions of the Counts Canitz and Brandenburgs: these were, as we may remember, recognition of the King's right to form a closer union within the more comprehensive Confederation; for this latter a Confederate assembly after the old pattern, but with Prussia sharing in the presidency; over the assembly a strong executive power in the hands of Austria and Prussia, who should be admitted into the Confederation with all their provinces; so that in the future there should be no Prussian or Austrian, but only German politics, to be controlled by Prussia and Austria acting conjointly.

The dream of German Unity would then be realized

in the form of a duumvirate, the joint supremacy of Austria and Prussia. There was no plan projected for a German Parliament. The King intended to establish a system of popular representation in his own future Union; and, moreover, if some one else should propose the same for the more comprehensive Confederation, he was resolved not to oppose this at the outset, but to consider the question further.

An outline of these ideas was communicated to the associates in the Union. One can hardly say that they were received with warm enthusiasm. The Petty States had, it is true, keenly felt the insufficiency of the Confederate arrangements in the tempests of 1848, and had therefore turned gladly, first to the Constitution of the Cathedral of St. Paul, and afterwards to the Prussian Union. But after the experiences of the last two years they were afraid of every new experiment, since every one so far had especially endangered their own lot; so that without venturing any direct opposition against Prussia, and in spite of all their former protests, they began to revert in their minds with an unexpressed longing to the old Confederate Diet with its powerless and useless but yet comfortable existence in the Eschenheim palace.

Quite other plans were the aim of the imperious soul of Prince Schwarzenberg and the aspiring ambition of the Lesser States; and after the events at Olmütz they believed they might cast aside all doubts as to their success. They were, to be sure, sorry that there had been no defeat of Prussia upon the battle-field; but,

although the Prussian King considered the Olmütz Agreement to be a victory for his own dearest principles, his enemies received, on the other hand, the impression that Prussia before all things feared a war, and that it was only necessary to make use alternately of conservative phrases and moderate threats to force from her all that they wanted, and make their success sure.

Their eyes were not by any means fixed upon a simple revival of the old Confederate Diet. They had indeed in the spring called it into life again as an instrument with which to fight Prussia. But Schwarzenberg's remark at the time was very seriously meant, when he said that he intended no barren revival of the ancient conditions, but only to secure a legitimate basis for a very thorough reform.

He, too, had in no way changed his aims since 1849. He would now no more than then listen to any plan of a restricted union within a more comprehensive alliance, nor of any popular representation in the Confederate legislation. He was endowed by nature with no appreciation whatever of freedom or of national wants; but his whole nature was the more thoroughly imbued with an ambition to promote material interests. Accordingly, he rejoiced to recognize in the Prussian programme two of his own doctrines; namely, the admission of entire Austria into the Confederation, and the formation of a strong executive to control the whole.

Yet he was as far as possible from entertaining a

thought of granting to Prussia equal rights with Austria in this supreme control. On the contrary, the presidency of the Confederate Diet and in the executive should be, in Schwarzenberg's opinion, exclusively in the hands of Austria; and, moreover, the executive should not consist of the two Great Powers alone, but of the four Kingdoms with them.

By this latter proposition he gained for his policy, beyond a doubt, the favor of the Lesser States, and he then allured them further by holding up before them the prospect of establishing the system of groups, which meant the mediatization of the Petty States, the prospect of the entrance of Austria into the Tariff-Union, and finally the wholesale limitation of the rights of the estates and of freedom in their states, which, as we have seen, could best be done, according to his notion, by the military.

If all this proved successful, then Germany would be split up into six absolutely-governed states; Prussia would be thrust back into her former rank of one of the German Lesser States, and, in respect to her relations to the rest of Europe, into the age before Frederick the Great; German Unity would be realized simply in the fact that all the German states would be obeying the same monarch as the Galician Ruthenians, the Bohemian Czechs, and the Italian Lombards.

It is obvious that between these two systems there could be no compromise, no reconciliation. Which would conquer? And if neither, then what would happen?

The solemn opening session of the Congress in Dresden, which took place on the 23d of December, gave the impression that Prince Schwarzenberg was already master of the whole situation. As a matter of course, he assumed the office of president, and made the introductory speech. Thereupon Herr von Beust, as host, gave an address of welcome, and then the Prussian Prime Minister rose to speak for the first time. Immediately after him came Baron von der Pfordten as representative of the next largest kingdom. Prussia found herself, as if in the proper order of things, right in the midst of the Lesser States.

Prince Schwarzenberg proposed the appointment of several committees to prepare drafts of the different Articles of the Constitution. This was approved without discussion, as also a few days later the lists of names nominated by the Prince to be members of the various committees.

On the 24th of December, the Prince, in company with Herr von Manteuffel, made a visit to Berlin, in order to use his personal influence in securing as rapid a transaction of the business as possible. He was received most cordially. The King, following the inclination of his heart toward Austria, promised to do everything in his power that could be at all consistent with the interests of Prussia. In his immediate presence, too, owing to the absence of Bunsen and Radowitz, the preponderating sentiment was favorable to Austria.

Herr von Manteuffel manifested likewise a constant

desire to come to an understanding without delay. He not only acquiesced at once in the wish of Schwarzenberg and recalled from Vienna Count Bernstorff, who was far too independent to be agreeable to the Prince, but he also appointed in his place, and at the suggestion of Schwarzenberg, a man who was well-nigh the most incapable of all the Prussian diplomatists of the time, a certain Count Arnim-Heinrichsdorff. No less pleased was the Prince with the choice of the second Prussian representative with full powers to Dresden, the former Minister of Finance, Count Alversleben-Erxleben, who seemed likely to be useful to Austria on account of his thoroughly conservative tendencies.

Nothing definite was settled in Berlin. The first word of the Prince was the declaration that it would not be possible to secure the functions of the executive for Austria and Prussia alone, since all the Lesser States opposed this plan very decidedly. Manteuffel yielded by saying that in that case it would be necessary to come to some understanding about a directory. Against the admission of entire Austria into the Confederation, Manteuffel had no objections to make; he inquired about a system of alternation in the presidency, and was contented when the Prince carelessly observed that he personally was quite in favor of such a plan. (He knew well enough that the Kingdoms would no more agree to this than to the placing of all the executive power in the hands of the Great Powers alone.) The Austrian statesman returned then to Dresden animated by the most encouraging hopes.

There the committees were now formed ; and the first one, appointed to determine the future authorities and territorial extent of the Confederation, began its work with ardor, under Austrian presidency. But the irreconcilable differences in purpose made themselves felt in the very first sitting. Two supreme organs were to be created, — a Plenum for the legislation and a Directory for the executive.

Prince Schwarzenberg first opened the discussion over the latter, and declared that if the executive was to act vigorously and quickly, it would be impossible to grant a share and vote in the same to the Petty States. Therefore he proposed a college, which should be composed of Austria and Prussia, each with two votes, the four Kingdoms, each with one vote, and Baden, the two Hesses, Holstein, and Luxemburg together, with one vote, — seven persons and nine votes. The more executive authority Prussia as well as Austria intended to vest in this body, the more vital for the whole of the Constitution was the question of its composition. And now Prince Schwarzenberg proposed, one might say with incredible coolness, a system of composition in which Austria, in case of conflict in opinion with Prussia, would be certain of controlling six votes out of nine! Count Alversleben asserted upon the spot that this system was impossible. With keen perception he skilfully emphasized the fact that that meant the sacrifice of the Petty States, the allies up to this time of Prussia, and that to that system the King would never give his consent.

The excitement among the Petty States was tremendous, and only partially quieted by the decided assertion of Alversleben. In the second sitting various proposals about the formation of the executive were discussed. All of them gave to it nine votes, of which each of the Great Powers should have two, the remainder being divided in the Prussian proposals among all the other states, and by Austrian among the larger states only, under various combinations. The discussion waxed warm. Each proposal found its advocates and opponents. The members grew excited, and there was disagreement in all directions. There could be no thought of bringing the matter to a vote.

Count Alversleben was a firm and sedate man, thoroughly monarchical in his principles, and a Prussian patriot of the truest kind; he had, moreover, been educated from his childhood in parliamentary business, was prudent in every particular, and very far-seeing in weighing every possibility. The first trial was enough to fix his opinion of the whole situation. The cold-hearted, ambitious behavior of Prince Schwarzenberg had within forty-eight hours produced an entire change in the feelings of the members. Those who had been hitherto enemies of the old Confederate Diet, the small states of the Union, saw before their eyes, as the result of the Austrian reform, their own complete suppression; so that their already budding longing for simple return to the old Confederate Diet blossomed forth into full vigor.

Alversleben shared in every respect their opinions,

and consequently became almost unreservedly their leader for the whole remaining time of the Congress. He considered the Prussian plan of reform hopeless, and recognized in the Austrian aims a mortal danger threatening Prussia's rank as a Power. Accordingly, he sent reports to Berlin concerning the feelings of the Petty States, and received the approbation of the Minister on account of his opinion that Prussia would have no longer any reason to oppose a proposition that the executive should be committed to the charge of the Close Council of the old Confederate Diet.

The Petty States were not more excited over the proposal of Austria than Schwarzenberg was over the Prussian representative. He was at a loss to understand such decisive opposition at the very outset, after all the fine things that had been said in Berlin. "Alversleben's conduct," he wrote to Prokesch, the Austrian ambassador in Berlin, "is a double riddle to me."

Prokesch turned to the adjutant-general and confidential friend of the King, Herr von Gerlach, and urgently begged him to try to influence His Majesty to send Manteuffel again to Dresden with unconditional full powers and with definite orders to effect a conclusion of negotiations. "The representatives of the Gotha party," he said, "are taking advantage of the expected rupture between Austria and Prussia; disorganization is gaining ground in the Congress."

Schwarzenberg turned to Manteuffel himself in a private letter, and in it he affirmed his oft-repeated

opinion that in Germany there was need of a regular standing army at home of about one hundred thousand men in order to suppress all opposition of the Estates, the Press, and the People; and that whatever states could not provide their contingent of troops should not be allowed a share in the executive, in which condition were all the Petty States. The letter produced little effect upon Manteuffel. He considered that the Lesser States, too, and even Bavaria itself, were not in a condition to maintain a standing army, and that consequently, according to Schwarzenberg's own principles, only the two Great Powers could have a place in the executive.

Yet it seemed altogether too shameful that in the much-eulogized Congress an open rupture should occur the very first day. It was only too evident that then nothing would remain but a return to the old Confederate Diet; and from what has preceded, it is easy to understand that against this the innermost nature of the King rebelled. Anything that was endurable should be preferred to this wretched disaster. It was therefore decided to send Manteuffel to Dresden to try to effect a compromise, although only upon the basis of the perfect equality of the two Great Powers in the presidency of the Confederate Diet and of the executive.

On this latter point, Schwarzenberg talked again as graciously as in Berlin; and concerning the participation of the Petty States in the executive, he allowed himself to be persuaded to yield a little from the strictness

of his theories. The two statesmen agreed in the scheme of adding to the nine votes proposed by Austria two more for the Petty States, making an executive of nine persons with eleven votes ; and this was to be laid before the committee as a common proposal of the two Great Powers.

Prince Schwarzenberg could regard this result as a victory : for even with eleven votes, he would be certain under all circumstances of the majority consisting of the six votes. With regard to Prussia's being upon an equal footing with Austria, he had spoken very encouragingly, but had this time no more than before made any binding promises. He had indeed succeeded in obtaining from Manteuffel almost his definite consent to the establishment of this new executive so soon as the plan of the eleven votes should be accepted by the Congress, before the other Articles of the Constitution were determined. Manteuffel, however, paid him back in his own coin with gracious words, which were not binding at all.

Meanwhile Schwarzenberg returned triumphantly to Vienna, leaving Austria to be represented by Count Buol-Schauenstein, the former ambassador in St. Petersburg, a haughty man, reckless of formalities, dogmatic and stubborn in disposition, and thoroughly penetrated with the political views of his master.

After the two Great Powers had come to an agreement about the constitution of the executive, the first and second committees held a joint session to consult in common about the functions of the future Con-

federate authorities, not only as to their mutual relations, but also with regard to their relations to the individual states. Prince Schwarzenberg had taken care that in both committees his friends should be in the majority; so the motion to consider all Austrian and Prussian lands as Confederate territory was carried through without difficulty.

The project of an executive consisting of eleven members met with the same success in the first committee; but in the joint session the two Mecklenburgs and Holstein, i.e., Denmark, made a decided objection to it. Denmark desired no executive whatever, and Mecklenburg wished to put it solely into the hands of Austria and Prussia. It goes without saying that this objection did not affect the report of the committee.

The functions of the executive were very much more extended than those that the Close Council of the old Confederation exercised. Yet the Lesser States did not push the matter so far as Schwarzenberg intended; and especially the Petty States, in their fear of Schwarzenberg's ambition, invariably strove to hinder, so far as possible, any change whatever. Accordingly, it was decided that the functions of both Confederate authorities should be determined by law, but that in doubtful cases the presumption should be in favor of the Plenum, and that the latter should be permitted to pass judgment on matters lying outside of its functions.

Then came the question, what decisions of the

Plenum should require unanimity, which ones a qualified majority, and which ones a simple majority-vote. The committee showed its anti-Prussian tendencies by its finding that in the matter of deciding whether any alliance made by a German state endangered the safety of the Confederation or its individual members a simple majority-vote of the Plenum would be sufficient. It was considered desirable to have at hand some convenient way to prevent every attempt to revive the Prussian Union.

In other matters the general sentiment was in favor of keeping up the demand of the law for unanimity or of requiring in its place a qualified majority-vote. Thus the principles of the confessedly abortive Confederate military organization were to be altered only in case of unanimous consent; for an increase in the military burdens was opposed by Bavaria, and also by Reuss and Schwarzburg. Measures respecting a German marine were to require a majority of three-fourths. The Kingdoms even demanded unanimity for the establishment of a war-marine; and only after great exertion did Count Alvensleben, supported alone by Hanover, Oldenburg, and Hanse-towns, succeed in preventing the motion that there should be no German fleet at all.

The old Confederate principle required unanimity for every decree that concerned organic regulations and common interests. When motions to the contrary were brought forward and in part accepted by the committee, Denmark made an exhaustive protest, with the declara-

tion that the suppression of the *liberum veto* would be the beginning of centralization and of the disorganization of the Confederation.

It would not be of interest nowadays to enumerate all the motions and decisions in detail. It will be enough to indicate the general principles which underlay them. The control of the Confederate authorities over the affairs and Constitution of the individual states remained upon the same footing as determined by the Confederate laws of 1820 and 1832, with the exception that the Executive was now to have the right in especially urgent cases of taking steps for the preservation of the peace, without waiting for orders from the Plenum.

No less consonant with Schwarzenberg's sentiment was the motion made in the third committee by Bavaria and Saxony for common tariff-laws among all the Confederate states. Count Alvensleben was able for some time to delay the discussion over this vital question of the German Tariff-Union; nor could the committee fail to recognize the material obstacles to an immediate admission of Austria into that Union. The committee limited itself accordingly to a series of articles about preliminary measures, tending to increase the facility of domestic trade, so that in 1858 a definite result might be reached with regard to common tariff-laws.

Unfortunately, the satisfaction which Schwarzenberg had promised to the Lesser States for such praiseworthy efforts was somewhat marred by the conduct of

his good friends, Beust and Pfordten, in another matter in the first committee, where these gentlemen were very active in explaining the need of a popular representation by the side of the Confederate Plenum. Count Buol affirmed on the spot the unchangeable opposition of Schwarzenberg. Yet it was disagreeable for him to find on his side in this most important question, beside Hesse-Cassel and Luxemburg, only the Mecklenburgs and Denmark, who were otherwise so excessively repugnant to him, while all the other states supported the proposition of Bavaria.

To be sure, Herr von Beust explained that one should not think of a parliament after the fashion of that of the Cathedral of St. Paul; no one would wish to revive such a nightmare. It was only desired, for some branches of legislation, to have delegates present from the chambers of the individual states, that their advice and counsel might be asked. Yet Schwarzenberg remained unyielding towards the proposition, even in this shape, if for no other reason, simply because he was determined as soon as possible to abolish the Austrian Constitution of 1849, and then there would be no "Imperial Council" to send delegates to Frankfort.

Thus it was that everything depended upon Prussia's action in the committee. Count Alvensleben, however, had instructions neither to bring forward nor to oppose such a proposition. Accordingly, Schwarzenberg energetically urged the Berlin Cabinet to unite with Austria in suppressing this evil purpose. He received, too, effectual support, since, as we are aware, Prussia laid

stress upon a popular representation in its restricted Union, but not for the more comprehensive alliance.

When one surveys the results of the discussion, it is impossible to call them satisfactory. All positive decisions were dictated by a blind fear of revolution; on the other hand, the most crying national needs, such as a reform of the Confederate military organization and the creation of a German marine, met with obstinate opposition.

Meanwhile, the first two of the committees succeeded so far, by the beginning of February, in the main features of their work upon the projected Confederate authorities, that Schwarzenberg, in his impatient zeal, decided to take the decisive step. He requested Herr von Manteuffel to meet him on the 16th of February in Dresden, and then, as had formerly been agreed, to make the announcement to the assembly that the two Great Powers intended, upon the basis of the decisions of the committees, to convene the new Confederate authorities in Frankfort, while the members of the Congress in Dresden should continue comfortably to work out the remaining articles of the Confederate Constitution.

The Prince believed that no one would have the courage to oppose the Great Powers or to refuse to send deputies to the new Confederate Plenum; and if any instances of such action should unexpectedly occur, the right of the refractory state to enter the Confederation could be reserved till later, and the Government be otherwise ignored: its isolation would soon enough make it feel uncomfortable.

Let us here call to mind a circumstance which Prince Schwarzenberg had forgotten. A year before, Prussia, who at that time stood outside of the Confederate Diet, had counted it an advantage of the general congresses that those who there agreed could establish their Constitution without the dissenters, whereas in the Confederate Diet every constitutional measure could be defeated by the veto of Homburg or Liechtenstein. Schwarzenberg had at that time, as presiding head of the Confederate Diet, rejected this theory as unlawful and anti-national. He was still, as ever, the chief defender of the Confederate laws; and yet in the coolest manner possible, and in spite of all Confederate laws, he now supported that Prussian doctrine.

The reason for his conduct is, it is true, easy to be seen. Herr von Manteuffel had hitherto shown himself in every particular compliant and willing to make advances. It was advisable to take advantage of this state of his mind, so long as it lasted, and to put into force the measures so fortunately approved of by him — the directory of eleven and the admission of entire Austria — before possible events in Berlin might cause a revulsion from this position. Afterwards, Prussia might assert her claim to parity in the presidency: there would be ways enough of rendering that harmless.

But pride had prepared the way for its own fall. In Berlin there had been strong faith hitherto in the possibility of sincere co-operation with Austria; and in order to come to an understanding, and thus to escape

the old Confederate Diet, Prussia had in different matters and step by step made concessions, some of them of very questionable expediency, always with the idea that any definite arrangement would be reserved until the work of framing the Constitution should be completed.

Now this most important point was to be thrown aside by the new proposition of Schwarzenberg, according to which, the new Confederate Government, doubled in influence by the admission of entire Austria, and with a sure anti-Prussian majority, was to begin its active operations at once, before either Prussia's equality in authority had been insured or her free right to form a union. This could never be allowed.

Furthermore, European conditions were this time as propitious for Prussia as they had formerly at Olmütz been adverse. Russia took only a slight interest in the admission of Austria into the Confederation: France and England, however, protested openly against it; so that not only would this measure not be forced upon Prussia, but it could not be realized without Prussia's active help. It was therefore unanimously decided in Berlin to reject Austria's proposition.

When Manteuffel requested from Count Alvensleben a report on the matter, the latter answered on the 9th of February: "In the course of the discussion it has on all sides been repeatedly acknowledged that before the whole has been gone over, there can be no binding votes passed upon a single detail. This will also be brought forward as the objection to the proposition to set

the new Confederate authorities at once in power. The decisions of the committees are not to be printed for distribution among the members until the 15th of February. If that proposition is then made, there will be a general excuse offered that further instructions will be necessary before voting upon this question, and it will be impossible not to grant a delay of two weeks for the reception of these instructions. The accomplishment of Schwarzenberg's scheme would bring the new executive into active operation a few weeks earlier than if the normal course were pursued; but it would produce a very bad impression, and the whole odium would fall upon Prussia. For the world is accustomed to expect violent conduct on the part of Schwarzenberg; but it would be said, Prussia had weakly allowed herself to be influenced, and had abandoned her old allies."

The same sentiments were expressed in a report from Count Bernstorff to the King, sent from Vienna on the 11th of February: "According to Schwarzenberg's plan, no notice is to be taken of any objection from the Petty States. Prussia is to assist in this; that is, to drop her allies, and with her own hand help form a Directory in which she would always be in the minority, and which would be of great advantage to her bitterest enemies. Russia is expected to support Austria. The two Powers, which a short time ago were ready to fight Prussia on account of violation of the treaties of 1815, now urge a reckless abolition of these treaties. If the question concerned the transference of the executive into the hands of the two Great Powers alone, this

would be a progressive step for the attainment of which it would be worth while making considerable sacrifice. But rather than establish a many-headed Directory, in which Austria would not share the power with Prussia but with the Lesser States, it would be decidedly better for Prussia to return to the old Confederate Diet. She would then be standing upon the basis of the treaties and in the old position; and beside her German allies, she would have upon her side England, Denmark, and the Netherlands. Moreover, it is certain that, in the event of the realization of Schwarzenberg's plan, Holstein-Lauenburg and Luxemburg-Limburg will withdraw from the Confederation. To silence this opposition, Schwarzenberg will perhaps for the present let the Confederate authorities enter upon their duties provisionally, and consist for the time of the two Great Powers and the four Kingdoms alone, while to the other three Curias by themselves will be left the arrangement and division of their votes. In this case this provisional executive, in which Prussia would have two votes against six, might be sure of a long continuance."

The effect of these reports was sweeping. I do not find that a single dissenting voice was heard in Berlin. Nor was there now any difference of opinion with regard to the doctrine that, in comparison with Schwarzenberg's plans, the old Confederate Diet, though so often and justly condemned, would offer a tolerable expedient. Manteuffel was accordingly to go to Dresden, and at once to state to Schwarzenberg that

the recognition of Prussia's claim to equal power with Austria was the indispensable preliminary condition of any further concessions.

Agreeable, then, to Schwarzenberg's proposal, the conference between the two Ministers began in Dresden on the 16th of February, and continued through the whole week. It was evident at the outset that Prussia's claim to parity in the Confederate presidency had no prospect of being satisfied. To begin with, Schwarzenberg asserted the establishment of the new authorities to be extremely urgent, saying that it was not proper to postpone it by the introduction of a question that after all was not so very simple. He promised that so soon as they were in Frankfort, the participation of Prussia in the presidency should be the very first matter with which he would himself charge the new Plenum.

As evidence of his good intentions, he began to discuss the various functions that would, in the order of business, fall to the president, such as the opening of communications received, assignment of them to the proper parties, appointment of the sessions, etc.; he considered in each case whether Prussia could be allowed to share in the same or not. What he believed he might approve of here, he would also present for acceptation and most urgently advise in Frankfort. More than this, he insisted, would not be consistent with his duty; a certain right to preference in honor the dignity of the Emperor could by no means relinquish.

All this was far below what Prussia desired in the way of perfect equality with Austria or alternation in the presidency. Manteuffel then went to Berlin to make his report personally to the King, but returned with instructions to yield no point of the whole extent of Prussia's demands. Schwarzenberg, thereupon, conceded some points in the order of business. Manteuffel, too, avoided for the time the statement of any decisive ultimatum. No clear understanding, however, was reached; and Manteuffel was obliged to declare that until this should be accomplished, a definite vote of the Congress upon the reports of the committees would have to be postponed, and more, than all, the installation of the new Confederate authorities.

On the 23d of February a full session of the Congress was held. Austria moved the acceptance of the committee's reports, and joined with this motion the proposition to install the executive forthwith. Prussia recognized the importance of the matter, but just on that account considered it necessary to give the Governments time for deliberation and instructions, and therefore moved a postponement of the vote for fourteen days. Inasmuch as Austria could bring forward no good cause for objecting to this postponement, Prussia's motion was passed unanimously.

Bavaria thought it would nevertheless be interesting to take an informal vote then, in order to get some idea of the opinions the deputies then held; and accordingly such a trial was made. It became evident by this how successfully Count Alvensleben had used

his influence. Of thirty-five states, no less than eighteen (beside the very small states, all the Grand Duchies) voted against the reports of the committees. Holstein, Luxemburg, and Homburg refrained from voting. To every unprejudiced observer it was evident that this more than anything else forever doomed the proposition of a Directory of eleven votes to which Manteuffel had agreed six weeks before.

The question unavoidably arose, what would happen if further deliberations led to no agreement. The answer lay so near that Baron Pfordten considered a vigorous protest in order. "Something new," he cried, "must be achieved in Dresden. Bavaria will never give her assent to a vote of the Congress to return to the old Confederate Diet, since that would be a violation of the solemn promises that have been made to the German nation."

Herr von Beust seconded the patriotic remarks of his friend with equal warmth. It was the spontaneous expression of grief at the disappointment of those alluring hopes which Schwarzenberg's schemes had offered to the ambition of the Lesser States. Otherwise it had no significance. For, if it was possible to prevent the Congress from passing a vote to return to the old Confederate Diet, it least of all became the members of the existing Confederate Diet to hinder the other states from entering the same.

When Manteuffel left Dresden, he promised Schwarzenberg that he would again report to the King, and then send the Prince without delay a definite statement

of Prussia's views, which should determine once for all her position in the Congress. This he did as early as the 27th of February. His letter to the Prince had quite another tone than that which Schwarzenberg had hitherto been accustomed to hear from his Prussian colleague. Manteuffel began with the asseveration that he was not expressing his own personal opinions, but those which were the inevitable result of stubborn facts and circumstances, and from which no Prussian Cabinet would ever swerve.

He then went on to say, that if Austria considered the admission of her entire monarchy into the Confederation as a necessity, so did Prussia likewise hold it quite as indispensable that she should be on an equal footing with Austria in the presidency. Prussia, he said, could not allow this to depend upon the result of future negotiations with the new Confederate authorities after they were already in Frankfort. Before the new Constitution could be put into force, these two vital questions must be satisfactorily settled. Accordingly, he enclosed Prussia's proposals with regard to the Confederate presidency, remarking at the same time that no opportunity would be offered for negotiating and discussing, but rather that this statement marked the uttermost limit of Prussia's compliance. If Austria would accept these proposals and assist in causing them to be passed by the Congress, then Prussia would be ready to support a motion from Austria concerning the formation of the executive, which would have more probability of being accepted

than the project of a Directory of eleven brought forward by both of the Powers. Nor would Prussia refuse to consider in an unprejudiced spirit any other proposal, even if it should come from one of the Petty States.

Manteuffel said further that Austria must not in this matter count upon the sympathy of the Conservative party in Prussia; for these Conservatives were true to the traditions of Old Prussia, filled with a desire for good friendship with Austria, but more than all with zeal for the independence and honor of the Prussian State.

In order to leave no doubt whatever concerning the Prussian resolves, Manteuffel closed with the observation that if no understanding with Vienna could be reached, Prussia would rest upon the basis of the old treaties which Austria had appealed to in 1850.

We can readily believe that the receipt of this semi-official letter filled Prince Schwarzenberg with profound astonishment. The mere fixing of an ultimatum, quite aside from its contents, was more than Manteuffel had ventured to take upon himself in any matter whatever upon which he had conversed with the Prince, — then, the full equality of Prussia with Austria to a greater degree even than had been verbally expressed by Manteuffel in Dresden — further, this parity set down as an indispensable condition for the admission of Austria entire into the Confederation — and finally, Prussia's undisguised abandonment of the proposition for a Directory of eleven, which had meant Austria's

certain supremacy in the new executive—all this, comprehended in the contents of one sheet, far exceeded the bounds of Schwarzenberg's patience.

But what could be done? Prussia was thoroughly united at home, and had not only the majority of the members of the Congress, but also the European Powers upon her side. In a word, the whole object of his hopeful exertions, and all that which had been so easy to gain from Manteuffel in private conversation, had been dashed to the ground the last moment before completion. It was the turning-point in all the transactions of the Dresden Congress.

Schwarzenberg's first step now was to send a circular on the 2d of March to the refractory Governments, in which, quite as if Manteuffel's letter had not been written, he represented to them, in view of the doings of the session of February 23d, that it would be an exceedingly bold step for the Petty States, who together made up only one-tenth of the population of the Confederation, to venture an opposition to the united wishes of the two Great Powers and the Kingdoms. "Under the present circumstances," he said, "which themselves speak so plainly, we believe we should only lower ourselves in the eyes of our Confederate allies by further explanations." The small states knew, of course, how things were in Berlin, and hastened to send thither a copy of the circular: the only possible consequence of this was an increase of the suspicions felt towards Schwarzenberg's violence and untrustworthiness.

The Prince, then, on the 4th of March answered the

Prussian message with a semi-official letter to Manteuffel, covering twenty-three quarto pages, and containing a prolix repetition of the whole discussion up to this point, a complaint over the folly of coupling together two questions so utterly unlike in essential importance, as the admission of entire Austria and the parity of Prussia, and finally the declaration that Austria was ready to make every just concession, but that the honor of sending the "Presiding Deputy" and of conducting the sessions must remain in the hands of Austria.

The whole wrath of his soul he then poured out in a private letter to Manteuffel on the same day: "Our *common* propositions," he said, "to which the representatives of nine-tenths of the German Confederation have given their assent, have been dropped by Prussia, probably from conscientious scruples concerning strict adherence to Confederate principles and rights. This new turn has filled all hearts in Paris with delight. I have sure indications, and am not surprised to find, that we have more than one Judas in our midst. In Dresden there will now spring up a multitude of new memorials as instructive as they will be absurd. I must therefore abandon the idea of returning thither to listen to such productions; such a sacrifice my country cannot twice demand at my hands. The ears of the Gotha faction stick out in spite of every disguise."

It is an evidence of the calm state of mind which now reigned in the Prussian Cabinet, that all these cutting expressions of affection did not produce a

strong impulse to break entirely with Austria. On the contrary, however decided the Prussians felt in the question of a German Constitution, they had, nevertheless, an ardent desire to retain in other respects friendly relations with Austria, partly on account of Russia's attitude, and partly from fears of encroachments from the side of the French Republic under the leadership of the revolutionary upstart, Louis Napoleon, who had just made the suggestion to the Prussian ambassador that the German and other European questions should be settled by calling a congress of the Great Powers.

Manteuffel sent on the 10th of March a second letter, in which he did not depart in a single point from his ultimatum of the 27th of February, yet expressed Prussia's readiness to enter into a mutually defensive alliance with entire Austria. "The more serious European complications become," said he, "the more unyieldingly shall we persist in our close relations with Austria."

This made a great impression in Vienna, where Louis Napoleon was regarded with as much suspicion as in Berlin. In the Prince's answer of the 17th of March, the petulant tone of his former letter did not appear at all, but in its place expressions of hearty thanks for the proposals of an alliance. The Prince, however, suggested that a more explicit consideration of the matter should be postponed until after the close of the Dresden Congress, which he hardly liked to believe would end in nothing.

The correspondence between the two Ministers was kept up for several weeks. New propositions about parity and about the executive were made by either side. The fate of them all was the same: they were rejected by Austria when they favored Prussia's interests, and *vice versa*. They suffered shipwreck upon the same rock which had so nearly caused the ruin of the Congress at its very first session—the rivalry of the two Great Powers. Until this was settled in some way or other, there could be for Germany no other constitution than the loosely-connected confederacy of states established in 1815.

The actual recognition of this truth was first shown by Prussia, who summoned on the 27th of March her former allies in the Union to send deputies to the Confederate Diet before the 12th of May. Soon afterwards, Prince Schwarzenberg also became convinced that the hopes built upon Dresden were vain, and returned to Prussia's offer of a special treaty of alliance.

On the 13th of April he sent an outline of such a treaty to Berlin, in the introduction to which the desire of both monarchs was mentioned to enter the Confederation with all their possessions and dependencies; but in view of the objections made to this by England and France, "quite invalid though these objections were," for the present the formation was proposed of a defensive alliance for the protection of their possessions. In the text, however, Prussia's obligations were limited to a willingness to assist with all her powers in case of an attack upon the Austrian portion of Italy, whereas

Austria offered the same promise of help in case any Prussian province was threatened, without discrimination.

From this outline the Berlin Cabinet erased the introduction; added to the Italian the other provinces of Austria that had belonged hitherto to the German Confederation; named, on the other hand, as claiming Austrian protection and aid, the Prussian Confederate lands as well as also East and West Prussia; proposed mutual help in case of insurrections in Galicia, Cracow, and Posen; and held, moreover, this treaty open to Russia, but limited the whole to three years. For no one in Berlin felt any duty or inclination to identify Prussia forever with the policy of the Court of Vienna in the Orient and in Italy.

Schwarzenberg was not well pleased with these alterations. He still sought to gain Prussia's consent to the admission of all the provinces of both Powers into the Confederation; and with the same idea he declined the mention of East and West Prussia in the treaty, since that implied Prussia's intention to withdraw these provinces from the Confederation. He declared it superfluous to say anything about mutual aid in case of Polish insurrections, since that was already included in the terms of the treaties of 1833.

Finally it was agreed to omit everything that could excite misgivings in the minds of either side, and simply to promise that within the next three years each of the two Governments would, to the extent of all its powers, assist the other, if any one of the latter's

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possessions inside or outside of the German Confederation should be attacked.

During the course of these private negotiations between the two Great Powers, the committees of the Congress in Dresden had been at work upon their tasks as conscientiously and as industriously as if the results of their labors were to open a new era in the world's history. In the middle of April they were able to announce that their reports would be ready for presentation by the end of the month; whereupon Prussia moved to close the Congress on the 5th of May with the simple declaration that the reports of the committees should be presented to the Confederate Diet for the discussion.

But Baron Beust could not endure the thought that the assembly which had met in the Saxon capital should prove to be so unsuccessful. He hastened to Vienna to urge upon Prince Schwarzenberg his opinion that although the Congress might not accept the decisions of the committees as laws, yet it ought at least to stamp them with its approval, that they might then be laid before the German Governments to be followed at their option. Inasmuch as this would inevitably have brought up again all the contested points between Austria and Prussia, the only result of Beust's plan would have been the breaking up of the Congress in an open quarrel.

Schwarzenberg agreed with Beust's desire not to let the Congress close with such a purely negative result, and therefore sent to Berlin the suggestion to appoint

the last session for the 15th of May, and before this time to draw up six reform decrees of unquestioned merit and desirability. But since he included with great assurance in his enumeration of the same the proposition of the third committee to prepare an extensive tariff league, Prussia sent back forthwith her rejection of the whole suggestion.

Upon this Schwarzenberg was again beside himself. "The Congress," said he to the Prussian agent, "*must* not be allowed to be so wholly unsuccessful. Whether little or much, *something* must be accomplished. I shall persist in bringing forward my six points."

On the 2d of May, Count Buol made the motion in the Congress to invite the Governments to express their opinions on the propositions of the committees, and for this purpose to appoint a session to be held upon May 15th. Since this did not involve a vote nor a decree, no objection could be made to it. Yet if Prince Schwarzenberg based upon this any hopes of attaining a result agreeable to his wishes, he was doomed to be thoroughly disappointed.

On the forenoon of the 15th, every member of the august assembly was present. Austria began with a prolix and eulogistic criticism of the work of the committees, and at the close made the above-mentioned motion to accept the six points offered. Prussia replied to every question with a short and very concise explanation, at the same time proposing that the decisions of the committees be referred to the Confederate Diet. Then other states followed with various

opinions, in some cases very diffusely expressed. The result was, that upon no single point was any agreement reached that could serve to direct future transactions.

In the afternoon the formal closing session took place. To Prince Schwarzenberg fell the duty, this time a rather melancholy one, of making in his address as presiding deputy the usual complimentary remarks about the assembly and its aims. The climax of his speech consisted in the phrase, which has so long remained fixed in the nation's memory, that although the Congress had created no new Constitution, it had provided without doubt much "valuable material" for further negotiations.

He could derive a little consolation from the fact that on the following day, the 16th of May, the secret treaty of alliance with Prussia was signed in Dresden, and thus Austria's supremacy in Italy insured for three years by Prussia's military support. But the alluring hope of a final mediatization of Prussia was gone forever.

Thus Austria's system of an "entire Germany" proved to be quite as abortive as the Imperial Constitution of the Cathedral of St. Paul, the League of the Three Kingdoms, and the Prussian Union! The productions of the revolutionary movement had been thrust aside by both Great Powers; but Prussia and Austria had opposed to each other the weight of their influence, and neither had been able to overpower the other. There was nothing left but the old Confederate

Diet, which in May began again its operations, recognized on all sides.

Whoever passed a judgment only according to outward appearances, might well believe that after all the enthusiasm and hopes, after all the ardent discussions and the bloody encounters, Germany had arrived at exactly the same point where she had stood on the 1st of February, 1848.

No one looked upon this result with more satisfaction than old Prince Metternich. In a memorial dated Nov. 10th, 1855, he said: "All endeavors which party-spirit during the years 1848 and 1849, and until the present day, has brought to bear against the principles of the Confederation in its lawful shape, have proved themselves to be empty strivings, directly contrary to the nature of things. The questions which the Austrian Cabinet discussed in the year 1813 were then and will always be the only possible legitimate ones; and these are capable of no other practical solution than that which they have found in the Act of Confederation."¹

¹ *Historische Zeitschrift*, 58, p. 384.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEW CONFEDERATE DIET.

IN one particular the revived Confederate Diet strove to appear unquestionably the continuation of the old one; namely, in its suppression of the liberal and democratic tendencies of the times. These had developed in the year 1848 a power hitherto unheard of in Germany; and now the corresponding reactionary spirit of the Confederate Diet left its prototype at Carlsbad far behind. In this common cause individualistic tendencies seemed to have been suddenly eradicated. The Governments of the single states with but few exceptions vied in conforming to the conservative decrees of the Diet, or in prompting such decrees themselves. The German Central Authority had never before been allowed to influence so largely the internal affairs of the individual states as now, when — to use the words of Frederick William IV. — its task was to wipe away from the German Constitutions the foulness which had come upon them in that year of shame.

Some things of that nature had already been accomplished when the Confederate Diet assembled with its former full number in May, 1851. In Mecklenburg-Schwerin, in spite of all opposition from the Grand Ducal Government, the old power of the nobility was

restored by the decision of a tribunal of arbitration. Saxony had in May, 1850, when in her Chambers one-half of the members urged the plan of joining the Prussian Union, and the other half pressed the recognition of the Frankfort imperial Constitution, dissolved the Chambers, declared the laws of 1848 to be invalid, and renewed the Constitution of 1831.

Württemberg had followed this example, when her popular representatives refused to grant to the Government the money necessary for the preparations which had been decided upon in Bregenz for the carrying out of the chastisement of Hesse-Cassel: the representatives were sent home, and the Constitution of 1819 put into force again.

In both Saxony and Württemberg, the Ministers, after resolutely taking the reins again into their hands, maintained a vigorous administration, which also gave much attention to the fostering of material interests. The old nobility, once more reinstated in their rights, was thankful to them; and a great share of the citizens were glad to be rid of political agitation, so detrimental to commerce and to trade.

Similar tendencies made themselves felt everywhere. It would fill a large volume to tell of them in the German countries in detail. We must content ourselves with noticing their general direction. Everywhere we meet just the opposite of the Democratic tide of 1848.

Let us repeat briefly the most important aims of that former movement.

Wherever the attempt was not actually made to raise the banner of a republic, the aim was to reduce the monarch to the position of an executive of the sovereign will of the People or of the People's representatives, by limiting his power in legislation to that of a merely postponing veto, by giving to the Lower Chamber the unbounded right of refusing the taxes, by obliging all officers and functionaries to swear loyalty to the Constitution, and by committing important branches of the administration to the care of persons chosen to those offices.

These powerful bodies representing the People were then in their turn made dependent upon the People's sovereign will by being chosen for short terms by universal suffrage, by the granting of the unlimited right of forming societies and holding meetings, by unconditional freedom of the Press, and by the imposing of limits as narrow as possible upon the authority of the police.

According to the principles of equality, all peculiar rights due to rank were to be done away with, and the nobility, if not simply abolished, to be forced to give up their privileges enjoyed hitherto. The Church should yield obedience in outward legal matters to the laws of the democratic state, science and education should be freed from every ecclesiastical influence, and no one be forced to make a confession of his religious faith.

This system had nowhere probably reached the stage of being fully realized; but it had in numerous states so far penetrated the body politic, that the sudden

overthrow of the former strongholds of authority, the flood of new laws, often provisional and incomplete, and the sanctioned license of the masses, occasioned great confusion and uncertainty in all branches of the administration, together with unlawful proceedings and acts of violence of all kinds.

That in hundreds of these places something had to be done is as clear as that the first step in the line of remedy was necessarily the strengthening of magisterial authority. In the more comprehensive organizations, the task, and not a light one, was to discriminate between the legitimate demands of the times and the abnormal excrescences, to remove the latter, and to incorporate the former in fitting fashion into the monarchical system.

But the ancient and wise doctrine, that the best security, both for order and for liberty, is offered by a Constitution composed of the united elements of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, was either unknown to the party that was now forcing its way into the leadership of the Reaction, or it appeared to them ridiculous. "Politics," it was then said, "is nothing but a contest for power; and whoever strives for the power is a fool to grant his opponents any share in it. The Democrats have sought to reduce the monarch to a mere mouthpiece of the popular representation: we will either have no representatives of the people at all, or at most allow them only a consulting voice. The Democrats would emancipate officials from the orders of the King, and the people from obedience to the authori-

ties: we will put the people under the control of the police, and the police at the beck of the monarch. The Democrats have mixed up nobility and proletariat in one mass, and given over the Church to the destructive caprices of the clubs and a false science: we will give back to the nobles their local and political rights, and place the infatuated people again under the guardianship of the reinstated and strengthened Church."

Thus in that reactionary movement absolutistic, feudal, and clerical tendencies worked side by side in varying combinations and with varying effectiveness.

Austria took the lead and set a vigorous example. Since the Revolution had been here crushed out by tremendous military operations, and since the Prime Minister, Prince Schwarzenberg, recognized a governmental system as useful only so far as it obliged the people to render, as in a military system, unconditional obedience, the element of absolutism here outweighed by far all others. The March Constitution at Kremsier had been from the start a dead letter; although, to please the popular fancy, quite as lifeless constitutions for every crown-land had been on paper appended to it.

Without doubt the decisive argument was the fact, that, in view of the complicated state of affairs in Hungary, more difficulties seemed to stand in the way of the execution of the Constitution than of its abolition. Only the unassailed omnipotence of the Government seemed to be able to insure the unity or even the very existence of the Empire. Therefore it was deemed best to pay no further attention to the special peculiari-

ties of each province, nor to the so-called fundamental rights, nor to the establishment of an independent parliament.

The whole monarchy was to be divided into administrative districts, all organized alike, and a beurocracy to be instituted which should be an authority over the subjects and strictly under the control of the Imperial Government. In this way a thoroughly centralized system was to be called into life; and to secure its stability, wherever a "state of siege" was not actually announced, the military authorities were invested with extensive powers in order to insure this universal dominion.

But to a still greater degree the vast official machinery of the Catholic Church was made to serve the same purpose. The most alluring prospects were held out to the Roman Curia, Jesuits and Liguorians were called back into the empire, the whole department of education was placed under the supervision of the bishops, and all secular officials were instructed to sustain the censorship and moral precepts of the Church. Schwarzenberg believed that he now might say like the first Napoleon: "With my soldiers, police, and clergy, I can do in the country what I please."

The nobility, especially after the Hungarian magnates had again dared to express their minds, received only fragmentary crumbs from the benefits of this system. The peasants remained free from socage service; and to correspond with this, the nobles were assured the liberty of establishing entails. Their

estates were separated from the property of the community, and the prospect was held out to them of being allowed to have a consulting voice in the government. Larger political privileges were not granted to them.

Three messages from the Emperor himself on the 20th of August, and three more on the 31st of December, 1851, announced to the people of Austria the abolition of the Constitution, and the doctrines of absolute centralization. No voice was raised in opposition. The Diets were dissolved, the Press lay fast in fetters, any resistance would have been stifled on the spot and severely punished. Not until some time later did the sequel prove that unlimited authority is not always a source of strength.

After the Imperial Government had in August, 1851, determined upon this course of action, an urgent appeal was sent in September to Berlin, advising the employment of the same means in Prussia to eradicate completely the products of the Revolution, and above all things to put out of existence that Constitution of 1850.

Not officially in the Ministry, but yet among those personally about the King, such ideas had already taken definite form. In place of a Constitution drawn up and generally agreed upon according to the compact, a royal patent was proposed, and in place of the elections according to the number of heads (as it was termed), the historical system of Estates. The King would have the interests of the State to care for, and

the Estates the interests of the Estates. In short, no imitation of Napoleonic despotism, such as Prince Schwarzenberg aimed at, was intended, but rather a return to the system of the United Provincial Parliament of 1847.

Since all this coincided exactly with the inmost convictions of Frederick William, the temptation for the Monarch was very great; for any revolutionary resistance to the measures was at this time as much out of the question in Prussia as in Austria. On the other hand, there was in Prussia no present distress, no disquietude in the country, no great strife with the Chambers. There was no excuse nor occasion for a *coup d'état* beyond the personal opinion of certain influential men, that the Constitution of 1847 was better than that of 1850.

But at the proclamation of the latter, the King had solemnly thanked the Chambers for the improved revision of the Constitution, had told them that they had thus made it possible for him to establish a royal *régime* upon a constitutional basis, and had then declared with a solemn vow and oath his sanction of the same. Could it be dreamed of that only two years later he should retract these declarations as being evident mistakes, and upon that renounce the obligations of his oath?

The King wished to hear what one of his Liberal friends had to say about it, and had the question laid before Bunsen, his ambassador in London. As might have been expected, Bunsen sought earnestly to dis-

suade him from a *coup d'état*, which would begin with a violation of an oath, and which in its results would disturb the internal peace from its very foundation.

I have been assured by reliable authorities that the advocates of a *coup d'état* did not, however, upon that give up their plan. They declared that the "Liberal babbler" in London was not capable of judging in the matter. Their opinion was, that it was more virtuous to break a sinful oath than to keep it. They questioned whether, if King Herod had broken his solemn promise made to Herodias to give her the head of John the Baptist, it would have been a sin in the sight of God.

Against them indeed arose a Royalist of the purest water, a man who was at that time looked upon by every Liberal as an enemy of all freedom, the governor of the province of Pomerania, Baron von Senft-Pilsach. He wrote to the King in respectful and earnest words, urging His Majesty not to allow himself to be misled by any pious sophistry from the straight path of honor and fidelity; for the cool-blooded and strong-hearted people of North Germany would never get over nor forget a violation by a King of his royal oath.

The King made up his mind that this was the truth, and nothing more was said about a charter.

Meanwhile the Minister of the Interior, Herr von Westphalen, persuaded his colleagues very soon that the desired break with the Revolution might be easily and successfully accomplished by a little skill, even if the Constitution of 1850 were allowed to remain.

The necessary skill, he said, consisted in a perfectly harmless interpretation of certain articles of the Constitution and paragraphs of the laws.

An exceedingly useful doctrine was then adopted; namely, that a long list of those articles, especially those under the second section of the Constitution, which treated "of the rights of Prussians," involved general principles that could receive binding force only after special laws should be passed concerning the details of execution; so that until the passage of these latter, the old laws concerning these subjects would remain in force. According to this simple doctrine, the legal force was taken away from such phrases as equality before the law, abolition of the privileges of the Estates, religious freedom and the right to form new religious societies holding services of public worship, abrogation of proprietary police, and so forth.

I shall not take the trouble of following in detail this science of getting rid of a law by considering its interpretation as applied to certain particular branches of the administration; for our purposes it will be enough to mention the results arrived at by this process. In Prussia, the beaurocracy, the nobility, and the Church, shared about equally in the profits, as they did not in Austria.

Against the unlawful demands of a government official there was in fact no redress whatever possible further than to enter a complaint with the proper Minister. The right of the police to make regulations with threats of punishment knew no limits. The dis-

strict authorities, in virtue of their right to supervise matters, interfered with the independent government of the cities as they pleased, with, without, and contrary to, the laws. Inasmuch as the law concerning the liberty of the Press empowered the judge, in case of abuse of the same, to take away their license from booksellers and publishers in certain cases, therefore Herr von Westphalen argued that the law did not say that the withdrawal of their license should be confined to these cases, and accordingly he permitted the police to take away the license wherever it seemed to be desirable. So that what was brought about in Austria by an open *sic volo, sic jubeo*, namely, a great extension of the beaucroatic power, was achieved in Prussia by a hitherto unheard-of interpretation of the laws.

In the same way the feudal party made sure of its portion of the booty. The proprietors of large estates received again the police authority of which they had been deprived by the Constitution. The old provincial Estates and the district assemblies, both inconsistent with the principles of the Constitution, were called into existence again, and, what was more than all, the Upper House, the members of which had hitherto been elected, was now, in accordance with a very doubtful interpretation of the law, turned into a House of Peers, in which counts and proprietors of manorial estates were in a decided majority, and thus possessed a sure bulwark against possible later attempts to legislate unfavorably to them.

As far as the Church was concerned, the Constitu-

tion was in this instance literally and to its fullest extent carried out. To the Catholic hierarchy was left the independent arrangement and administration of their own affairs without any of the former reservations about the rights of supervision held by the State. The education and the official position of the priests, the control of the property connected with the parish churches, the ecclesiastical means of enforcing morality among the laity — all this was henceforth wholly in the hands and at the will of the bishops. Religious houses of all orders, more especially of the Jesuits, filled the land, and gained a mighty influence among all classes.

In both Catholic and Protestant districts, the local supervision of the common schools was once for all intrusted to the priest or pastor of the parish. In a word, the Crown showed itself still more unselfish in this department, and more ready to yield in limitations of its power to the Church than to the nobility. In the Protestant Church, to be sure, there was no hierarchy that could assert itself after the fashion of the Catholic system, except in the supervision of the schools. Yet among the Protestants the prevailing sentiment made itself felt in many ways. The independence of the Church in respect to the State was seen when a clergyman refused to obey the laws of the land upon the ground of some biblical command — for instance, in the question of marrying a divorced man to another wife — and then was defended in his position by the civil authorities.

Further, the care of the State for the maintenance of the established Church was evident from the marked pressure brought to bear upon unbelievers and the indifferent. Societies of Dissenters were brauded as political clubs of the most dangerous sort, and every means of police oppression was employed to exterminate them. Every ambitious government official knew that his advancement depended upon his pious habits, devotion to the ordinances of the Church, frequent attendance upon divine service, interest in religious societies, and subscriptions to benevolent institutions.

The edifying effect of these regulations was very soon evident. The dominant party was so sure of success that no person regarded by it with disfavor could expect to be spared. This was carried so far that even the Heir-Apparent, who by no means belonged to that party, was in many instances obliged to experience slight but yet pointed incivilities, on account of his difference of opinion.

This then was the attitude and policy of the two Great Powers, and under these influences the new Confederate Diet assembled with the task of healing the State Constitutions which had been suffering since 1848 from Democratic poison. On the 8th of July, 1851, Austria and Prussia brought forward together a motion, which in the first place included several propositions about the maintenance of a body of troops to insure the protection of the Confederate assembly, and about the formation of a central police organization, and then referred to the right and duty of the Confedera-

tion, in accordance with Article II. of the Act of Confederation as well as with the decision of a committee of the Dresden Congress, to provide for the internal safety of Germany, and therefore not to suffer the political conditions of the individual Confederate states to militate against the aims, laws, and decrees of the Confederation, as unfortunately was too often the case in consequence of the enactment of the Frankfort "fundamental rights," the democratic electoral laws, the revolutionary inclinations of numerous public officials, and the license of the Press.

In such states, it was contended, the superficial appearance of good order was deceiving. From them proceeded the influences that unsettled the other states in their fundamental principles, scarcely yet fixed. It was true that in general the maintenance of internal peace and order was consigned by the laws of the Confederation to the individual Governments; but this was no rule to go by, when it was necessary in these individual states to exterminate institutions which were contrary to the laws of the Confederation, or threatened to thwart its essential aims.

Based upon these considerations the motion was made as follows: "The Confederate assembly shall by a special decree assert its fundamental right, in case of need, to demand from the Governments of those Confederate states whose condition seems dangerous to the common welfare, that they shall bring the ordinances of their Constitutions and of their laws, as well as their own personal attitude towards questions of public

order, into conformity with the fundamental laws of the Confederation and with the duty incumbent upon every member of the Confederation of not endangering the common safety.

“Furthermore, the assembly shall appoint a committee of its own, that shall as speedily as possible report upon the measures best adapted to the carrying out of these principles. If the demand made to the Governments be not voluntarily complied with, then those means shall be employed that are sanctioned by the laws of the Confederation, and first of all, commissioners of the Confederation shall be sent with appropriate powers into the respective states.” Appended to this was a second motion, with the reservation of the possibility of further enactments, forbidding, in the name of the Confederation, the printing of any communistic or republican publications.

It was a very comprehensive and radical cure that was planned for the healing of the states so disordered by the democratic epidemic: a regular corps of troops for the defence of the Confederation, Confederate police, Confederate ordinances against the vicious Press, Confederate measures against the odious State Constitutions. If this should all be realized, Germany would have a Central Authority over the individual states with a power greater than the Majority in the Cathedral of St. Paul had the remotest idea of vesting in their German Emperor: instead of being a definitely limited imperial government, it was to be an actually unlimited central Confederate police system.

The members of the committee to whom the motions had been referred for consideration (beside Austria and Prussia, including Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, Baden, and Darmstadt), weighed the subject with very mixed feelings; they were quite ready to suppress the Democracy, but yet were not without anxiety as to where the powers of the Confederation were to end, in view of such indefinite phraseology as "the common safety," "the monarchical principle," "the highest welfare of the Confederation."

Their report of the 16th of August reveals their hesitation and their doubts. They hoped that the Governments of the individual states would of their own accord take hold of the work. They considered it impossible that any Government should refuse to acquiesce in the demands of the Confederation; so that special measures of the Confederation would be necessary only in case other obstacles stood in the way of some Government.

They therefore urged the Governments to go on their own accord. They even rose to the hope that if all the Governments should show themselves united and energetic, the nation would then acknowledge that in this unity the power was to be found for the sake of which brave patriots had favored a Confederation having a single head. They remarked further very discreetly that it was more necessary just now to prevent any occasion for the interference of the Confederation in the internal affairs of the single members than to insure the right of so interfering.

Yet in spite of all their scruples, there was no thought of opposing this first motion of the two Great Powers, further than to modify some few expressions. It was recommended by the committee and accepted on the 23d of August; the commission proposed in the motion was straightway chosen: Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Darmstadt. So far as the Press was concerned, however, the prohibition of objectionable newspapers by the Confederate Diet as proposed by the Great Powers proved unpopular, and another committee was appointed to draw up a Confederate Press-law.

The Reaction-Commission, as the Representatives in the Confederate Diet were accustomed, themselves, with a smile, to call their creation of August 23d, very soon found their hands full. Beside Hesse-Cassel, whose hour of agony had long since begun, the Constitutions of Anhalt, Bremen, Hamburg, Frankfort, Hanover, Lippe, Saxe-Coburg, Liechtenstein, Hesse-Homburg, and Waldeck came gradually under the treatment of the Confederate Diet.

Here again it would be very wearisome for the reader of to-day to work his way through the numerous writings back and forth in these controversies, in which the primary object had been long since forgotten. In most cases, aristocratic corporations that had lost their standing during the years of the Revolution demanded and obtained restoration at the hands of the Confederation. What respect was manifested for Confederate and state laws, what practical judgment and

what party zeal were frequently manifested in the course of these restorations, we will at least illustrate by one example, which was remarkable in many respects: the chastisement of Hesse-Cassel.

We have already seen how, at the very outset, this punishment of the people of Hesse wanted all lawful foundation. The Government had continued to refuse to lay before the Estates, as the Constitution prescribed, the statement of the budget, and yet had four times imperiously demanded unusual grants. Actual reasons for this delay in the presentation of the budget were not to be discovered, and the Estates merely did their duty when they refused to grant further appropriations before a budget should be presented. Likewise, when Hassenpflug commanded the officers of the Finance Department, by a decree, to raise the taxes, they were quite right in refusing to obey an order against the express prohibition of the Constitution.

When Hassenpflug made his complaint about this to the Confederation, it was most certainly the business of the Confederate Diet in the first place to direct him to fulfil his own duty and present the statement of the budget. Instead of that, the Diet without delay confirmed Hassenpflug in his position that the conduct of the Estates meant a withholding of the revenues, that according to the Confederate law of 1832 this meant rebellion, and that in the case of rebellion the Confederate Diet, according to Articles XXVI. and LVII. of the Vienna Final Act, had the duty of lending aid, if the distressed Government in question should

not have the necessary force with which to protect itself.

Therefore, in order to restore order, the chastisement of Hesse was forthwith decreed in spite of the positive declaration in the Vienna Final Act that such measures should not be resorted to until all other constitutional means had been tried. Of such means to be employed in just such cases as this, there were many; namely, beside the Union Court of Arbitration, the court for deciding similar matters provided in the Hessian Constitution, and the Confederate Court of Arbitration appointed by the law of 1834.

But then the troubles would have been settled peaceably, the sending of Confederate troops to Cassel would not have been possible, and this fine opportunity for damaging the Prussian Union would have been lost! Accordingly, not a word was said about those courts of settlement. On the contrary, a Bavarian army corps, increased by some additional Austrians, marched into Hesse-Cassel under the direction of a civil commissioner of the Confederation, Count Rechberg, and a commissioner of the Hessian Government, Scheffer, a converted Democrat, who, as is usual in such cases, became a doubly zealous Absolutist.

During November, as we have seen, active operations could not extend farther than the districts of Hanau and Fulda on account of the Prussian intervention. Here the resistance of the Hessian officials and taxpayers was broken by that means invented by Louis XIV. in his persecution of the French Protes-

tants; namely, that of dragoonades, or, as the Germans called it, *Bequartierung* (quartering soldiers upon one), in contrast to the regular quartering of soldiers, or *Einquartierung*. Ten, twenty, or thirty men were placed in the house of a rebel, and he was obliged to entertain them. A broad hint was also given to the soldiers that they might make their presence as disagreeable to their host as they chose. Of course, the sure consequence of this must be nuisances of all sorts in the house: the rooms were soiled and besmeared, the inmates were not infrequently grossly ill-treated, and finally the man's property was ruined.

The attempt of the Prussian King, through Herren Niebuhr and Delbrück, to mediate between the Elector at Wilhelmsbad and the leader of the Opposition in Cassel, began favorably, but amounted to nothing after all. Then came the decision at Olmütz, in accordance with which Prussia left the continuance of the punishment of Hesse to the Vienna Court and its allies, and the further settlement of the affairs in Hesse-Cassel was to be accomplished by commissioners of both Courts and their allies in the name of all the German Governments. To this end Prussia appointed General von Peucker, and Austria appointed Count Leiningen. To the latter, the Confederate Diet at once committed the direction of the penal measures in the place of Rechberg.

Peucker received instructions, with a view to stopping as soon as possible the sufferings of the Hessian people, to continue the conciliatory efforts in Wilhelms-

bad as well as in Cassel; in the former place he was to propose the dismissal of Hassenpflug and the return of the Elector to Cassel, and in the latter place to urge the levying of the taxes voluntarily. The legal right of the matter was then to be determined at the Dresden Congress.

In Wilhelmsbad the General accomplished no more than Niebuhr. There could be no thought entertained of Hassenpflug's dismissal; and the Elector would not return to Cassel until the rebels should have been completely subdued, and various necessary measures proclaimed.

While the Bavarian troops, after having crossed the Prussian military road, were slowly approaching Cassel, Peucker hastened thither on the 17th of December, and pressingly urged upon the highest court of justice the actual necessity and the lawful propriety of submitting, especially after this had been demanded by all the German Governments upon the basis of the Olmütz Agreement, and after it had been intimated that the legal claims of both sides would be discussed in Dresden.

The judges were inclined to yield. Then came on the 19th a note from Leiningen, in which the disarming of the militia, the dissolution of the committee of the Estates, and the acknowledgment of the war establishment, were demanded, and a military punishment at the hands of the Bavarian troops threatened for any attempt at resistance. Thereupon the judges declared unanimously that it was impossible to submit

to these terms. The entrance of the Bavarians into Cassel and the overthrow of all the authorities was then most imminent.

Peucker's protest sent to Leiningen obtained only the reply that he, Leiningen, had no instructions as commissioner of Austria, and must, as commissioner of the Confederate Diet, carry out the latter's commands. Manteuffel shrugged his shoulders and said: "We gave up in Olmütz all right to have anything to say in the matter." The King was indignant. He neither wished to see Bavarian troops, contrary to the Agreement at Olmütz, in Cassel, nor to see them in the execution of Hesse's punishment playing a part in connection with the Hessian Constitution (as would happen by the dissolution of the committee of the Estates).

On the other hand, Prince Schwarzenberg positively refused to promise to let the legal merits of the question be decided at the Dresden Congress. "With rebels," he said, "one does not treat; one forces them to submit." On the 19th of December, meanwhile, the highest Court of Appeals had decided to yield to the order of September 4th (the raising of the taxes). The militia were also ready to give up their arms. Yet on the 22d a Bavarian brigade appeared in Cassel, and in the most oppressive way the *Bequartierung*, now clearly only an act of vengeance, began.

At last, on the 26th, Leiningen announced that he had received, as Austrian commissioner, his instructions to co-operate with Peucker; but this did not prevent

him from continuing at the same time his functions as commissioner of the Confederate Diet.

The city council of Cassel received directly from Hassenpflug orders to recognize distinctly their duty to levy taxes based upon the directions of the 4th of September. They replied that their functions had nothing at all to do with the levying of taxes. Then they were given notice, that, since they had once received the orders, they would be obliged to obey. They were then maltreated a whole week by excessive consignments of soldiers in their homes. The Electoral authorities further sent to Leiningen a list of one hundred and thirty names of persons who, it was said, on account of former misdoings, richly deserved such treatment. Leiningen then, in accordance with instructions from Frankfort, carried out the oppressive measures in several instances.

Meanwhile, he himself put an end to these disgraceful enormities on the 4th of January, 1851; and when, on the 7th, the city council presented the desired declaration of acquiescence, somewhat modified by Peucker, the submission under the order of the 4th of September was complete and the object of the chastisement attained. Nevertheless the question of the suspension of the committee of the Estates remained the same; and there followed on the 10th the establishment of Austrian and Bavarian councils of war, passing sentences in the case of any transgressions that Leiningen might refer to them. It was understood that they should also have the power to punish such misdemeanors as had

occurred before the beginning of the enforcement of penal measures by the Confederation. No proof is needed to show that this was as well a violation of the Hessian law of the land as an exaggeration of the rights and functions of the Confederation.

Yet it was generally believed that the submission of the Cassel city council was virtually the end of the disorders. What was there now to do?

The Austrian Minister resident in Cassel, Count Hartig, wrote on the 2d of January: "The further the chastisement of Hesse progresses, the more difficult does Leiningen's situation become. The instruments of the Government try at every opportunity to use these penal measures as an excuse and a means for venting their small spite upon individuals, and at the same time to lay the blame of every hateful step upon the higher authorities. . . . With the completion of her punishment, Hesse's affairs enter upon a new stage, which I consider a more serious one by far. Count Leiningen is already convinced that if, on the one hand, no government is possible with this Constitution, it is also true that with these conditions and elements at the head of affairs a government is equally impossible."

Now, although Hesse-Cassel had been ruled for nearly twenty years under the Constitution of 1831, Hartig's assertion, that with this no government was possible, had in the minds of Schwarzenberg and Manteuffel already won the credence of an Article of Faith. No less certainly did they believe that after the law of 1849 the elections to the Assembly of the

Estates had taken place upon the basis of universal suffrage. "All officials and functionaries," wrote Prince Schwarzenberg on the 7th of January, "took an interest in the preservation of an impracticable Democratic Constitution, while the hands of the Government were tied by a sovereign Assembly of Estates that had been instituted by general elections."

As a matter of fact, after the law of 1849, one-third of the Chambers were elected by the large landed proprietors, and the other two-thirds by electors possessing a certain amount of property. With such a knowledge of the facts, these high and mighty men decided the fate of a brave German race. In their blind theorizing they were preparing to give this race over into the power of a Prince whom their own representatives had just declared to be unfit to rule.

The two Ministers were, however, not yet quite ready to decide to overthrow entirely the Constitution of 1831. The King of Prussia, indeed, after the rebellion had been suppressed, demanded that a formal investigation of the matter should be held, in which both sides should be heard with regard to the cause of the rebellion and the legal basis of Hassenpflug's September ordinances. He accordingly instructed his Minister, to this end, to propose the revival of the Confederate Court of Arbitration of 1834. This might then also be further commissioned by the Confederate Diet to investigate the question as to how far the principles of the Hessian Constitution were in accord with the laws of the Confederation.

This was, in truth, the expression of a sentiment that the constitutional system which had become so precious to the hearts of the people ought not to be torn away with arbitrary wilfulness. It was the last pulse of sympathy with a country upon whom misfortune had burst with fury, because she had preferred to hold loyally to the Prussian Union rather than to the unlawful Confederate Diet. But the King stood quite alone in his pity. His proposition of referring the matter to the Confederate Court of Arbitration met, so far as I can discover, with neither favor nor opposition. It was quietly passed by and ignored.

Prince Schwarzenberg at this time built great hopes upon the Dresden Congress, which was not only to determine the general outlines of the German State Constitutions, but also to provide a strong Confederate executive to insure their being carried out. This executive would then also adjust the laws and the government of the state of Hesse-Cassel. Until such a fortunate time, however, it would be impossible to leave the Hessian Government without active support. It would therefore be necessary to deal for the time with one matter after another, to interfere in the name of the Confederation whenever it was necessary, and, through the agency of the two commissioners, to prevent a return of anarchy.

The Prince did not trouble himself about technicalities. He did not worry about a legal authorization of such a method of procedure on the part of the commissioners, however impossible it would have been to

find any basis for the same. It was enough that they had the power in their hands. The Elector must never be left defenceless at the mercy of people in their exasperation.¹ If there was no other way, Leiningen could resume his office of executor of the penal measures; for although they were virtually at an end, this had not been proclaimed officially.

Very soon an instance occurred where the principle had to be settled. The time set by the Constitution for the convening of the assembly of the Estates, March 2d, was at hand. Hassenpflug declared that there was no possibility of getting along with this democratic set of men; they would immediately irritate himself, his colleagues, and his subordinates, and would thus arouse anew a rebellious feeling throughout the whole land. The convening of the assembly must therefore be prevented. His second point of doctrine, however, was, that the electoral Government was bound by its oath to stand by the Constitution, and therefore could not forbid the assembly to meet. Nothing was left but for the Confederation to ward off this evil from the country. These words are enough to characterize the man. He had sworn to be governed by the Constitution and to preserve it. Therefore he had scruples about violating it; but he did not hesitate to prompt a third party to overthrow it.

¹ When Leiningen inaugurated the military tribunal, he referred among other things to the fact that no soul greeted the Elector on the streets. Peucker made the quotation: *Zur Liebe kann ich Dich nicht zwingen, Doch geb' ich Dir die Freiheit nicht.* (I cannot constrain you to love, yet I leave you no choice.)

Prince Schwarzenberg and Herr von Manteuffel had the same feelings. General Peucker was the only one who offered any opposition. He vigorously objected to the scheme, and reminded them that Hassenpflug himself had on the 4th of September given as the aim of his ordinance the preservation of the Constitution, and that the Confederate Diet had named the restoration of lawful order as the object of their penal measures; so that certainly neither could have meditated the overthrow of the Constitution. It was, however, all in vain. Leiningen received orders, if Peucker should not be willing to join him, to carry out the proposed measures alone, as commissioner of the Confederate Diet. Manteuffel sent instructions, on the other hand, to Peucker, in case this should happen, to remain perfectly quiet.

The prohibition of the assembling of the Estates opened the second Act in the violent proceedings. The penal measures already executed had been illegal enough; yet they had been wrapped, however flimsily, in certain casuistical terms. But henceforth there was to be no more ceremoniousness. It was believed that in Hesse-Cassel the Government and People were both alike dangerously diseased, and that only some higher power could restore them to health.

On the 21st of January, Manteuffel wrote: "It will be found impossible to restore by force the lost confidence between People and Government in Hesse-Cassel. If the Confederate troops should be withdrawn, the Government could not possibly preserve its authority,

especially since it would be hard for it to convince others that in its decisions the interests of the country outweighed every other consideration. If the previous penal measures can be said to have served the officials of the Government as a means of satisfying their own private passions, how will these officials behave when they are no longer subject to foreign control, nor need fear the censure of any lawful authorities at home? The Electorate cannot then be left to itself. The intervention of the Confederation is necessary, not only to crush out the opposition, but to establish a condition of things that shall insure the maintenance of morals and of the laws. It is not the preservation of the Hessian Constitution that is at stake, but protection against wilfulness and passion."

Such impartial considerations gave rise to the proposition to appoint in common with Austria two civil commissioners well informed in such matters, who should first execute suitable measures in the exceptional cases still pending, and then prepare the way for the settlement of the question as to how the unnatural state of things in the country might be remedied. This meant the proclamation of a new Constitution and of the constitutive power of the Confederation. On the 27th of January, Prince Schwarzenberg expressed his assent to this line of conduct.

Herr von Manteuffel, accordingly, on the 11th of February, in a draft which he intended to send to Vienna, developed in detail the points of view from which the commissioners were to act. Their chief task

was to be a revision of the Constitution; in place of election by "number of heads," there should be summoned genuine conservative representatives of the interests of the landed proprietors, the cities, and the peasants; the two-Chamber system was advocated, but more especially the settlement of fixed limits to the functions of the Chambers. Inasmuch as such a new arrangement could not be established for some weeks, an interregnum should be declared in which the country would be governed in common by representatives of the Confederation and of the electoral Government, until the new Constitution should afford the necessary security against arbitrariness and despotism. The commissioners must therefore sustain so far as possible the sovereign authority, and at the same time share directly in the government themselves, exerting in the name of the Confederation that control over the administration that according to the Constitution fell to the assembly of the Estates. It was proposed at the same time that the commissioners should receive their powers from all the German Governments that is to say, by decrees of the Congress at Dresden, where, according to the King's wishes, a Court of Arbitration might also be instituted to decide the matter finally.

Prince Schwarzenberg had misgivings about allowing the Dresden Congress to become entangled in the business; and personally, Herr von Manteuffel also had his fears concerning it. It seemed advisable, to be sure, to reserve the possibility of submitting the results of the commissioners' efforts to the new Confederate authori-

ties that should be appointed at the Congress ; but for the present, each commissioner had better receive his powers from his own Government in the name of the Confederation. Prince Schwarzenberg declared that Austria could have no better representative in this matter than Count Leiningen. As for Prussia, General Peucker was far too scrupulous about justice and law to be expected to execute such commissions. He received, accordingly, in March, his frequently solicited release from the thankless task. His successor, Herr Uhden, was an old acquaintance and patron of Hassenpflug, and had been Minister of Justice during the period before the "March days." He was a man that concealed under condescending urbanity a deep-seated fanaticism on the subject of feudal theories and practical absolutism.

When he arrived in Cassel on the 12th of March, he found the electoral Government filled with suspicion towards Prussia, and Hassenpflug angry over his trial in Griefswald. Uhden, in his first report, expressed the wish that that trial might be quashed ; but Manteuffel showed only little inclination to procure a non-suit. To start with, the commissioners, especially Uhden, to whom Leiningen gladly left such arduous labors, buried themselves in historical studies that bore upon the question of revising the Constitution, "in order to gain real data and to avoid the appearance of following abstract theories."

Counsellor of State Scheffer provided the scientific material for these investigations. By the middle of

April, Uhden had already drawn up an electoral law, to which Hassenpflug gave his hearty approval. He then mentioned the divisions in the corps of officers and the urgent necessity of relieving the officers from the constitutional oath. The commissioners readily agreed to this, and were about to give at once their assent to an ordinance from the Elector to this effect. But then Hassenpflug returned to his doctrine, that inasmuch as the Elector had sworn to sustain the Constitution, he could abrogate no one of its articles. Consequently he said that this must be authorized by the commissioners, and only be proclaimed by the Elector. Uhden thought, however, that such an arbitrary striking out of an Article of the Constitution exceeded his powers; Manteuffel, too, dreaded wearisome discussions on the subject in the Prussian Chamber, and came to an understanding with Schwarzenberg that the question should be referred to the Confederate Diet, whose authority was soon acknowledged on all sides.

When the full sessions of this distinguished assembly had begun to be held in Frankfort, Uhden announced on the 2d of June, that before the new Constitution could appear, the preservation of the peace demanded not only the ordinance concerning the officers' oath but also a whole list of arrangements with reference to the civil officials, the higher court of appeals, the district counsellors, the newspapers, and clubs. All these matters, he said, could not be regulated by the Elector, who was bound by his oath to the Constitution;

and consequently the intervention of the Confederation was indispensable.

Unfortunately Uhden was obliged to confess that he knew no legal excuse for such interference; but he said that the actual needs of the situation were imperative. Otherwise, uncertainty and insecurity would continue, loyal hearts would become discouraged, and the disaffected emboldened to further riotous actions. He did not advise that the Confederation should request the Elector to proclaim at once new laws; for in the present excited state of the country, unfortunate results might well be feared. The best plan would be for the Confederation to decree that the Government should work out a code of laws under the control of the commissioners. Manteuffel, having agreed with Schwarzenberg on this point, decided to make a motion in the Confederate Diet, the passage of which would prepare the way for further action.

This time, however, the evil-doers were not to succeed in concealing their guilt under foreign cover. The two deputies in the Confederate Diet, Count Thun and General von Rochow, were obliged to inform the commissioners that there was no chance for such a motion to win a majority. "It could succeed," wrote Rochow, "only on the express condition that a formal approval of the course of conduct hitherto pursued by the Great Powers in the Hessian affair be not demanded, and that the full powers granted by us be limited to a definite length of time. The two Powers agreed to these conditions; and on the 11th of June, 1851, a

decree was passed, by a majority of ten votes against seven, that the further conduct of affairs in Hesse-Cassel, and steps toward a definite settlement of the same, should be intrusted to Austria and Prussia, and that this power should be granted for the present for the term of six weeks; if the matter should not then be ripe for settlement, the Confederate assembly would expect a report, and reserved for itself the right of further decision.

The two Courts did not, however, have the remotest intention of being deflected from their course by this holding back on the part of the Confederate Diet. It had committed to them the conduct of the Hessian affair; this seemed to them to mean full powers to do even that which the majority of the Confederate Diet did not wish, and for which Uhden himself could not find that the Confederation had any authority. Unhindered, the commission went forward. The welfare of the Hessian country — so it stood in the decree of the 11th of June — was to be looked after and the common safety of Germany.

Uhden went to Berlin and laid before Manteuffel the outlines of several laws, which the Minister considered faultless, and which Schwarzenberg praised unreservedly. From the 26th of June on, then, and through the month of July, a storm of ordinances, issued by the commissioners and proclaimed by the Elector, poured over the wretched land, of which three took the form of definite laws: the abolition of the constitutional oath for officers; the limitation of the

responsibility of officials, in case of violation of the Constitution, to independent acts, thus inculcating unconditional obedience to the commands of their superiors; and finally a law which forbade as rebellion punishable by a court-martial any criticism by officials concerning the legality of the laws decreed by the commissioners of the Confederation.

There appeared further seven other ordinances, which were to be considered provisional until determined upon by the Estates. These were the limitation of the functions of the district counsellors, extension of the police control of the Government, a new organization of the whole system of the administration of justice, the abolition of the Estates' right of presentation in appointments to the highest tribunal, limitation of the right to summon legal help against misuse of the prerogatives of office by the officials of the administration, and finally an increase of the cost of a license to possess weapons.

This is not the place for a discussion of the actual worth of these laws. Even if one grants that certain of them promised material amelioration of the existing evils, the illegality of their promulgation cannot be gainsaid, since the Confederation itself had not the authority to make the laws; and neither had it given to the Great Powers and their commissioners full powers to institute such measures, nor would it have been able to do so. And even if it be possible to justify such means as might under the peculiar circumstances seem to be necessary for the preservation of

peace and order, the greater part of these ordinances had in their content not the least connection with such an aim, and the legal incompetence of the originators could not be covered even by the excuse of a constraining *salus publica*.

By the side of these acts Uhden and Leiningen went to work with redoubled zeal upon the development of the new Constitution, holding daily conversations upon the subject with Hassenpflug and Scheffer. It is enough for us to consider one or two prominent points. At the outset the "true" Estates were defined as "the nobility, the cities, and the peasants, whose representatives are such in virtue of the fact that they represent nothing further than the interests of their own class, and consequently belong naturally to that class themselves. From this follows the principle in general that in all classes the electors may choose for a representative only a man from their midst.

"The representation of the Estates falls into two divisions or Chambers. The first Chamber includes the princes and persons of princely rank, the vice-chancellor of the university, the Catholic bishop, three Protestant superintendents, and representatives of the religious institutions and of the nobility." — These, as facts afterwards proved, formed, by reason of the smallness of the country, a dignified and illustrious company of seldom more than fourteen persons. — "The second Chamber consists of sixteen members coming from among the remaining landed proprietors, and chosen by an election in which all those eligible

shared; sixteen representatives of the small farmers and peasants, chosen by the chief officials of the villages and their compeers in the electoral district; and finally sixteen deputies from the cities, chosen by the burgo-masters, city fathers, and presidents of the guilds."

To the objection that this would as good as exclude the educated classes from the representation of the cities, Uhden replied: The element of intelligence would be represented in the Chamber by the commissioners of the Government; intelligence was a characteristic of no one class, and consequently was not adapted to being honored by a special representation. Without any such scientific explanations and euphemisms, Manteuffel had also intimated on the 11th of February that barristers, notaries, physicians, and all such peace-disturbers, ought to be kept out of the Chamber.

Quite in keeping with such views were the actual rights that were allotted to the "true" Estates. Without their consent no laws could be passed that concerned personal rights and property or the administration of justice, no taxes could be imposed or existing ones increased, and no loan be made. They received, furthermore, the right of making petitions, of giving advice, of entering complaints, and of demanding explanations: whether the Government was to be obliged to make the explanations was not stated. Every three years an outline of the administration of the finances should be laid before the Estates, not that they should decide upon anything, or oversee the public

expenses, but only that they might know about them. By these regulations the Government was allowed free course in spending the public revenues: the chief aim of Hassenpflug's overthrow of the Constitution, next to the abolition of the Union, was attained.

Justice forces us, however, to acknowledge that the commissioners in their work did not *quite* exclusively have the interests of the Elector at heart, but did *actually* now and then oppose some questionable demands of Hassenpflug. Thus, the Minister complained that they would not grant him absolute power to remove and pension all officials; that they rejected his opinion, that, in case the two Chambers did not agree in their decisions, it fell to the Government to give to one side of the question by its approval the force of law; that they crossed out from the order of business for the Chamber of the Estates the clause to the effect, that, after the pertinence of a bill as a whole had been admitted, amendments proposed by the Estates to the separate Articles should have the value only of petitions, which the Government might or might not grant as it saw fit. Such a degradation of the true Estates was a little too much even for Herr Uhden.

On the 22d of July, Hassenpflug announced to the Confederate Diet that by continuing the strict police regulations, the Government could now guarantee internal order without the assistance of foreign troops. Both commissioners thereupon closed their labors on Hessian soil and repaired to Frankfort, where Uhden

wrote out their main report to the Confederate Diet, as well as a long list of memorials about the provisional laws and about the new Constitution, all together covering more than one hundred pages of the printed minutes of the Confederate Diet, so that it was not until the beginning of October that the prolific author could lay his productions before his Government. But new points of disagreement sprang up between the commissioners and the electoral Government.

Hassenpflug proposed to the Great Powers that the Confederate Diet should expressly approve the new Constitution, guarantee its enforcement, and direct the electoral Government to introduce it without delay, and this because, without such a command from the highest authority, the Elector, on account of his oath to support the old Constitution, would be hindered from having anything to do with the new one. On the other hand, the commissioners proposed that the Confederation should give the draft of the Constitution its approval provisionally, and should reserve a definite decision about it until the opinion of the assembly of Estates, which was to be summoned on the basis of the new Constitution, should have been heard on the subject. The Constitution must, however, although provisionally, be introduced at once with full binding force. Manteuffel agreed with this sentiment that the "true" Estates must be given the opportunity to express themselves in the matter.

Prince Schwarzenberg entertained the contrary opinion. "The Government of Hesse-Cassel," he

wrote on the 1st of December, "declares that its old constitutional oath prevents it from introducing a new Constitution without an express command from the Confederation. But to such an extent as that the Confederation has never yet interfered with the internal government of a country. On the other hand, there is no doubt but that the Constitution of 1831 contains many regulations that are inconsistent with Confederate rights; and therefore it is the privilege and function of the Confederation to nullify that Constitution.¹ Then the way will be open for the Government to introduce a new Constitution, not only provisionally but definitely, which is in every respect to be preferred."

Manteuffel finally did not have much of anything to say against this view of the subject, but requested the Prussian deputy to the Confederate Diet to report to him what Hesse-Cassel's attitude was in the quarrel that had broken out between Prussia and Austria about the Tariff-Union. When the report proved to be entirely unfavorable to Prussia, he instructed the deputy to insist upon only a provisional introduction of the new Constitution.

At last a compromise was effected between the different views of the subject, and the Great Powers introduced the following motion on the 3d of January, 1852: The Confederate Diet shall nullify the Constitution of 1831, approve the new constitutional draft as a whole, and express to the electoral Government the

¹ More truly, to expunge such objectionable Articles.

expectation that by the immediate proclamation of this Constitution a certain termination of the Hessian difficulties may be hastened, and further, that the definite assent to this Constitution by the Confederation and the formal guaranty of its execution shall be deferred to a later vote after the opinion of the assembly of Estates with regard to the matter shall have been heard.

This motion was referred to a committee consisting of Würtemberg, Darmstadt, and Mecklenberg; the deputy from the last named, Von Oertzen, being the chairman.

The report was made on the 6th of March. It was again evident, as on the 11th of June, that the ruling influence of the Great Powers in the assembly had, after all, its limits. The committee was ready to approve of the propositions of the two Powers, as far as the present was concerned, but wished to leave the question open in respect to the future. The abolition of the Constitution of 1831 seemed to the committee feasible on account of the numerous clauses contained in it that were contradictory to the principles of the Confederation, and easily possible according to Art. II. of the Act of Confederation and Art. I. of the Vienna Final Act, touching the maintenance of internal security. This naturally involved the introduction of the new revised Constitution provisionally with full validity. At the same time the committee asserted the necessity of submitting this constitution to the criticism of the assembly of the Estates; and this must not be merely

an expression of opinion, but the assembly must be requested to vote upon it. Of course nothing could be more satisfactory than for the Government and the Estates to agree on the subject; but if this hope should prove vain, then it should be the duty of the Confederate Diet to settle the remaining differences.

Accordingly the committee moved, —

1. The approval of the ordinances instituted by the commissioners.

2. The nullification of the Constitution of 1831, together with the supplementary laws of 1848 and 1849.

3. That the electoral Government be requested, after consideration of this committee's report, to proclaim as law the Constitution decided upon by the commissioners in common with the Government; to lay the same before the assembly of Estates to be summoned in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution; and to report the result to the Confederation.

4. That the Confederate Diet express its approval of the draft only as a whole, and reserve any criticism of the separate provisions.

5. That the Confederate Diet await a report affirming the pacification of the country and the disappearance of all signs of a state of war.

6. That the Confederate Diet reserve for itself the right to decide, after the receipt of the above-mentioned report, upon further measures for the definite settlement of the matters connected with the Constitution of Hesse-Cassel.

The motion corresponded with the original senti-

ments of Manteuffel and the commissioners. Schwarzberg was the more willing to agree to it, since Luxemburg, Oldenburg, Waldeck, Schwarzburg, Weimar, and the Saxon Duchies, together with the free cities, would have nothing to do with the whole business, and also some other voices were raised against certain clauses of the motion.

On the 27th of March the motion was accepted by a Majority of ten votes ; and on the 13th of April, 1852, the proclamation of the new Constitution took place at Cassel. The summoning of the "true," or, as it was worded in the Address from the Throne, the "actual," Estates followed on the 16th of July.

Everybody believed that, after the horrors of the penal measures, and in view of the continued severe police regulations, as well as of the laws instituted by the commissioners, it would be very easy for Hassenpflug to secure amenable Chambers and therewith to gain for the Elector and himself, for an indefinite period, unhampered control of the public revenues and absolute power in the administration of the government.

Even though everything had not been attained that the two Great Powers had longed for, yet the Confederate control over the individual states, directed by those Powers and made effective wherever extermination of liberal ideas and institutions was in order, had risen to such a height as Metternich had not undertaken to scale either in 1819 or in 1834. With those two formulas of "the Welfare of the Country" and "the

Public Safety," the Confederate power under the guidance of Schwarzenberg and Manteuffel cleared all the barriers of legal rights as easily as did in 1793 in Paris with the same phrases the *Comité de Salut Public* and the *Comité de Sûreté Générale*. That form of German Unity which had been kept along through thirty years by Metternich's sagacity and Prussia's compliance, the duumvirate of Austria and Prussia, had now taken on an unheard-of strength in contrast with the independence of the individual states.

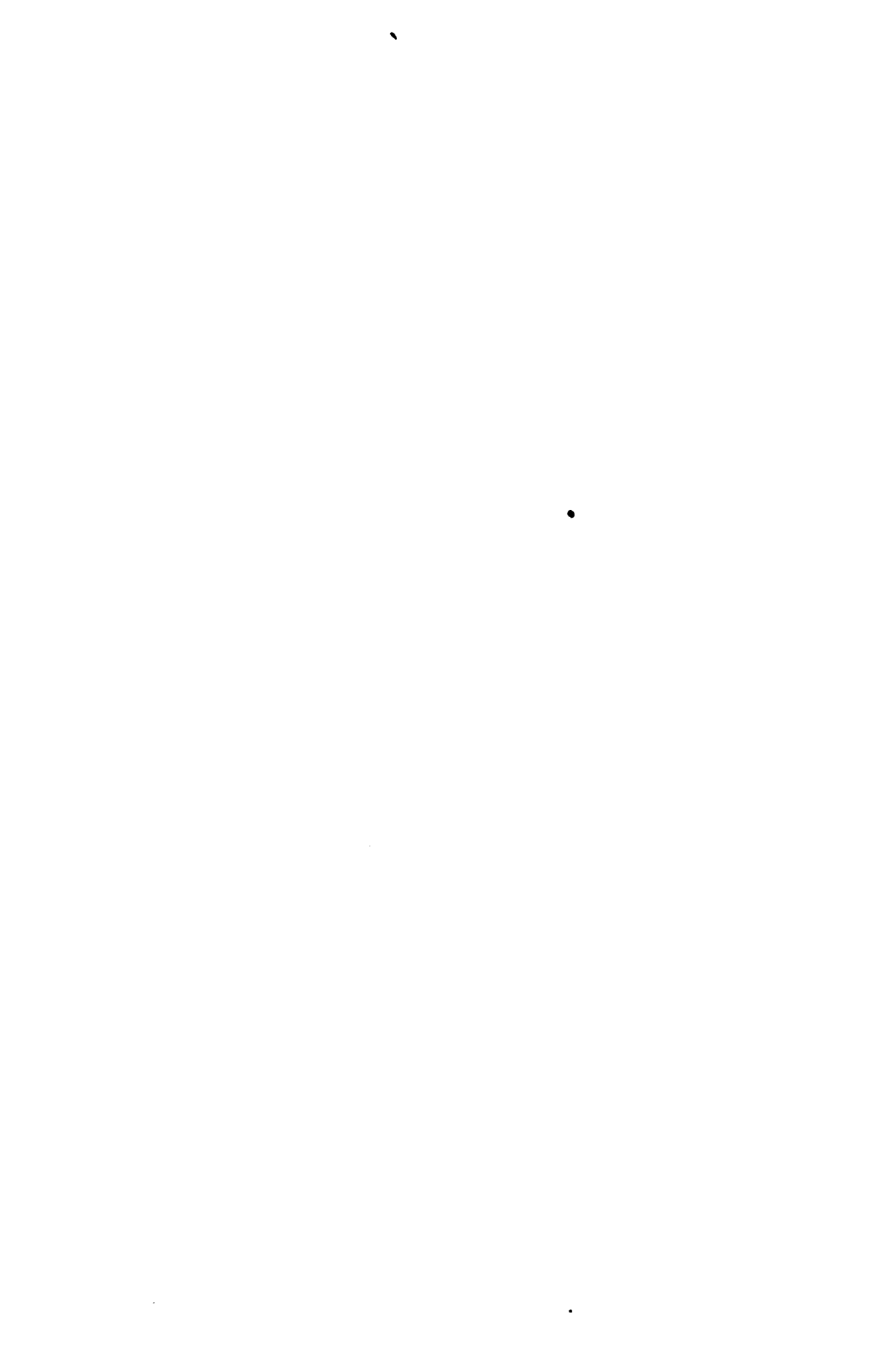
But it was all an empty illusion. So far as the effect of the new system was concerned, it fared the same with this Central Authority as with its predecessors of 1819 and 1832: in spite of its being so prolific along the line of political police institutions, it was sadly barren in all other departments. Thus its energy aroused among the people on the one side bitter hatred, and its impotence on the other renewed contempt. In spite of all the patronage bestowed upon it by princes and the nobility, as was the fashion then at Frankfort, the Governments of the individual states regarded the dictatorial conduct of the Central Authority more with mistrust than with gratitude. The result was the same as after the passage of the Carlsbad Decrees,—a universal strengthening of individualistic tendencies. Rather no central authority than one so arbitrary and so impotent!

Still another circumstance was a very decisive factor. The basis of the system, the hearty concord between the two Great Powers, which even at the time of

Metternich was in important subjects very problematical, became dead at the roots as a result of the events of 1848 and 1849. However joyously the two Courts marched hand in hand in their war against Liberalism, the far-reaching difference of their relations to the interests of Germany as a whole, although concealed for thirty years as successfully as possible, appeared after the March Revolution in its true light, and could not be again banished from view. It forced with iron resistlessness, the leading statesmen of both sides, strive against it as they might, into a continued struggle over the great party-questions of 1849.

BOOK VI.

*GERMANY AT THE TIME OF THE
CRIMEAN WAR.*



CHAPTER I.

DUALISM IN THE CONFEDERATION.

THE newly-born Confederate Diet, even after all the states had joined it, retained the stamp of its origin ; it continued to be, as ever, a weapon of war in the hands of Austria and the Lesser States against Prussia. After the German Parliament had been given up, the whole question of the future German Constitution was reduced to the simple one of supremacy between the two Great Powers in the Confederation. This played its *rôle* directly or indirectly in almost every discussion of the Confederate Diet, in spite of the secret alliance, in spite of the common war against Liberalism, in spite of the instructions sent to the new Prussian deputy, Herr von Rochow, and his earnest efforts to go hand in hand with Austria.

For, as the Emperor Francis Joseph once wrote to the Prussian King: Circumstances are stronger than men. As circumstances had been for more than half a century, the two Powers were natural allies in European questions, but on German soil their vital interests were necessarily different, and consequently in the most important matters a conflict was inevitable. In these disputes Austria's prospects seemed to be decidedly favorable, as she was always sure of an unhesi-

tating majority in the Confederate Diet. From the ranks of the Petty States that were once united in the Prussian Union, both Hesse and Nassau had fallen out, and had joined the Austrian camp. There was then no need of a very large following to secure a majority among seventeen votes; nor was this following small. Since the Olmütz Agreement, Austria's favor had been considered more desirable and her ill-will more dangerous than Prussia's. Many noble families had their sons enter the imperial service, and used their influence at home on the side of Austria. Without question, the Court of Vienna in the line of personal suasion was much more active and clever than the Court of Berlin. Then, again, Austria's presidency counted for a great deal in her favor. In short, the imperial will was the predominant influence in the Confederate Diet.

Prince Schwarzenberg was surely not the man to leave unapplied such a source of power. He was very willing to acquiesce in the agreement with Berlin so ardently sought after in Rochow's instructions, on the condition that Prussia would comply as readily with Vienna's views as Ancillon had formerly yielded to the opinions of Prince Metternich. But if Manteuffel should venture to have any will of his own, then Schwarzenberg believed that in the Confederate Diet itself he had the best means of breaking that will and of keeping Prussia down by the passing of majority-votes. The simple result of this would be an attempt to extend gradually the authority of the Confederate

Diet, and in this way to limit the scope of Prussia's independent influence.

A few weeks after all the deputies had taken their seats in the Confederate Diet, Schwarzenberg took the first important step towards this result, by securing, on the 10th of July, 1851, the appointment of a committee to discuss and elaborate the material brought forward in Dresden on the subject of a tariff-union between Austria and the other German states. This meant, as we know, Austria's determination either entirely to break up the Prussian Tariff-Union, or to share with Prussia in the leadership of the same, or even to thrust Prussia out of it altogether. The Prince was in this, also, certain of the support of most of the Lesser States, to whom nothing seemed more desirable than to have two leaders instead of one in matters of trade and duties, as well as in all other Confederate interests. For they were sure of the protection of the one against arbitrary measures attempted by the other; and in quarrels between the two, they could play the fine part of the deciding judge.

These developments were watched from Berlin with calmness. Prussia had at Olmütz yielded to a very unfavorable conjunction of European conditions. She had suffered badly in her political reputation, but had escaped any material damage. She felt, therefore, driven back, but not overcome. For the time, she gave up any attempt to rise to any higher position in the Confederation than she had formerly enjoyed; but she by no means intended to allow herself to be set lower in it than she had been before 1848.

As far as her military power was concerned, she considered herself, to say the least, Austria's peer in financial possibilities, and in the internal harmony of the State far ahead of her rival; and if the Court of Vienna reckoned upon arousing against Prussia the mistrust of the Lesser States, Prussia believed that she herself had a much more reliable hold upon them by sharing with them the interests, both material and intellectual, of the whole German population outside of Austria. In commercial politics she was quietly busy with the inauguration of a thorough-going opposition policy. As deputy to the Confederate Diet, however, the King appointed in the place of Herr von Rochow, who returned to St. Petersburg, the former dike-grave, Herr Otto von Bismarck-Schönhausen. When the latter presented his credentials to the President of the Diet on the 29th of August, 1851, he took his first step in a career of world-wide reputation.

Bismarck was now in his thirty-sixth year, in the full bloom of his vigorous manhood. A tall and imposing figure, which towered by a whole head above the generality of the children of men, a face glowing with every sign of health, a glance lighted up with intelligence, in his mouth and chin the expression of an inflexible will—such he appeared to his contemporaries, enlivening every conversation with original thoughts, brilliant figures, and striking phrases, manifesting a charming affability in social life, and in business affairs a consummate superiority.

He had been for the most part self-taught. The

original freshness of his nature he had never been willing to repress by stereotyped courses of study at school nor to furbish by the constraint of superficial conventionalities. At the university he soon gave up attendance upon tedious lectures, and as a jolly *Corps-Bursche* enjoyed to the utmost the pleasures of "academical freedom." But in spite of his enthusiastic devotion to his *corps*, he did not allow this to be his chief end in life, as do so many, who afterwards sink aimless and spiritless into the ranks of the *Philisters*: on the contrary, no day passed that he did not spend some time in instructive and profound reading, which stimulated and trained his active, aspiring ideas.

As a boy even, he was fond of geography, which had not yet been developed into the modern conglomeration of fragments of all sciences, but confined itself especially to the distribution and outward conditions of the human race in different lands. Bismarck liked to tell how this thorough study of the map of Germany, with its bright variety of colors representing the territory of thirty-nine different countries, early awoke in him the feeling that such a map portrayed a very unnatural state of things. Yet, as if with a presentiment of his future sphere of activity, he devoted himself especially to historical studies. He was afterwards, in the light of his own broad experience, accustomed to say, that for every statesman a properly-directed course of study in history was the most important element in the foundation of his knowledge; by this alone could he learn what might be attainable in dealing with other nations;

and the highest lesson in the diplomatic art was to be able to recognize the limits of what might be attained.

His whole later life was a commentary upon this doctrine. From this principle he derived his boldness in setting as high as possible the objects of his efforts, and the prudence which never allowed him in the intoxication of victory to stray beyond these limits set to the attainable.

After leaving the university, Bismarck went through a short novitiate in the government-service; but he could not long endure the restraint of the bureau, and returned to his free life upon one of the country-seats belonging to the family, where he kept up his reputation of being unwearied in the chase, fearless in horsemanship, and invincible in the drinking-bout, but at the same time a skilful manager and careful administrator of the estate. With all the impetuous overflow of animal spirits, his inner life was being developed, as his letters show, both in ripeness of judgment and in self-reliance, upon the foundation of a deeply-serious piety.

Then came the years of political commotion, which drew him too into the current of public life. We have seen how, in the United Provincial Diet of 1847, he took a bold stand in defence of the King's purposes. In his very first speech he showed a remarkable command of language, a classical power in the art of expression, and an inexhaustible skill in pertinent repartee. It was characteristic of the bent of his mind, that even here in questions of internal politics his thoughts went

far out beyond the limits of Prussia and were busy with her relations to foreign States. He recognized the usefulness of the proposed Berlin-Königsberg railway, not so much from a mercantile and financial point of view as from military and political considerations. With the same aims in mind, he urged the assembly not to demand more privileges than the King had offered them, and thus cause a rupture with the Government, but rather by a constant accord with the King to show to the whole of Europe that they were a strong and united people. When, then, in the following year the waves of the Revolution broke over Prussia and a wild spirit of anarchy took possession of Berlin, his blood boiled with loyalty to his King, and he became one of the most valiant members of the *Kreuzzeitung* party.

His personal relations with the King now became gradually more intimate. The King had already, in 1847, noted with pleasure Bismarck's discourses in the United Provincial Diet upon the Christian State and the King's tenure of office by the Grace of God. I am not able to decide whether the King felt any sympathetic bond between himself and this man of genius so utterly different from him in natural disposition; but certain it is, that Frederick William, whose *forte* was by no means a correct knowledge of human nature, did perceive the remarkable qualities so prominent in Bismarck's character, and resolved to train him himself to some high position of usefulness to the State. "He considered me an egg," said Bismarck later, "from

which he expected to hatch a minister." He surprised him, then, by sending him to Frankfort, as it were to a school of diplomacy, where indeed all the lines of German politics met in a focus.

With precisely the same sentiment that the King entertained, one often hears people speak of Bismarck's years of apprenticeship at Frankfort. One might as well talk of a young fish going to a swimming-school! To be sure, he who had formerly had no experience in the diplomatic service, now entered a new world, and had a great deal to learn about people and things. But after he had within the first few weeks taken his bearings in this new field, he evinced in his very first political moves his skill as a master-workman. He was a statesman by birth. Nature had generously endowed him with all the necessary attributes of a great leader. He possessed the power of grasping quickly and exactly the relations of things, of exactly perceiving the strong and weak points of every position, and of gauging with penetrating discernment the possible usefulness of the most different sorts of men for the furtherance of his aims.

To a most resolute and unswerving determination in the pursuit of his ends, he joined an elasticity of mind in changing his methods to suit the occasion, that never played him false. Without ever having subjected himself to a systematic course of instruction, he had that faculty which Thucydides praised in Themistocles, the power of discovering almost immediately the wanting term by the intuition of his own nature.

All these traits appear quite as marked in his Frankfurt correspondence as in his later spheres of action in higher offices. One marvels everywhere at the circumspection with which he considers a question from all points of view, his courage in presenting the merits of the cause, his inexhaustible fund of unexpected strategic movements to rout and confuse his adversary, and at the same time the ever-constant pulse of an energy always tempered and controlled by reason. He was not yet in a ruling position, but was obliged to obey the orders of his superiors in office; yet his reports were always so thoroughly based upon actual facts, and so irresistibly forcible in their logic, that the Minister only very seldom saw the possibility of a different conclusion. Herr von Manteuffel very likely often grumbled with incipient jealousy: "That young *Schönhäuser* seems to be rather sure of what he is about,"—yet wrote "all right" at the end of the report.

In the early maturity of his talents and in his control over those above him in office, Bismarck reminds one forcibly of General Bonaparte's course of action in 1796. But by the side of this point of resemblance there appears in every other point only the greatest possible difference between the characters of the two men. In place of the tremendous selfishness which overwhelmed every other sentiment in the heart of the Corsican *Imperator*, the Prussian statesman showed a patriotic devotion to his country, an unreserved recognition of his duty toward his King and toward his Fatherland.

His soul was inspired with the mission of raising Prussia to a position of power and prosperity: his every act was made subservient to this single and ruling task. However zealous an adherent of his party he had been formerly, he was now, in the fullest sense of the word, a servant of the State. Before his duty to the State every other consideration must retreat to the background. Questions of the greatest importance, such as free-trade or protection, feudal or democratic institutions, religious liberty or a hierarchy, questions which thousands of men regard as involving the most vital interests of their existence, were for him nothing, except so far as they offered an occasion for Prussia's aggrandizement; so that his adversaries not unfrequently upbraided him with being the most unprincipled time-server of any age.

As Frederick the Great, who devoted a long life to the service of the interests of the State, was in his inmost heart convinced that the State was only a means for the preservation and cultivation of the ideal blessings of Beauty, Truth, Art, and Science: so Bismarck held precisely the inverse doctrine, showing himself here also a utilitarian; and however much he did indeed appreciate those blessings, the first and last question with him was, How far can this art or that science serve the interests of Prussia as a state?

Although, perhaps, not appropriately referred to in this connection, it may be mentioned here, that although he was farther removed than any other man from religious indifference, yet he warned his former party

associates repeatedly against the prevalent doctrine of uniting Church and State. "You do not" — these were his words — "in this way preach the people into the church, but out of the church; and you injure the State by disgusting the people with their religion."

To the enemies of Prussia in the Confederate Diet it was naturally very uncomfortable to have such a man in their way, a man that could handle all the weapons of polemics as an expert, and who left no boast of his adversary uncriticised, nor any weak spot unnoticed. He soon won the reputation of being an exceedingly dangerous opponent in the lists. Precise diplomatists, and not only those in Frankfort, censured him for being too off-hand, or wondered at his assuming already with the coolest mien the airs of a future prime-minister. At first, indeed, he was in every case cordial towards his colleagues in the Confederate Diet, and determined to preserve a good feeling between himself and them. For he had not come to Frankfort to oppose Austria on principle; on the contrary, he had always hitherto acted upon the conviction that it was necessary for Prussia and Austria to hold closely together, and this had been the basis of his assumptions his whole life long.

Accordingly, he endeavored in the Confederate Diet to smooth over every incipient difference of opinion by manifesting especial cordiality towards the Presiding Deputy, Count Thun, in order to avoid presenting to the smaller states the spectacle of a dissension between the two Great Powers. But only too soon was he

forced to acknowledge to himself that the necessary foundation for such endeavors, namely, the reciprocation of this feeling, was entirely wanting, and that it was foolish to expect Austria to recognize Prussia as her equal, or to hope that, considering their respective relation to German questions, she would ever do so. After having weighed this well, his future course of action was once for all decided. He would resist to the last point, ay, even further, to the rupture of the Confederation, before he would allow Prussia's honor or her just rights to suffer. Within the first few weeks the opportunity came for him to take this stand.

Prussia wished to be able to assert her legal right to be regarded as an independent European Power by again withdrawing East and West Prussia from the territory of the Confederation. For Austria, who was anxious to have all her lands included in the Confederation, this request from Prussia was untimely, and hence from many sides exceptions and misgivings arose. The emphasis with which Bismarck repelled this is seen from his appeal to Manteuffel for permission to make the declaration, that if the gentlemen persisted in their objections, Prussia would carry out the measure independently of them. It did not, however, come to this; for the threatening attitude of Bismarck induced the majority finally to pass the vote.

Another question, in the treatment of which the majority of the Confederate deputies showed their anti-Prussian sentiments, concerned the publication of

the minutes of the sessions.¹ Upon the motion of Austria a special committee was appointed to select from the matters discussed in the assembly those that might suitably be made public, and, weighing their respective importance, to prepare them for publication. Herr von Bismarck, who had voted against the motion and then had not been chosen as a member of the committee, scanned the selection made in the very first publication, and found his suspicions confirmed with regard to the choice made and the exactness of the report. It had evidently been a move made to secure a one-sided organ of the Austrian party to work in their interests against Prussia. He opposed this project on the spot, not only openly in the newspapers, but also by a bold challenge in the Diet itself, thus preventing, to the painful astonishment of his adversaries, a repetition of this unsuccessful attempt.

Even more disgraceful and in every way melancholy was the quarrel over the German fleet on the North Sea, which had been created in 1848. This matter monopolized for many long months the attention of the Diet; and from a stubborn haggling over an insignificant sum of money, it developed gradually into a strife over the fundamental questions of the whole Confederate Constitution.

The German fleet had originally been built for the German Imperial Government, which it was expected

¹ In the following I have taken the liberty of reproducing a few pages from the introduction (edited largely by myself) to the publication of archives entitled : *Preussen im Bundestage*.

would be born in the immediate future. With this in view, Prussia had readily paid her contribution, which had covered the greatest part of the cost of the fleet, while Austria and a number of the inland states were either wholly or partly behind in their payments. Now, it was the opposition of these latter that had caused the projected Imperial Government to disappear in smoke; but the fleet still existed, and it was necessary to decide upon means of raising money for its support. We have already seen that at the Dresden Congress the inland states showed no great inclination to maintain a German navy; unanimity or a majority of three-fourths was demanded to pass any measure concerning it.

Prussia now proposed, that, for the support of the fleet, the contributions due in 1848, and still in arrears, should first be paid in and expended. But the states to whom this applied would not hear to it; and at their instigation the Confederate Diet by a majority-vote on the 7th of July, 1851, voted a new appropriation of 532,000 florins. Prussia objected to this on the ground that the fleet was not yet an organization sanctioned by the Confederate Diet, and that consequently, just as the South Germans had demanded at Dresden, unanimity would be necessary in any vote concerning its maintenance. The same thing occurred again, when towards the end of the year the majority decided to cover the deficit by negotiating a loan from the banking-house of the Rothschilds: this project determined upon in spite of her opposition, Prussia

declared to be unconstitutional and null. The Majority replied that no Confederate law required unanimity for such measures. Prussia in turn demanded proofs that according to Confederate law the Majority possessed such powers.

This put the quarrel upon a very dangerous basis. The Majority believed, that, in doubtful cases, the functions and powers of the Confederate Diet were to be decided by itself, that is, by its majority; for otherwise the smallest Confederate state might by its veto prevent the passage of most important measures. Prussia responded that according to that theory the constitutional sovereignty of the individual states would be left, by the extension of the powers of the Confederation, without defence in the power of an arbitrary majority. These two principles it was equally impossible to disprove. Brought thus side by side, they showed very strikingly the unnaturalness and the unreasonableness of the principles upon which the Confederate Constitution of 1815 had been founded.

Moreover, as usual, this difference in the legal stand-points concealed a no less radical difference in aims and demands. Prussia would gladly have made further contributions, if the new North Sea fleet had been joined with the Prussian navy in such a way that Prussia might be the common commander of them both. Among the Lesser States, the opinion prevailed that Austria should maintain the fleet on the Adriatic, Prussia the one on the Baltic, and the other states the one on the North Sea. Austria might perhaps have

avored some system by which the North Sea fleet should remain, as well as the Confederate army, under the control of the Confederate Diet, since this was virtually in the hands of Austria. So it happened that scarcely a year after the agreement at Olmütz, the old standards of an "entire" Germany, a Union, and a Triad, advocated respectively by Austria, Prussia, and the Lesser States, stood again opposed to each other with renewed vigor. The representatives of these systems did not yet come to any open rupture; but the fleet went to ruin under their quarrelling.

When the project of the Triad came to be voted upon, the result, as the chairman of the committee on the navy was obliged to confess, was undeniably most melancholy. For it was not enough that the votes varied so widely that almost every one followed a different direction,—at least in minor details,—but some protested beforehand against possible compromises.

No better fate awaited the attempt to establish a restricted association of states for the maintenance of the North Sea fleet. The difficulty here lay in the simple fact that the smaller coast states, however gladly Hanover would have accepted the position of Confederate admiral of the North Sea, were not able to assume this responsibility without Prussia, nor had they any inclination to do so with (*i.e., under*) Prussia. Thus the matter was already hopeless when the Confederation in February, 1852, decreed the dissolution of the fleet, in case the proposed association of states

should not be formed by April. When this time arrived, this had not been accomplished; and to the sorrow and disgrace of all Germany, the fleet fell into the hands of the auctioneer. The ships were publicly sold at auction by the Oldenburg Counsellor of State, Hannibal Fischer.

This was at about the time when the Confederate Diet was displaying its efficiency to the German nation by the proclamation of the new Hessian Constitution. Meanwhile a stubborn diplomatic struggle was arising over the great commercial question between Prussia on the one side and Austria with her associates on the other.

As is well known, the coast states of North Germany had not hitherto joined the great Tariff-Union, because the import-tax on colonial wares and wines seemed to them too high. Instead of this, Hanover, Oldenburg, and Brunswick had formed a special tariff-league among themselves in 1834. Brunswick let this drop in 1841, and tried to gain admission to the great Tariff-Union. Many efforts to induce Hanover to do the same were unsuccessful. The Court of Hanover felt that in joining the Tariff-Union the sovereign authority of the King would be too seriously compromised; and the financial privileges with which Hanover wished to be favored beyond the other members as an indemnification for such a sacrifice were so great, that Prussia continually declared them to be inadmissible.

Since 1848, however, the tables had gradually been turning in these relations.

The Hanover "March" Ministry of Count Bennigsen-

Stüve had brought about numerous changes, in keeping with the current of the times, in the Constitution that had been given to the country in 1840 by the King Ernest Augustus. The First Chamber, in which the deputies from the nobility of the separate provinces formed a decided majority, was opened to elected representatives of the landed proprietors of all ranks. In the department of finance, Ernest Augustus had re-established the old system of keeping the royal and the state treasuries distinct: the royal exchequer received the income from the domains and other revenues, and, after providing for the expenses of the Court and the establishment of members of the royal family, paid over the remainder into the state treasury to cover the expenses attending certain branches of the administration. The legislation of 1848 reversed this relation, by uniting the two exchequers, placed the administration of the domains as well as taxes in the hands of the Minister of Finance, and determined a civil-list for the King during his lifetime. Beside these and numerous other changes in the Constitution, a new organization of the judicial and administrative authorities was projected, and also a reformation of the provincial constitutions by lessening in them the preponderance of the nobility.

In the autumn of 1850, it is true, the Ministry of Bennigsen-Stüve was dismissed by the King, because, in spite of its individualistic resistance to Prussia, it would not share in the Hessian measures of the "Rump" Confederate Diet; yet the new Cabinet, under the

leadership of Baron von Münchhausen, kept up the policy of its predecessors in internal affairs, and began especially to put into effect the organizations planned by them. But these, like all good things on our earth, cost money; and the state treasury, as everywhere, had been exhausted by a variety of expenditures during the years of the Revolution. The Estates, indeed, showed everywhere a remarkable willingness to assist the Government; but in a state in which the agricultural resources had hitherto been so little developed, there was a limit to the possibilities of raising the taxes. So that before the end of the year 1850, the Government tried the expedient of augmenting its revenue by increasing the duties, but failed in this on account of the opposition of the Oldenburg provincial Estates.

After this the embarrassment was great; and when once the attention of the Government had been directed to the German Tariff-Union, inducements for joining it followed fast upon one another. Especially since the withdrawal of Brunswick the care of the frontiers had become very expensive and complicated. Connection with the German Tariff-Union would probably make the Hanover railways much more profitable; and many branches of industry which had been for some time enjoying an increasing prosperity, longed for free admission to the German market, and strong protection against English competition. The Prussian Government was fully aware of these symptoms, and in the beginning of 1851 made up its mind to take advantage of them in energetic fashion for its own interests.

This came about in the following way. Serious divisions had occurred in the Tariff-Union. Prussia inclined, not exactly to free-trade, but at least to a reduction of the tariff and other means of facilitating commerce; whereas, the South German States, for the sake of their large manufacturers, desired a thorough-going system of protection, and thus approached the commercial standpoint of Austria. If, then, Austria should now execute vigorously her plans for a tariff-union, Prussia would be in no small danger of suffering by reason of either a secession of the Southern States to Austria, or a complete overthrow of the Tariff-Union and interruption of free communication between the two halves of the monarchy. This last must at any rate be prevented, and at any price; and there was no better means of doing this than a commercial league with Hanover. If this could be accomplished, then Prussia, standing upon a firm basis, might await the action of the Southern States.

Accordingly, Austria had scarcely succeeded in securing in the Confederate Diet, on the 10th of July, 1851, the appointment of the committee on commercial relations, when Prussia sent a private message to Hanover, proposing to enter into negotiations with regard to incorporating the customs-league into the Tariff-Union, and to begin the same so soon as confidential information should be received that a speedy conclusion would be reached based upon the conditions accompanying Prussia's message. These were indeed exceedingly advantageous for Hanover and Oldenburg,

the concession of all those points which in former negotiations Prussia had constantly declared inadmissible: a great reduction of the duty on tea, coffee, wine, and French brandy, free importation of rails for the Hanover railways, and a prior claim of seventy-five per cent in the distribution of the Tariff-Union revenues.

In Hanover this offer was accepted without much hesitation. The Director of Customs, Klenze, was sent to Magdeburg, where he, with the Prussian Privy Counsellor, Delbrück, prepared in the greatest secrecy the separate articles of the treaty, which he signed on the 7th of September in Berlin, and which confirmed the admission of Hanover and Oldenburg into commercial alliance with Prussia and her associates of the Tariff-Union, to take effect on the 1st of January, 1854. On the 11th of September, Prussia announced the fact to the other members of the Tariff-Union.

But during these negotiations an internal crisis was impending in Hanover. Several of the societies of the nobility had sent complaints to the Confederate Diet concerning the loss of their old rights, begging for assistance in the recovery and defence of the same in the provincial as well as in the general assembly of the Estates. The people of Hanover did not think this act of the nobility of any importance, inasmuch as the Confederate Diet in 1839 had refused to consider the complaints of several cities and corporations against the unlawful *coup d'état* of Ernest Augustus, and this time the laws which had offended the nobility had been enacted with the consent of the King and of both

Chambers. The Ministry, however, who had protested so emphatically against any interference of the Confederate Diet in the internal affairs of the country, were now not a little anxious, since they were well aware of the especial favor and partiality of the King and the Crown Prince towards the nobility.

When, then, the Diet's committee on commercial relations summoned experienced men to its aid in the discussions, and Klenze for this reason was sent to Frankfort, the latter called on Bismarck and explained to him that the treaty of the 7th of September had many opponents in Hanover, especially among the party of the nobility; that if these by successes in the Confederate Diet should effect the overthrow of the Ministry of Münchhausen, it would then be impossible to secure for the treaty the approval of the Chambers; and that it therefore lay in the interests of Prussia to support the Münchhausen Ministry in the Confederate Diet as well as at the Hanoverian Court.

This gave rise to a characteristic correspondence between Bismarck and Manteuffel. The former, who indeed held that it was one of the functions of the Confederate Diet to decide in cases of complaint, wrote, nevertheless, on the 9th of October, in a private letter to the Prime Minister, as follows: "However strong my personal disinclination may be towards sacrificing political rectitude in my own country, yet I have self-interest enough as a Prussian not to be quite so conscientious with regard to the same in Hanover, and would humbly offer my advice that only such a minis-

try should be supported in Hanover, as would be ready to favor our policy embodied in the treaty of September 7th, let the political color of that ministry be what it may. Our own state is strong enough for us to be able to countenance and encourage in Hanover a liberal ministry sooner than one that sides with Austria."

Manteuffel took counsel with his under-secretary Lecoq, a man of few talents, and unprepossessing, but politically devoted heart and soul to the party of the *Kreuzzeitung* and the Von Gerlachs. To him it seemed like a sin against the Holy Ghost to favor, for the sake of Prussia's interests, the opponents of the nobility in Hanover. Accordingly, Manteuffel replied on the 13th of October. "Klenze," he wrote, "has already made remarks in Berlin to the effect, that the nobility are hostile to the treaty, and that the overthrow of Münchhausen would be dangerous to it. But that opinion is simply his personal one. Aside from the financial advantages to be derived by Hanover from the treaty, the nobility would certainly, from political motives, recognize in the treaty with conservative Prussia a sure safeguard of their own future. The old King and the Crown Prince also favor the fulfilment of the solemnly ratified treaty. It is only to be hoped that the Confederate Diet will be cautious and deferential in its conduct towards the Hanoverian Government, so that the actions of the latter may still have the character and stamp of independence. Nor can anything more be required of us, in order to avoid the choice, painful enough, between supporting a politically un-

certain [liberal, *crossed out*] ministry, and endangering the treaty of September 7th."

Prussia kept true, then, to this determination, to refrain from exerting any positive influence upon Hanover's internal policy. This determination was all the more gratifying, since at the death of King Ernest Augustus on the 18th of November, 1851, his blind son, George V., after having promised with his royal oath to maintain the Constitution, immediately appointed, under Baron von Schele, at the time Hanoverian deputy to the Confederate Diet, a conservative Ministry, who proceeded in the next assembly of the Estates to secure the recognition of the tariff treaty in both Chambers. Klenze's assertions were then seen to have been without foundation, and to have arisen purely from party-ambition.

Meanwhile the September treaty had caused no small excitement in the rest of Germany. The Lesser States pretended to be gravely insulted by the secrecy of its preparation; it was, they said, a cutting slight to their dignity, and evidently an act of vengeance for the part they played in Prussia's defeat at Olmütz. This complaint was fitted to produce an impression upon political children, the number of whom was indeed not small in the Fatherland. Evidently there was no thought in Prussia's mind of vengeance for past grievances, but of precaution against present hostilities, against the Austrian tendencies of the Lesser States, who, had they been aware of the negotiations before the settlement of the treaty, would without any doubt have made a

previous understanding with Vienna the condition of their consent. This was immediately manifest when Prussia, now sure of her position, announced in November, 1851, that the Tariff-Union would cease on January 1st, 1854, and at the same time expressed her willingness to renew it upon the basis of the September treaty. To this end all the members of the Tariff-Union were invited to conferences to be held in Berlin beginning on the first of April, 1852.

Thereupon, Prince Schwarzenberg without hesitation took upon himself the leadership of the Opposition, and summoned all the German States to a conference to be held forthwith, in January, in Vienna, to consider in the first place a commercial treaty (Document A), and then the project of a complete union of Austria and Germany in the matter of duties (Document B). The fundamental idea of these projects, as was natural under the circumstances, was an increase of facilities in internal trade between the two groups of countries, together with a raising of the duties upon imports from all other countries, according to the standard of the Austrian system, that is to say, in direct contrast to the principles of the Hanoverian treaty.

For the more than probable event of Prussia's remaining obstinate, a third plan (Document C) was secretly laid before the old friends, Bavaria, Würtemberg, Saxony, both Hesses, and Nassau, by which these states were to bind themselves to a tariff-league with Austria, without Prussia; that is, to withdraw from the present Tariff-Union. When the delegates met,

they praised the purpose and aim of documents A and B, but differed widely in their views upon the details of the schemes. And the six confidential friends came to no decision about Document C, further than that they would give it their serious consideration. To this end they met together alone at the beginning of April in Darmstadt, and agreed to hold together as a unit in the pending negotiations, and to recognize all the former Tariff-Union treaties as consequently binding among themselves, but under no circumstances to enter into a compact with Prussia concerning a continuance of the Tariff-Union before January 1st, 1853, unless an understanding should be already reached between Austria and all the Tariff-Union states.

To this Prussia replied in the Berlin Conference, that a tariff-league with Austria was a matter of time, which could be effected only very gradually; and that Prussia was ready to discuss a commercial alliance between the Tariff-Union and Austria so soon as the continuance of the latter was assured beyond the first of January, 1854. During the whole summer the deliberations continued. An endless amount of talking and negotiating was done on all sides. Gradually an agreement took shape between Prussia and the Darmstadt allies about the essential contents of the new Tariff-Union treaty as well as of the commercial treaty with Austria.

But the technical difficulty was not yet surmounted. Prussia persisted in her logical demand: first the renewal of the Tariff-Union, and then a treaty between

this body and a third party—while the Southern States remained just as determined in their claim that both points should be settled at the same time. This resolved itself into the practical question: Shall the treaty with Austria depend upon the needs of the Tariff-Union, or shall the character of the Tariff-Union conform to the will of Austria? At last, at a final conference with the Darmstadt faction in September, Prussia felt that she had had enough of arguing in a circle. She declared the conference closed and negotiations at an end.

It was now expected in Vienna that the Southern States would carry out Document C, and form a tariff-union with Austria, thus freeing South Germany finally from Prussian influence. According to Herr von Beust, Bavaria and Würtemberg would not have objected to doing so; but that Darmstadt agreement to preserve at all events the tariff league among themselves stood in the way; for Saxony, in view of her highly-developed industries, positively refused a tariff alliance with Austria. Public opinion, moreover, in the other states of the Coalition, expressed itself in favor of maintaining the old Tariff-Union, in spite of all protective interests.

It may be remarked in passing, that Herr von Bismarck contributed not a little to this, by making his influence felt from his post at Frankfort through the Press, by founding societies, by sending out workers, etc., although it is true that the chief cause of this public feeling lay in the nature of things. The Governments of the Coalition were helpless.

Then a variety of causes produced an unexpected change, not only in Vienna, but in Berlin as well.

In Vienna, the talented statesman, whose boldness and energy had led Austria from success to success, Prince Felix Schwarzenberg, had breathed his last. His health, long since undermined by indulgences of every kind, was completely broken down by his exertions in political life. Yet in spite of many serious attacks of illness, his love of life was not extinguished. On the morning of the 5th of April, 1852, as he received an invitation to a ball, at which he expected to meet a certain belle whom he adored, he cried: "Most certainly I shall come, unless I am dead." In the course of the day he held several meetings and conferences, and sent in the mean time a choice bouquet to the lady mentioned. As he was preparing his evening toilet for dinner, he suddenly fell in an apoplectic fit, and did not again recover consciousness.

We will not attempt to determine how far his power might have succeeded in carrying out his all-embracing plans of dominion; certain it is that his pupil and successor, Count Buol-Schauenstein, although most zealous and ambitious, by no means possessed the ability necessary for fully realizing and completing the political schemes of the deceased Prince. It is very true that an imperious, despotic nature may produce a great impression and effect much; but nothing is more dangerous than for an unskilful imitator of such a character to try to continue the work of his predecessor.

In the matter of a tariff-union, Count Buol began by

being excessively domineering. When, in June, Herr von Bismarck, having been sent by the King to Vienna on a special mission, waited upon the Count, the latter declared to the Prussian envoy, that Austria would not allow herself to be treated by Germany as a foreign country, and that this would be implied, if she were offered a mere commercial alliance without the prospect of a closer tariff-union. He remarked that the consideration of such matters belonged, moreover, to the Confederate Diet, adding in a manner not over-polite that he was sorry that just at this moment, when he had sent Count Thun very important instructions, Herr von Bismarck was not to be found at his post. In this same strain the tone of his diplomacy made itself heard and felt at all the German Courts.

In the autumn, however, he found many reasons for lowering somewhat the pitch of his anti-Prussian zeal. In France, Louis Napoleon was taking one step after another toward the imperial throne; and it was no longer a secret that he considered the popular vote not the source, but merely the acknowledgment, of his inherited right to the crown, and that he would thus openly withstand the treaties of 1815, which excluded forever the House of Bonaparte from the French throne. From this quarter, then, there appeared to be the possibility that a serious European danger might arise, and therefore it would be desirable to be sincerely on good terms with Prussia. The Emperor Nicholas pressed this point most urgently; and when then, to Count Buol's bitter mortification and disap-

pointment, Document C seemed likely to remain a dead letter with the South German States, the Emperor Francis Joseph offered to his royal uncle the hand of reconciliation.

His good words fell upon good ground. For, just as in Vienna operations in connection with the Darmstadt Coalition had proved fruitless, so, too, the basis of Prussia's new position, her friendship with Hanover, had given way. The young King desired most ardently, if he could not indeed overthrow the whole legislation of 1848, at least to nullify the changes made by it in the Constitution of 1840, and at the same time to prevent the carrying out of the new organization of offices. In this he was the natural ally of the nobility, whom he also favored in other respects, and whose chiefs easily persuaded him that the September treaty would bring about the complete industrial ruin of Hanover and her dependence upon Prussia, from which nothing could save her but a close connection with Austria. The Austrian ambassador consequently found during the summer a ready ear in advocating the "Darmstadt theory," that before, or at least simultaneously with, the renewal of the Tariff-Union, negotiations with Austria must be brought to a successful issue.

A special circumstance contributed to making the feeling in Hanover more intense. It was discovered that Prussia was about to enter into a compact with Oldenburg, by which the latter should give up the bay of Jahde for the establishment of a Prussian naval

station on the North Sea. This touched the King of Hanover in a very sensitive spot. It was one of Hanover's ancient ambitions to gain the leadership of the fleets bearing the German flag upon the North Sea, and now Prussia was trying to get a foothold in this old hereditary domain of the House of the Guelphs. "That would be," cried the Minister, Bacmeister, "with Magdeburg and Minden the third of the strong positions with which Prussia is seeking to surround us."

The ill-will against the September treaty soon found a way of manifesting itself practically. In this treaty Hanover had promised to publish before March 1st, 1853, a preliminary tariff-system preparatory to entering the Tariff-Union. This had been already drawn up, but, in spite of repeated reminders from Berlin, King George had not published it; so that in the autumn of 1853, anxiety began to be felt in Berlin lest it should not appear at all, and the whole affair in this way should be exploded. This was the last straw which induced Prussia to meet Austria's advances in a friendly manner.

Accordingly, the Austrian Minister himself, Baron von Bruck, went to Berlin to negotiate, at first, about the commercial treaty. Prussia took no exceptions at all to the principles laid down by Austria in Document A, by which in the internal reciprocal trade between Austria and the Tariff-Union there was to be imposed upon a long list of articles a lower import-duty than either of the parties intended to levy upon the intro-

duction of the same articles from other foreign countries. If at any time either of the parties intended to lower this tax upon the importations from foreign countries, this was to be announced to the other party three months before its accomplishment, so that the latter could make those changes considered necessary in the internal traffic; neither party should favor any foreign country with a change in the tariff that would at once prove disadvantageous to the other party.

Thereupon Bruck brought forward for discussion the second great question, the possibility of a reciprocal tariff-system. Prussia was still convinced of the economical and also the political impossibility of such a system, but allowed herself to be moved by the force of circumstance to yielding in some degree: six years after the conclusion of the present treaty, i.e., in 1859, negotiations were to be opened on the subject of a closer tariff-union, which it was to be hoped might then be effected. Hereupon, on the 19th of February the commercial treaty was signed.

This seemed to remove the difficulties in the way of a renewal of the Tariff-Union. But those who entertained this hope found it thwarted now, not by the South Germans, but by Hanover, who, it is true, published the required preliminary tariff-system at the same time that the Austrian commercial treaty was made public, but then, in addition to the great favors accorded to her by the September treaty, demanded a long list of further advantages, thus delaying the negotiations for weeks, much to the annoyance of all

the other states. It took a severe reprimand from both of the Great Powers to force Hanover, with many a murmur, to give up her exorbitant demands. At last, on the 8th of April, the Tariff-Union and the Austrian commercial treaty were both concluded for a term of twelve years.

Thus the crisis was terminated. Prussia had for the time asserted her position, but had been obliged to make formal as well as material concessions. Above all, she had not been successful in emphasizing the principle that Austria could not share in the Tariff-Union on account of her position in the German Confederation; it was to be expected that six years later new discussions would arise from the same source. Meanwhile, a truce had been concluded, and very soon a new turn in European politics proved that this was most beneficial.

Just here it may be in place to give a short account of how the matter of the Hanover Constitution was settled.

King George was, to even a greater degree than his father, imbued with the majesty and dignity of the royal office. In the case of Ernest Augustus, it was the possession by the Crown of the highest military authority, that had been the basis of his political absolutism. The soul of the son, however, who was a zealous High-Churchman, was filled with a belief in the mystical sacredness of the royal office, in an eternal decree of God, according to which the House of the Guelphs was called to rule over its possessions until the

end of time; this sovereignty, from its very nature, could be neither divided, subordinated, nor limited.

The immediate consequence of these sentiments was the King's disinclination to join the Tariff-Union and his desire to annul so far as possible the laws of 1848. The Minister, Von Schele, sympathized greatly with this latter wish, and did his best to bring about its realization by constitutional means; he could not, however, secure the necessary consent of the Chambers, and resigned on the 9th of November, 1853.

If the King's ambition was to be satisfied, there were only two ways in which it might be done. But there stood in the way of the first, the proclamation of a new Constitution on the basis of royal supremacy, the solemn oath of the King taken at his coronation. The second method would have been to call upon the reactionary committee of the Confederate Diet to command a change in the Hanoverian Constitution. But here, too, the King met with difficulties. Indeed, he allowed himself, like the Elector of Hesse, to be persuaded that one is not guilty of violating one's oath, if one can induce a superior authority to command this violation. But it was repugnant to his instinct of sovereignty to recognize in the Confederate Diet such a superior authority; and so a year and a half was frittered away in continual wavering.

Meanwhile, the reactionary committee, in which Hanover still took part, drew up an overwhelming list of points in the Constitution of 1848 that were said to be contrary to the principles of the Confederation.

After the Confederate Diet had recognized in its decree of April 12th, 1855, the justice of the complaints of the nobility, and had commanded the purification of the Constitution from those faults mentioned, the King finally made up his mind and commissioned his Ministry, that of Count Kielmannsegge and Von Borries, appointed especially for this purpose, to execute the decree of the Confederation.

By this means a large number of the existing rights of the Assembly of Estates were cut off, and the nobility reinstated in the enjoyment of their ancient prerogatives. Every attempt at resistance throughout the kingdom was effectually suppressed by new Confederate laws concerning the Press and societies, and by the proclamation in 1856 of further and more rigorous police regulations. The nobility were ever afterwards enthusiastic for the King who was so kindly disposed to them; but apart from this class, respect for the Confederate Diet was as thoroughly shaken throughout the country as was the feeling of devotion to the House of the Guelphs.

CHAPTER II.

THE NEW AUSTRO-PRUSSIAN ALLIANCE.

THE settlement of German affairs suffered in 1854 long delay and serious detriment by reason of a great European crisis, the war of Russia against Turkey and the Western Powers. We are interested here only in its reflex influence upon German relations; about the course of events in general, such brief observations will suffice us as are necessary for an understanding of German politics during those years.

The Emperor Nicholas stood at this time at the height of success, of eminence, and of power. In keeping with his dignity as ruler of Russia and an autocrat in matters of church and state, he had always, as we have seen, spurned the principles of modern liberalism, and had opposed with the greatest energy, so far as in him lay, the Revolution of 1848. This policy had everywhere reaped for him rich rewards. By his suppression of the Hungarian rebellion he felt that he had gained the unreserved devotion of Austria. He had at first treated the Prussian King roughly, but had afterwards, to the great satisfaction of the King, saved him from the snares of the union policy. He had assisted in keeping up the dismemberment of Germany,

so desirable for the Lesser States and for Russia herself. His threats had forced the German Powers to give up Schleswig-Holstein to Denmark; and the Czar had profited by the opportunity of confirming his ancient personal friendship with several of the leading English statesmen. The only Great Power in Europe that was not eager to profess its readiness to serve him, and that was then the hated source of all revolutions, seemed to him weakened by anarchy and party hatred. He had no scruples about expressing openly his contempt for everything that was French by directly insulting the new chief of the Republic.

Thus he had become in the eyes of all the world the repository of legitimate government and of conservative principles. He was hated and still more feared by the Liberals of Europe, but profoundly revered among the influential circles of the feudal and High-Church parties. It is no wonder, that in such a position he was filled with an unparalleled self-satisfaction, a state of mind fostered by the feeling of his tremendous strength as well as by his firm belief in the sacredness of his acts, and which was indeed almost forced upon him by the devoted admiration of those portions of the great European world which he considered alone worthy of regard.

In the year 1852 he saw the European Occident tolerably well arranged according to his instructions, and his eyes turned longingly again to that goal of ancient Muscovite ambition, the Ottoman Orient.

Here, too, he believed that he should find a field for

the exercise of his vocation of ruler. However humbly and unhesitatingly the Porte had been willing to obey his nod, the poison of revolutionary ideas had also reached Constantinople. The Porte had offered a hospitable reception to Polish and Hungarian refugees, and had even taken a number of them into its service.

When France demanded for the Roman Catholics in Jerusalem a greater share in the possession and the use of the so-called Holy Places at the expense of the Greeks living there, the Divan after some resistance graciously granted the request. To be sure, Russia made such violent objections, that these concessions were immediately reduced again to ridiculous insignificance: namely, to the possession of the key to a church door which was never locked; but even then, Nicholas, supported by England, asserted that that attempt to wound the feelings of the Greek Church involved a very serious personal insult to himself, especially since the Greek congregations in several provinces had suffered severe injuries and losses by the arbitrariness of the Turkish officials, and that Russia in virtue of old treaties had the formal right to protect her associates in religious faith. The more prudence shown by France, in now giving up her demands, in spite of the evident utter lack of foundation for the Russian claims, and the more overwhelming Russia's power in Europe had in 1852 grown to be, the more plausible to the proud despot seemed the idea that an auspicious time had come for solving the old and perplexing

Eastern Question exclusively in accordance with Russia's wishes.

Or, in other words, he gave himself up, as in 1829, to the thought that Turkish rule was perishing from internal demoralization; that the Christian subjects, of whom from ten to twelve millions in Europe were of the same faith as Russia, were about to throw off the yoke of the Crescent; and that it would be dishonorable and wicked to deter them, and not rather to encourage and support them. The inheritance of the Sick Man would then come in question; and it would be very desirable at the settlement of the same to prevent so far as possible any one whose presence as a neighbor would be undesirable from sharing in it.

In this strain he conversed in February, 1853, with the English ambassador in St. Petersburg, Sir Hamilton Seymour, and explained that he should claim for himself only a protectorate over Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia, and should leave to England Candia and Egypt. He hoped that this offer would prove irresistible to England. "We are both agreed," he said, "and therefore we need not trouble ourselves about any one else. And when I say Russia, I mean also Austria, for our interests are identical in the East." He did not even mention Prussia at all. Concerning France, he expressed himself to Sir Hamilton with contemptuous animosity; which, however, did not prevent him, upon the receipt from London of a cool rejection of his plans, from trying the effect of the same offer upon the French Ambassador, M. de Castelbajac.

He felt so sure of himself that he made ready his fleet on the Euxine to set sail from Sebastopol, collected a large army in Bessarabia, and sent the admiral Prince Mentschikoff with a decisive ultimatum to Constantinople. This ultimatum turned upon the acceptance of a treaty in which both Powers were to promise to sustain all the rights and privileges of the followers of the Russian-Greek faith in the Turkish empire; so that in the future at every actual or nominal injustice the Czar should have the right to interfere. It is clear that this meant nothing more nor less than the downfall of Turkish independence and the death of the Sick Man. To the Divan was left, then, only the choice of voluntary submission or annihilation by the Russian sword.

But in this case, too, pride went before a fall. To the Czar, so certain of victory, was decreed a long list of bitter disappointments from all sides.

The Divan made up its mind that an end in the midst of horrors was more glorious than horrors without an end. The Russian ultimatum was rejected. Nicholas replied by ordering his troops to occupy Moldavia and Wallachia, not, as he said, for any purpose of war, but to hold in his possession some material pledge that his just requests would be complied with.

This was his second and more serious mistake. He, who had hitherto controlled Europe according to his wish, now aroused the ill-will of Europe by his own conduct.

From the beginning of the complications, Napoleon, who had just been raised to the imperial throne and

was at this time surrounded by wise counsellors, saw in Russian vainglory the possibility of great successes for himself. By well-calculated compliance in the question concerning the Holy Places he had encouraged the selfish conduct of his opponent; but when Mentschikoff's action had rendered a rupture unavoidable, Napoleon sent at once a French fleet into Grecian waters.

The English Ministers were at first lulled to sleep by the pleasant words of their mighty Russian patron; but at the occupation of the principalities, public opinion in London asserted itself so forcibly against the Czar, that the Cabinet followed the French example of sending out a fleet for the protection of Turkey.

Not less important was the effect of the Russian doings upon the Court of Vienna. It is true that the personal esteem and gratitude which the young Emperor felt for his powerful neighbor remained unchanged, but only too plainly did the Czar's latest measures endanger the most vital interests of the Austrian empire. Russian territory already bounded Austria on the north and east: it would not be desirable to be henceforth hemmed in by the same giant power on the south. Special considerations gave weight to this feeling; for the freedom of the navigation upon the Danube would by the Russian possession of Wallachia become quite dependent upon the will of the Czar.

It was then learned, too, that Russian agents were exciting the Christian subjects of Turkey to a rebellion against the Porte. Now, although the greater part of

the Turkish Christians held to a common faith with Russia, yet they were of a common race with the Slavs in the south of Austria, and no one could say how easily a national agitation among the former might spread across the frontiers of the empire. To be sure, in the further course of events, Nicholas gave to the Emperor Francis Joseph a solemn promise in his own name and that of his heirs, that no such encroachment should take place. Count Buol, however, without making any reflection upon the sincerity of this promise, had doubts as to the possibility of keeping the same, and consequently was quite ready in common with the other two Powers to attempt to settle the difficulty by diplomatic mediation.

So far as Prussia was concerned, the King and his Ministers were well pleased, that, owing to Prussia's geographical position, they had no immediate interest in the outcome of the complications, yet they recognized, as did all the world, the inexcusableness of the Russian offensive acts, and felt no scruples about joining in the diplomatic efforts of the other Courts. So a conference of the four Powers was held in Vienna with a view to bringing about upon fair terms a settlement agreeable to all parties.

The first attempt failed: Russia at first accepted the proposition of the Powers, but after a closer examination of its contents rejected it. Thereupon the Porte declared war upon the northern aggressor, and sent a force to liberate Wallachia: bloody encounters on the Danube followed with varying result, and immediately

the fleets of the Western Powers appeared in the Bosphorus, to defend Turkey against any attack from the sea. But when in spite of this Admiral Nachimoff annihilated a Turkish squadron off Sinope, the Western Powers ordered their fleets to sail into the Black Sea itself, with the declaration that they would not suffer any further attack upon the Turkish coasts. Thereupon Russia broke off diplomatic relations with France and England.

In Vienna the four Powers in conference agreed upon the chief points that would be necessary for the establishment of a lasting peace. These were: inviolability of Turkish territory, and consequently, as the first condition of peace, the evacuation of the principalities by the Russians; modification of the treaties of 1841 and the recognition of Turkey as a European Power; and the voluntary promise of the Sultan to assure protection to Christian churches of all sects.

The Divan consented to all this; but Russia insisted upon her original demands, and would not hear at all to any officious mediation by the four Powers, for she said that her quarrel with Turkey was entirely an internal family affair.

Thus within the space of a year's time, the political situation in Europe had undergone a fundamental change. At the beginning of 1853, Russia, standing at the head of the Holy Alliance, and in confidential friendship with England, had without question held the position of leader in the politics of the continent,

while France, regarded with mistrust by all the Courts, stood entirely alone. A year later, Russia found herself facing the united and unanimous opposition of all the other Great Powers, saw her conduct uniformly condemned by them all, and herself threatened by two of them with armed chastisement.

By no means the least cause for annoyance at St. Petersburg was the fact that at the head of this league of Governments stood just that most hated and most despised scion of the Bonapartes whose energetic persistence had, step by step, set the English fleet in motion, and whose prudent diplomacy had won for him the leading voice in the Vienna conference. England had already seconded his assertion that the butchery at Sinope had affected the honor of the maritime Powers themselves, so that, if Russia continued her defiance, it would mean war against them as well as against Turkey. If, now, the two German Powers should be brought to a similar decision, to execute by force of arms their verdict expressed in the resolutions of the Vienna conference, then the Holy Alliance lay indeed in ruins, and there could be no bounds set to Napoleon's restless and visionary ambitions.

A note of inquiry was sent by the Western Powers, at the end of February, 1854, to the Courts of Vienna and Berlin, stating that they intended to demand from Russia the evacuation of the principalities by the 30th of April at the latest, and to consider failure to respond to this as a declaration of war; they wished to know, then, what attitude in the matter was to be expected

in that case on the part of the Courts of Vienna and of Berlin. Immediately afterwards the representatives of the maritime Powers laid before the two Courts the outline of a convention in which the four Governments bound themselves to use, for the carrying out of the principles laid down in the resolutions of the conference, such means as their representatives in that body should decide upon and advise.

The critical moment had come. But here the paths separated.

In Vienna, the Emperor Francis Joseph had with great distress and deep sorrow watched the gulf daily growing wider, which had opened itself between his own and Russian interests. But so it was, and there was no help for it. The Russians, after crossing the Danube, began to press on into Bulgaria. Their agents there worked with redoubled energy in trying to raise a revolt among the Christians. In Epirus and Thessaly there was already an armed band of insurgents set on by the agents at Athens. Austria could never allow these things to go further. Count Buol placed an army of 25,000 men in the Banat, induced the maritime Powers to adopt vigorous measures at the Court of Athens, and expressed to Russia his surprise that the high and mighty protector of legitimate rule should now himself wish to unchain Revolution.

This surprise, however, was uncalled for; for the Czar was not only *Imperator* but also *Pontifex Maximus* of Russia, and consequently an insurrection of orthodox subjects against an unbelieving Government seemed to

him, as formerly to the prophet Mohammed and to the Roman popes, a perfectly legitimate enterprise. However this might be, Count Buol believed it best to stifle these dangers in their infancy, and, if worst came to worst, not to risk an open rupture with Russia.

His courage in carrying out such a policy was the more increased, since he saw the Western Powers preparing for an armed intervention, so that Austria would be strongly supported in any steps which she might take. If everything went well, Austria might end by acquiring the Danube principalities, or at least holding the protectorate over them in the place of Russia. He did not, however, shut his eyes to the unfavorable condition of Austria internally, both financially and politically; and therefore he ardently desired to have, in case of war, not only the friendship of the distant Western Powers, but especially the assistance of Austria's nearest neighbors, Prussia and Germany. For this reason, he had already made in Berlin, on the 8th of January, the proposition of a treaty of alliance, which began with the declaration of common neutrality and ended with the reservation that either party might act freely in protecting its own interests. Prussia had replied at that time, that inasmuch as everybody was united everywhere, and threatened by no one, there was really no need of any formal document.

Meanwhile the irritation felt in Vienna at the presumption of the Muscovites increased, the further Russia pushed her operations on the Danube. Large troops of soldiers were collected in Hungary, and, on

the 25th of February, Austria urged upon the Western Powers the necessity of sending a peremptory request to St. Petersburg to accede to their demand that the principalities be evacuated: otherwise the responsibility for the consequences should fall upon the Russian Cabinet, and henceforth Austria would act only in accordance with the dictates of her own interests.

We shall speak of Prussia somewhat more in detail.

Here the Eastern Question had from the very beginning aroused the feelings of the people far and wide. Whoever cherished any liberal sentiments whatever, whoever had any enthusiasm left for German Unity, whoever mourned over Olmütz and Schleswig-Holstein, watched with exultation Russia's ambition conjure up threatening and ever-increasing dangers above its own head. It was thought that a new era of freedom would dawn if the northern champion of despotism should fall to pieces under the blows of united Europe. To the great majority of the people it seemed inconceivable that Prussia, upon whom Russia's hostile rage had fallen the most severely, should not join the common stream. Here there was again, they thought, an opportunity offered to Prussia to raise herself by a bold policy at one blow to the chief place in Germany, and to rid all Europe forever from the pressure of Russian supremacy.

These views were held in many influential circles. A group of prominent officials and diplomatists, Counts Goltz and Pourtales, and the privy counsellors, Bethmann-Hollweg and Mathis, who together had founded

their own organ, the *Preussisches Wochenblatt*, for the repression of feudal tendencies, urgently advocated co-operation with the Western Powers. Baron Bunsen, then Prussian ambassador in London, drew up with the English statesmen the outline of a new map of Europe on which the boundaries of Russia were considerably pushed back. The Minister of War, Bonin, saw under the existing circumstances no reason for wishing to avoid a rupture with Russia. The heir to the throne himself, the Prince of Prussia, inclined to this side. He thought that after Russia had been so wilfully the disturber of European peace, she needed to be taught a lesson, and that some security was due the rest of the continent against a return of such dangers.

But those men in Berlin in whose hands the decision lay, entertained entirely different opinions.

The President of the Ministry, Herr von Manteuffel, who by no means looked upon his Olmütz Agreement as a defeat, felt himself repelled rather than incited by the loud signals of the Liberals thirsting for war. Yet he did acknowledge, and still more decidedly than he, his most influential counsellor, Balan, that Russia had committed a great wrong; and consequently, he had without hesitation allowed Prussia to take part in the Vienna conference, and to give her assent to all of its decrees. He also intended to continue this policy further. Would he have resorted to arms? Who can tell? Certain it is, that in accordance with his cool, almost apathetic nature, he did not wish to pursue a bold, but rather a safe policy: hence it was very natural for

him to believe that a persistent agreement among the four Powers would finally, even without the threat of war, induce the Russian Monarch to yield, and so bring about a restoration of peace.

In sharp contrast to these determinations or tendencies, stood the sentiments of those personally about the King; among whom were in the first place Adjutant-General von Gerlach, also Generals Count Drohna and von der Gröben, and then, though of less importance, Adjutant Colonel von Manteuffel, the Cabinet Counsellor Niebuhr, and the former Minister, Count Alvensleben-Erxleben. These men, in accordance with their conservative principles, were definitely and decidedly inclined towards Russia. They were filled with enthusiastic admiration for the mighty Czar, who had protected Austria in 1849 and Prussia in 1850 from the demon of Revolution, and who now was waging a holy war to plant once more the Cross upon the *Hagia Sofia* and to purify Europe from the contamination of Islam. They did not exactly wish to rush into battle for the sake of the Czar, but would do everything possible to improve Russia's position. Should participation in a war be unavoidable, then Prussia should be found not on the side of revolutionary France, but of conservative Russia.

To this party there belonged at this time a man, who was as well a faithful Christian as a firm royalist, but who was free from the extravagant theories of the *Kreuzzeitung*, and a thoroughly practical politician, namely, the Prussian deputy to the Confederate Diet.

Bismarck decidedly agreed with General von Gerlach in the wish that a war with Russia might be avoided; but certainly in this case, if ever, the proverb held good: *si duo faciunt idem, non est idem*. Bismarck weighed the consequences of such a war, and foresaw only evil results for Prussia. He argued that the war would involve no serious dangers for the Western Powers, and victory would bring them great benefits. For Prussia, just the reverse would be the case. The burden of the war would fall chiefly upon her, and from the most glorious victories she would reap no advantages. "What are we after in the East?" said he. "On the other hand, we have great reason to be careful to preserve our friendly relations to Russia, which may in the future be exceedingly advantageous and even indispensable to us. Our only adversary, as we continually see in matters concerning the Tariff-Union and the Confederate Diet, is Austria; and she is the only Power whose defeat can bring us any real good. If there must be a war, then we have to enter the lists on the side that opposes Austria, unless the Court of Vienna is willing to make great and important concessions to us in German affairs. For the time, however, strict neutrality is the best plan, especially since this is also the desire of all the other German states."

The Monarch, upon whom in this matter everything depended, heard every day the expression of all these different opinions; and each one found, as was natural with him, an echo in his breast, open as he was to every

passing impression. He commended England, like Bunsen, in her resistance against Russia's conquest of Turkey, and mourned over the presumption of his brother-in-law, which had sundered the firm alliance of old conservative Europe against the Revolution and its representative, Napoleon.

But as ever, religious views and considerations had a much stronger influence upon him than political principles. England had always seemed to him the most valuable ally on account of their common Protestant faith; but from the same feeling it was revolting to him to see in Turkey many million Christians under heathen rule, and he prophesied divine judgment upon every one that drew the sword on the side of the Crescent and against the Cross. There could be for him no sadder nor more perplexing turn of things than that England should, step by step, enter into a league with Turkey and with Napoleon, and, to use his own expression, be drawn into the incest between Paganism and Revolution; and that, too, without his being able to justify Russia's conduct, which was the source of all the trouble.

His first efforts were directed towards doing what he could to prevent an open rupture. He had already, in June, 1853, made an attempt to mediate, which had the usual misfortune of displeasing all parties. Then he assented to the resolutions of the Vienna Conference, and urgently advocated them in St. Petersburg, constantly hoping that Russia would yield to this united pressure from the rest of Europe. But when this, too,

failed, and a declaration of war on the part of the Western Powers against Russia grew more and more imminent, in the confusion of his contradictory feelings he arrived at decisions of the most peculiar nature.

He had firmly made up his mind, in this "abominable" war, to remain neutral; for he could not side with Russia, because she was in the wrong, nor against Russia, because that would mean fighting for Mohammed against Christ. Then, on the other hand, he had no doubt but that Napoleon would let loose against neutral Prussia all the bloodhounds of the Revolution, and, alas, would only find too many sympathizers in Germany itself. To obviate this danger he determined to turn once more in confidence to England. For this purpose he chose one of those anti-Russian diplomatists, the talented and intense, although perhaps not always prudent nor pliant, Count Albert Pourtales.

This man he sent to Prince Albert with a letter dated the 22d of December, 1853, in which, among other things, he wrote: "I shall make every attempt that lies in Prussia's power to be ready 'for the spring of the Tiger' from the west, to protect from his claws poor, unfortunate, guilty, and consequently 'half-stultified,' half-conspiring Germany, and to fight against that godless, anti-Christian monster of Revolution, that is arousing the 'Tiger' in Hungary, Poland, Italy, and Germany. It has been my most earnest wish and honest purpose in these complications to engage in the mortal combat side by side with my beloved England. But of England now is willing from sym-

pathy with Turkey to hurl ruin and death upon Christian soldiers, then this cherished wish, too, must fall to the ground."

Accordingly, Pourtales was to try every possible means of making the idea of Prussia's neutrality acceptable to the English Government, indeed, of making it seem to be most advantageous for the common cause. He was to represent that it was of the greatest importance to have some neutral party at hand that would be always ready to mediate and to convey messages of peace; that Prussia's neutrality would by no means be a passive one, but she would, on the contrary, be constantly active in striving to introduce wise propositions to the Russian Court, and if definite action must be taken, Prussia would not be tardy in throwing into the balance, if need be, the weight of her own influence; but that in order to be able to render such important services, Prussia must ask that England, and, through England's influence, also France should guarantee the preservation of the integrity and also the inviolability of Prussian and of German territory, that both Powers should refrain from any interference with the internal affairs of Germany, and that they should beforehand assure Prussia of their assent and concurrence, in case the latter found herself compelled, either as the result of revolutionary agitations or of the leaning of individual German states towards the opposite party, to take upon herself again, and perhaps exceeding the limits of the existing Confederate rights, the duties which she had fulfilled in the year 1849.

The English Ministers, after this communication, were astonished to learn that Prussia's neutrality was to be more valuable to them than the assistance of a Prussian army of 30,000 men. Their astonishment increased at the idea that they were to assure Prussia, as a reward for this precious neutrality, the unreserved right of changing the principles of the German Confederation. But the highest pitch was reached when Baron Bunsen set as the price of this "real and autonomic" neutrality¹ the further condition that England after, in, and through the peace, should regain for the King his faithful Neuchâtel.

We have narrated already, how after the February Revolution in 1848 the Radical party in Neuchâtel banished the royal authorities and set up a democratic government in their place. The King, whose protests were of no avail, finally succeeded in 1852 in obtaining from the remaining Great Powers an agreement, which recognized unconditionally his sovereign rights and promised to institute negotiations of the Powers upon the subject, whereas the King pledged himself, during the continuance of these negotiations, to make no move on his own part. Since that time the Powers had not lifted a finger in the matter; but among the foremost political thoughts of the King still stood the desire to possess again "that dear little country in the Jura," the ever-faithful Neuchâtel, of whose inhabitants he was "prouder than of all his other subjects." We shall see later, what weighty consequences this abnormal

¹ The King's letter to Bunsen, January 9th, 1854.

and eccentric sentiment was to have for him and for Prussia.

It hardly needs to be said that the mission of Count Pourtales in London was entirely unsuccessful. Quite as bootless was the endeavor of Baron Bunsen, with all the friendship of his royal patron for him, to bring the King over to the standpoint of the Western Powers. When, in February, 1854, the formal note of inquiry from the Western Powers came to hand, the King, it is true, sent an urgent request to his august brother-in-law to avert a terrible disaster from Europe by evacuating the principalities; but he remained immovable in his position, that he would have nothing to do with a war that was to be waged for Turkey's sake and against Christians, declined categorically the convention proposed by the Western Powers, and declared that Prussia then, as ever, was satisfied with the conditions of the agreement, but in the choice of means to carry it out, she was unwilling to bind her hands.

Thereupon, in the beginning of March, he sent autograph letters—for the time seemed to him to have come when diplomats could with their science do no more, and the sovereigns must take the matter into their own hands—to Victoria and Napoleon, imploring them most urgently to favor reconciliation and peace, and declaring his own absolute and unreserved neutrality. Whatever may be thought of the King's motives, or of his individual acts and the fantastic flourishes with which he adorned them, no unprejudiced observer to-day will deny that in view of the situation of Prussia

at that time, her relations with Austria and the weakness of the German Confederation, neutrality was the only policy consistent with the interests of the State.

The assertion that Prussia would have been able, by a powerful attack upon Russia, to have assembled about herself all Germany, and thus to have established national unity under her leadership, might have gained credence, had she not had in such a war two allies who would have been very glad to see Prussian battalions arrayed against the Russians, but who would so much the more regardlessly have crushed out every movement in Germany towards unity. "Only no German Unity," said Napoleon to the Duke of Coburg. "No idea is more atrocious than that of German Unity," said Count Buol, as decidedly as did once Metternich.

In short, Bismarck's reasons as briefly given above, leave no doubt as to the correctness of the position of neutrality. The noisy cry in the French and still more in the English newspapers, that Prussia was renouncing her claim to a position as a Great Power, was, to be sure, childish; for what Great Power would ever act in a way contrary to its own interests? Yet it is easy to understand their clamor, for they would only too gladly have thrown the main burden of the war upon Prussia's shoulders.

If Bismarck's unceasingly emphasized counsel had only been followed in Berlin! If in spite of all threats and abuse the proposed neutrality had only been maintained with persistent courage and becoming dignity!

But the fancied picture of "the spring of the Tiger from the west" left the Prussian Government no peace;¹ and General von Gerlach urgently advised, since England offered no support, that Prussia, in order not to be exposed to the danger wholly alone, should turn to Austria. How would it be, if Austria should accept the offers of the Western Powers, and should then draw the other German states into her own war policy?

We have seen that in January, in order not to bind her hands in any direction, Prussia declined an offer of a neutrality-alliance proposed by Austria. The King now decided on his part to send the same message to Vienna in the hope that he might in this way in the East restrain the Court of Vienna from engaging in the war, and in the West insure the protection of the German boundary against the French. On the 11th of March he wrote to the Emperor Francis Joseph, and told him of his letter to Queen Victoria, saying that although he had taken this step with a good deal of formality, it had been without any reasonable hope of meeting with success.

"Your Majesty," he went on to explain, "will understand how my letter to the Queen was written, I might say, with my conscience. It shall be a testimony to the fact of my having recognized the vocation which Divine Providence has placed before me; namely, of being a man and advocate of Peace, in season and out

¹ Napoleon once said to the Duke of Coburg, that he should be probably forced at last to wage war against Prussia.

of season, in fair weather and in foul. I am forced to tell people the truth, to represent to them dangers that may be imminent and the fearfulness of assuming responsibilities, no matter whether I find attentive ears or not. I will show that I have recognized and fulfilled my duty. God the Lord will then direct events. At the close of that letter I declared my intention to remain absolutely neutral, and my firm purpose in so doing to defend Prussia's independence with all the forces at my control against every one who tries to play the master over us."

He then gave expression to his pleasure at hearing that Austria was willing to accept the offer of a convention with the maritime Powers "only as one of four," meaning not without Prussia. "Taking for granted that this refreshing draught is no deception, I beg of Your Majesty to send us word at once concerning the hopes which you undoubtedly connect with those blessed decrees. To me, some proposal resulting from a genuine, vigorous union of Austria and Prussia, and directed to all the Teutonic states, seems imperatively necessary, and it must be drawn up at once. The *form* of the same may be determined by the diplomatists; but the kernel — so it seems to me — must be an offensive and defensive alliance of the three great groups of countries in Central Europe, entered into for the time of the impending direful war, and guaranteeing the mutual defence of all our frontiers during its continuance."

He closed with the words: "Our position is not free

from great and serious dangers; but I have good courage and trust in God. For Your Majesty, young in years and fresh in valor, this will be much easier still than for me. I commend myself now with all my heart and all my soul to your inspiring friendship and good-will."

In Vienna this note fell with great weight into the balance. There, too, people had been looking towards Paris with anxiety and fear, and indeed had much more reason to do so than had Prussia. But then the war between Russia and the Western Powers had already begun. On the Danube the Russians were preparing to make a more effective attack upon Bulgaria. The necessity of preventing this and of freeing the principalities seemed to Count Buol more and more urgent. How would it be if Prussia could be persuaded to incorporate in the proposed alliance Austria's full power to engage in such action, and thus to gain Prussia's consent in this instance, though she did not take part herself in the war, to the protection of Austrian lands outside of Germany, as had been the case in May, 1851?

It was decided to make the attempt immediately. The Emperor answered the letter of his royal uncle in a very full and explicit note, in which he above all expressed his wish that universal peace might be preserved, and his conviction that there could be no better means to this end than the defensive alliance of all Central Europe proposed by the King. He said that he would accordingly send General of the Ordnance

von Hess to Berlin to lay before the King in fullest frankness Austria's most private views and intentions with regard to every possible turn of affairs.

"Each of the contracting parties," he went on to say, "would still, after the conclusion of the alliance, retain its full right to act independently, except so far as the object of this alliance is concerned; and if Austria should wish to take advantage of that liberty by occupying certain Turkish provinces, then she would have the right, in case Russia attacked her possessions, to count upon the full support of the Confederation. It seems to me of the highest importance for us to have a clear understanding of the extent to which this principle can be applied.

"Although I am firmly determined to continue in the unbound, expectant attitude, which I have maintained hitherto, and not to allow myself to be moved from it by the entreaties of the Western Powers, yet I cannot close my eyes to the dreadful possibility of my being compelled by Russia's inconsiderate behavior to protect Austrian and also German interests, by ordering the occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia. At the same time, I intend by no means to declare war formally against Russia, nor to make an attack upon Russian territory. The Austrian bayonets would in any case halt at the Pruth."

In spite of all the spirit of peace that separate sentences in the note contained, the difference was very apparent between the ideas entertained at Vienna as to the purpose of the proposed alliance and those enter-

tained at Berlin. Bismarck, who had not yet been heard in this matter, was displeased with the whole plan. When he learned of it, he said that this step ought not to have been taken with Austria, but with the other Confederate states against Austria; for what could be more agreeable to Prussia than to see the coalition of Russia, Austria, and the Lesser States, which had pressed so hard upon Prussia since 1849, broken up forever?

On the other hand, General Gerlach was now full of the greatest hopes, although he considered it necessary, in view of Austria's desire to move ahead, to be very prudent in negotiations. That there was good reason for this, was evident when Hess reached Berlin at the end of March and announced his proposals. These embraced simply the conclusion of an offensive and defensive alliance between Austria, Prussia, and Germany for all time, as a means of protecting all their possessions, from whatsoever direction any danger might threaten. Austria, he said, had stationed 150,000 men in Hungary, and would soon send thither 100,000 more; she proposed that Prussia should now equip 100,000, and later 50,000 more, and that the other German states should at once mobilize one-half of their Confederate contingent, and promise to send the other half upon receiving orders from the two Great Powers. Soon afterwards the General added another article, to the effect that the allies should jointly and separately bear the expense of the equipment and the conduct of the war.

Of course there was no thought of all this on the part of Prussia. Balan drew up a counter-outline, in which the alliance was limited to the duration of the present war, its more detailed regulations and the ordinances concerning the beginning and the extent of the equipments being left to further consideration, and the item of the expense being passed over in silence.

When, upon this, Hess brought forward the draft of a common despatch to St. Petersburg, in which the Russian evacuation of the principalities was demanded under the threat of armed interference, the representatives of Prussia gave their assent, but demanded a modification of the form, so that it should contain no aggressive challenge.

While Prussia showed such caution in her movements, the Vienna Court was trying to confirm and even strengthen its relations with the Western Powers. On the 9th of April, Count Buol summoned the ambassadors of the four Great Powers to a conference, who then drew up a protocol to the effect that the Powers, although two of them were now at war with Russia, would persist in the principles formerly laid down; namely, the preservation of the integrity of Turkey, involving the evacuation of the principalities by Russia, the confirmation of the rights of the Christian subjects by a free act of the Sultan, and the admission of Turkey into the number of the European States: in no case was a Power to enter into any agreement inconsistent with these principles, without first laying the matter before them all for consideration.

When this protocol was presented to the Prussian King for his approval, he expressed some misgivings, but finally decided not to retract anything that he had before asserted, and signed it.

Meanwhile an understanding was arrived at in Berlin about the separate points of an alliance, mainly based upon Balan's draft. The two Powers were mutually to guarantee the protection of all their possessions. They were to promise to defend the rights and interests of Germany, and also to assist in warding off a foreign attack upon their territories when one of them, with the consent of the other, should find itself called upon to take active measures in defence of German interests. Just what might be termed such an occasion was to be made the subject of special consideration, as well as also the matter of establishing such a body of troops as this alliance might demand. All the German Confederate Governments were to be requested to join the alliance. During its continuance, neither of the two Powers was to make any other alliance with other Powers, that would not be fully in accord with the principles of the one in question.

Prussia had evidently taken care not to lay herself open to being drawn against her will by any one-sided movements of Austria into complications involving war. The second article implied the possibility of such movements, but bound Prussia to defend Austrian territory only in case Austria should previously obtain Prussia's consent to her plans. This point had hardly been settled, when General Hess, before the papers

had been signed, came forward with the declaration that such an instance was already at hand; since Austria, in the interests of Germany and upon the basis of the protocol of the 9th of April, was about to demand of Russia the evacuation of the principalities, and was ready, if necessary, to back her request by force of arms: therefore she now desired, in virtue of the second article, Prussia's assent to the step, and the promise to guard Austria's possessions from danger in the event of its being carried out.

In view of all that had taken place, this declaration in itself ought not to have caused any surprise; but the King was startled at its suddenness, and as he meditated upon the possible consequences, he almost repented of having signed the Vienna protocol. Yet he was very anxious to see the alliance concluded; and, moreover, at this moment he received from Russia a curt refusal to accede to Prussia's conciliatory propositions, which both in the form of the reply and its contents aroused the King's displeasure towards his brother-in-law to an unusual pitch.

So that, in accordance with the proposal of General Hess, he consented to an additional clause in the treaty, to the effect that if Russia should not, in response to a request from Austria supported by Prussia, withdraw from the principalities, then the measures decided upon by Austria would fall under the second article. A common aggressive movement would, however, the clause went on to say, be sanctioned only in case of an attempted incorporation of the principalities.

ties by Russia, or, added the King in his vexation at the Russian reply, in case of an attack or of the crossing of the Balkans by the Russians.

Accordingly, the treaty of alliance together with this additional clause was signed on the 20th of April, and at the same time it was agreed that Prussia should under given circumstances station 100,000 men within thirty-six days upon her eastern frontier, and possibly increase her army to the number of 200,000; on these points it was said she would come to some understanding with Austria. Here, too, the decision of the questions whether and when these measures might be necessary was accordingly not left to Austria's judgment alone, but to the united conviction of the two allies.

In fact, this was an alliance of a very peculiar nature: hearty co-operation together with the greatest circumspection, brotherly confidence ever on guard. Prussia saw very well the possibility of a break with Russia, and Austria was pleased with the alliance whenever she thought of Italy and of France. Yet the chief aim of the treaty was after all for Austria the protection of her possessions in the event of her going ahead against Russia, for Prussia the assurance of her neutrality in the face of possible schemes of France and of the Revolution. To Austria's mind the alliance was a bulwark against the East, for Prussia it was a defence against the West. The strength of Frederick William's convictions in this line was made manifest to the world by his treatment of those men who had been hitherto

the representatives of the opposite tendencies: at the very beginning of May, Baron Bunsen was recalled from London, the Minister of War, Von Bonin, was suddenly dismissed, and the Prince of Prussia was given leave of absence from all his military offices; indeed, the latter was even threatened with fortress-confinement because of his former adherence to the Opposition.

Meanwhile a circular note was sent from Vienna and Berlin to the German Courts, announcing the conclusion of the alliance, the invitation to join in the same, and the intention to bring the matter before the Confederate Diet. But at this point there was in store for Austria an exceedingly unpleasant experience. She was forced to see, even more strongly than in the recent tariff war, that the interests of Germany were very far removed from those of the Austrian Empire, whereas they were identical with those of Prussia. In fair weather this fact might easily be concealed by the mistrust felt by the Courts towards Prussian projects of union or of annexation; but when any really serious dangers threatened, the relations of things could not but be seen in their true light.

The Lesser States, like Prussia, felt the strongest disinclination to take any part whatever in a war-policy. The only exception was found in the person of the ever-restless and ambitious Herr von Beust. He had not forgotten the services which Russia had rendered to German individualism in 1850: "We must hope for Russia's triumph," he said; "we have need of

her assistance against Prussian ambition." Ever since the summer of 1853, he had been urging those Governments that had formed the Darmstadt Coalition against Prussia in the tariff quarrel, to establish a closer league of the Lesser States, which might then join an Austro-Prussian alliance with Russia.

But these belligerent plans were at once decidedly discountenanced by his friends at Munich and at Stuttgart. There these projects were met by a universal desire for rest and peace, and for strict neutrality on the Eastern Question. The feeling was in every respect like that manifested at Berlin, which found in any meddling in Turkish complications only serious sacrifices for Germany, and not the least prospect of any gain.

Consequently, the members of the Darmstadt Coalition met again at Bamberg, in order to give expression to their distrust of Austria's ambitious schemes. They drew up on the 25th of May a common circular, praising in the usual phrases the patriotic magnanimity of the two Monarchs and their endeavors to unite all the power and strength of Germany. The states would, therefore, gladly join the alliance, but they hoped that it was the intention, consistent with actual neutrality, to keep not only Russian, but also Turkish and the allied troops as well, out of the principalities. They said that it was presumed that at future peace-congresses the German Confederation would be specially represented as such, by the side of Austria and Prussia, but that during the continuance of the war, Germany would hold herself so far as possible aloof.

Count Buol was, as may easily be imagined, quite as much astonished at these declarations as he was enraged. Whereas King Frederick William urgently besought his imperial nephew to accept graciously the peacefully-inclined attitude of the German Princes, to preserve as mild a tone as possible in the message which was to be sent to St. Petersburg, and to delay the sending of the same until after the German Confederation, as such, should have joined the alliance: Count Buol decided upon just the opposite, to confront the Bamberg expectations with an accomplished fact, and to send at once, on the 3d of June, the peremptory note to St. Petersburg without consulting either the Confederation or Prussia with regard to its form.

To prevent any Prussian disaffection at this precipitation, the Emperor Francis Joseph, who was staying at the time in Prague with his newly-married wife, sent a most hearty and urgent invitation to the King to meet him at Tetschen, whither Buol and Manteuffel were then also summoned. Here the Emperor succeeded in retaining his influence over the King, to whom the principles of the Bamberg confederates seemed correct enough, but their conduct rather an attempt on the part of small people to play the grandee; and the King was induced still to navigate in Austrian waters.

The King approved the form of the Austrian note to Russia; a Prussian despatch in its support was promised, and a common reply to the Bamberg confederates was settled upon, the drift of which was, that their

co-operation in the alliance was beyond question counted upon, and that then their wishes would be regarded so far as circumstances would allow.

Furthermore, the Emperor, who had just before this ordered a fresh levy of 95,000 men, took no pains to conceal from his august ally that Russia's refusal to comply with their demand would immediately be followed by war, and that in that case he should be obliged to depend upon Prussia's protection of Austrian territory. The King expressed his hope that the best results might be expected from Russia's willingness to acquiesce.

CHAPTER III.

DISCORD.

ONLY too soon was it made evident how unsteady was the foundation upon which the alliance of the 20th of April had been based.

To start with, everything depended upon the decision of Russia about evacuating the principalities, and this seemed at first likely to turn out unfavorably; but soon the powers at St. Petersburg considered the evil consequences of such a method of procedure, and thought better of it. The Czar, according to the reports of the Prussian commissioner, was over-burdened with work, continually ill, anxious with cares, and alternately excitable and irresolute. The customary regularity and system disappeared from the conduct of business. The Czar made rash decisions, and then noticing the silent dissatisfaction of the Chancellor, Count Nesselrode, let the matter go, and allowed him to determine and carry out plans as he best saw fit. So the Count now succeeded in getting a partial answer returned to the summary note from Vienna. Russia declared, on the 29th of June, her willingness to withdraw from the principalities, if Austria would guarantee that Russia's adversaries would refrain from all further hostilities towards Russian possessions; in

the event of such a truce, Russia was ready to enter into peace-negotiations upon the basis of the Vienna protocol of April 9th.

These were indeed no insignificant concessions. But Count Buol was not contented. He had already, on the 14th of June (without any consultation with Berlin), concluded a treaty with Turkey about a common occupation of the principalities, and was now pushing large bodies of troops towards the Roumanian frontier. On the 9th of July he declared to the Russian Government, that he would recommend Russia's desire for an armistice to the attention of the Western Powers, though he could in no way vouch for the nature of their decision; but let that turn out as it might, Austria must still insist upon her demand that the principalities be soon evacuated. At the same time he kept urging Prussia to consent to the mobilization of 200,000 men, and half of the Confederate contingents. Indeed, soon afterwards, to Prussia's great surprise, he announced to the German states that a motion for mobilization would presently be brought forward in the Confederate Diet by both of the Great Powers in concert. In short, every action of the Count betrayed an ill-concealed thirst for war.

Prussia, on her part, maintained persistently, as was consistent with the interests of the country, her pacific attitude. The contrast between her position and Austria's, which had seemed almost removed in the April treaty, now stood forth in sharp outlines. In Berlin the Russian reply was deemed satisfactory; Russia's

demand, that if she should withdraw from the territory of the enemy, her own territory should be protected from hostile attacks, seemed founded in fairness; and the Russian note, it was said, could certainly be made the starting-point for a general settlement of the terms of peace. Consequently, Prussia had no notion of mobilizing; the only thing that the King determined upon was the raising to a war-footing of the number of horses in the cavalry and artillery. He himself sent despatches to Paris and London, saying that it was now the business of the maritime Powers to declare their aims in the pursuit of the war, and the conditions which they on their part would impose as the terms of an armistice or of peace.

At this time there came to Paris and London also Austria's inquiry, what verdict the Western Powers passed upon Russia's reply. The answer was just what Count Buol expected. So soon as the contents of the Russian note of June 29th were known, the position of the Western Powers was determined, namely, that the only proper response to it was the conclusion of an offensive and defensive alliance with the Vienna Cabinet, and consequently the immediate prosecution by Austria of the war with Russia. The draft of such an alliance was prepared in Paris, and very carefully considered in Vienna.

But then came an unexpected turn. After the Czar Nicholas in his last note had shown that he would not be dictated to by foreigners, he ordered immediately afterwards, as the result of his own private reflection,

and "for strategic reasons," the withdrawal of his troops from the principalities to a position beyond the Pruth, thus taking out of Count Buol's hand his excuse for declaring war.

Now the political tendencies of the German Lesser and Petty States in the Confederate Diet were fully manifest. Even after the Tetschen circular, the majority of the Governments felt no enthusiasm for the proposition to join the April alliance. Then the opinion took root in many places, that it would be better to join in order to give strength and support to Prussia's hinderance of Count Buol's projects. Yet the preliminary deliberations of the several committees progressed with the pace of a snail. It was not until the withdrawal of the Russians had already made the questionable additional clause of no effect, that it was decided, on the 24th of July, to join, but still with the prudent paragraph, that the best means of attaining the end should be made the subject of further deliberations. In order not to allow Prussia's new position as leader to be too marked, Austria voted in all cases with the majority.

All this might well have dampened somewhat the ardor of Count Buol. He gave up for the time the idea of a formal alliance with the maritime Powers; although the discussion went forward with reference to the conditions which ought to be imposed upon Russia as the terms of an armistice and of peace-negotiations. An agreement was soon reached upon the basis of the former Vienna protocol. Count Buol also consented to

the demand of the maritime Powers that the provokingly peace-loving Prussia should be allowed no share in any of the deliberations, and that Austria should be bound by the articles decided upon, almost as formally as in an alliance. By the interchange of similar documents, the following demands were agreed upon on the 8th of August, with the reservation of further requisitions as the course of events in the war might prescribe :

1. A European guaranty of the rights of the Danube principalities in place of the former Russian protectorate.
2. Free navigation of the Danube to the sea.
3. Revision of the treaty of 1841 in the interests of the European balance of power.
4. Promotion of the interests and rights of the Turkish Christians in a way consistent with the sovereign prerogatives of the Sultan.

None of the contracting parties were to consider any Russian proposals that should not express full acceptance of these principles.

On the 10th of August, then, Count Buol sent these demands, made in the name of the three Powers in common, to St. Petersburg, and simultaneously communicated this fact to Berlin with an invitation to join in this work of peace.

One can easily imagine the impression which such news made upon the Prussian Government. The confidential ally of April 20th had again, on her own account and without consulting Prussia, taken a step which for Austria involved a new declaration of war against Russia, and which was only too likely to draw Prussia

and Germany into the complication. Prussia's resentment was increased by the fact that the Western Powers preserved a strict silence towards her with regard to the matter. "It seems," said Herr von Manteuffel, "as if we were to be punished for differing in our opinion from the Western Powers."

Besides, it was impossible to discover the least advantage to German interests in the four requisitions. The freedom of navigation upon the Danube meant at the time almost nothing to the Germans, and would not be likely to be of consequence to them, unless perhaps in the distant future. The removal of the Russian protectorate over the Danube principalities was all very well, but the replacement of the same by a Pan-European guaranty might be attended with very unpleasant consequences. The third and fourth points concerned matters to which Germany was decidedly indifferent; and furthermore, they were stated so indefinitely that everything depended upon their more exact interpretation. In spite of all this, the King decided on the 18th of August to recommend to the Czar the four requisitions as a starting-point for peace-negotiations and an armistice; but he also made it known in Vienna that he would not bind himself by promising to take up arms against Russia, if she saw fit to decline these demands.

While this correspondence was going on, the Russians had completely withdrawn from Wallachia, and on the 20th of August, Austrian and Turkish troops entered the country. Yet there was anxiety still at Vienna as

to the consequences. Therefore, Count Buol instructed the deputy to the Confederate Diet, Herr von Prokesch, to sound carefully the sentiments of the German Courts as represented at Frankfort. Prokesch, then, just before the usual adjournment of the Diet, put the question in a session of the committee whether the German Governments were inclined to include, as under the protection of the April alliance, the Austrian troops in the Danube principalities as well as Austria's own proper territory, and also whether the Governments following Austria's example were ready to bind themselves to accept and carry out the four points of the requisitions. The other members of that committee could only reply by promising to announce the answer of their Governments after the vacation.

At the beginning of September, a Russian note appeared, dated August 26th, rejecting absolutely the four requisitions, and declaring that Russia would in the future confine herself to the defence of her possessions, and with fixed resolution await the course of events.

The Prussian King was at the time at Putbus on the island of Rügen, attended by Bismarck, Alvensleben, and Colonel Manteuffel. The President of the Ministry was also summoned thither. On the 3d of September, as a negative reply to the questions proposed by Prokesch, a circular to the German Courts was drawn up, to the effect that, after Russia's declaration that she wished to remain upon the defensive,

there was no imminent danger threatening the Austrian troops in the principalities, and therefore an extension of the April alliance for their protection was not necessary; further, that the four requisitions were open to many objections, and the King, especially since Russia's refusal, could not recommend to his allies any participation in them that might give rise to burdens and to obligations; he also hoped that Austria would refrain from any aggressive movement, and so avoid new complications.

By this means, in view of the well-known sentiments of the Lesser States, all hope was destroyed for Austria of influencing the Confederate Diet to pass warlike decrees, unless, indeed, Frederick William should allow himself to be persuaded to change his position at the last minute. Accordingly, Count Buol decided for the present to remain passive, especially since the English and French land-forces, to the number of 50,000 men, which had been gathering up to this time at Varna, now embarked, on the 5th of September, with a portion of the Turkish army for the Crimea to besiege the great military seaport town, Sebastopol; and thus no support was to be looked for by Austria from that source along the Danube and the Carpathian Mountains, in case she made an attack upon the Russians.

The Western Powers were exceedingly angry at the course events had taken. Former remarks of Buol's had led them to count at least upon Austria's recalling her ambassador from St. Petersburg in case Russia refused to comply with the four requisitions;

after which diplomatic rupture, military operations would probably soon follow. But nothing of the kind was done, and Russia could with composure bring great masses of troops together to crush the bold assailants at Sebastopol.

Austria turned the blame off upon Prussia, but was only half successful in gaining credit for this in Paris and London. The two Courts kept up, of course, their resentment against the Berlin Cabinet; but yet they confessed that Prussia had indeed more reason than Austria to wish to preserve Russia's friendship, and had always shown consistently only one color, whereas Austria was always playing with the sword, but did not draw it at the critical moment. Thus they poured out the vials of their wrath over both of the German Powers.

Napoleon, who at the time was visited by Prince Albert, confidentially told his guest that although he was obliged, naturally, to direct his policy according to the course of events, yet the inmost wish of his heart was ever the liberation of Poland from the Russian yoke, and Italy from the Austrian, a wish which his endeavor at that time to provoke Austria into a war with Russia placed in a peculiar light. His ambassadors at the German Courts remarked significantly that if Russia were not forced by Germany's attitude into making peace before the end of the year, then it would be necessary in the spring to call in revolutionary help.

In keeping with this, a rumor arose in several places, to the effect that France, in a secret understanding

with Austria, was collecting troops upon her own eastern frontier, with a view to letting them march through South Germany towards Poland in order to attack Russia in her most vulnerable spot. The English newspapers kept saying that if the sleepy Germans did not soon of their own accord fulfil their duty towards Europe, it would be necessary to drag them in disgrace into the arena. The English diplomats, too, made similar observations; so that Minister von Manteuffel began to believe in the possibility of a blockade of the Prussian coasts by the allied fleet. Bismarck laughed at the idea. "I place no belief," he wrote, "in the probability of a blockade that would do English commerce more harm than it would us, until I see it actually taking place; and as to the passage of a French army across Germany, the simplest and most effective means of resisting this would be the mobilization of two Prussian and two South German army-corps. If we show ourselves to be absolutely without fear, others will not molest us."

Meanwhile, the King was disturbed by very earnest and half-threatening letters from Prince Albert, which induced him to favor an attempt to still the fury of the storm rather by friendly advances than by mobilization. He therefore sent one of his adjutant-generals, the old General von Wedell, to Paris, without any definite instructions, but with a fine letter to Napoleon, overflowing with affectionate sentiment and respectful phrases.

The effect of this step was not happy. Napoleon, appreciating thankfully the kind feeling expressed in

the letter, nevertheless had Drouyn de Lhuys ask the Prussian ambassador, Count Hatzfeldt, whether all that was indicative only of the personal relations between the two Sovereigns, or meant an alliance between the two Governments and common action. Count Hatzfeldt considered himself at liberty only to say that the intention could hardly have been to signify that if one of the Governments went to war, the other would immediately pounce upon their common enemy. While Wedell's mission was thus unsuccessful in Paris, it created everywhere in Germany the impression that Prussia was beginning to hesitate, and that this time, too, Austria was again proving herself to be the strongest of the Confederate Governments.

This was the state of affairs when on the 28th of September a despatch from Bucharest was received at Vienna with the information that a Tartar had brought the news of a great defeat of the Russians at Sebastopol, and that the city had fallen into the hands of the allies. Count Buol in his exultation twice sent burning congratulations to Napoleon, and determined, in the midst of the intoxicating impression which the news of this victory was making upon all Europe, to put to rout completely the resistance of Prussia and the Lesser States to his propositions.

On the 30th of September he sent word to Berlin that Austria must now proceed in Frankfort even without Prussia's co-operation; and on the 1st of October announced to the other German Courts that Austria would make in the Confederate Diet at once a

peremptory claim for the protection of her troops in the principalities, and for the definite acceptance of the four demands addressed to Russia. Buol's calculations proved to be well founded. The great majority of the Lesser and Petty States were completely overawed, and assured the imperial ambassadors of their most ardent friendship.

Prussia sent, indeed, on the 13th of October, a warning circular to them all, urging them not to be led into making a promise of such a nature that afterwards any miserable affray between Turks and Russians on the Pruth would involve first Austria and then with her all Germany in the war. But meanwhile the probability of such a war grew less every day. The news brought by the Tartar very soon proved to be a fabrication; for Sebastopol had in fact made an heroic resistance. So the forces of both parties collected about this point, and there was no talk about any engagements on the river Pruth.

Russia renewed in Berlin the declaration of her determination to limit her action to the defensive, and indeed implied a willingness under certain circumstances to accede to the four requisitions. Milder messages came, too, from Vienna: saying (November 9th) that although Austria might be obliged in case of necessity to compel the acceptance of the four points by force of arms, yet she had no desire at all to make any aggressive movements, and would make no agreements with the other Powers concerning a war, without first informing Prussia and Germany.

Upon this, Herr von Manteuffel inquired several times during the next few weeks of Count Buol with regard to the latter's relations with the Western Powers, and received only the reply that the details of the application of the four points were being discussed. Under these circumstances, when everything seemed to be tending towards peace, it seemed to the Berlin Court that there would be no danger in yielding a trifle to the wishes of Austria: on the 26th of November it was agreed that an additional clause should be attached to the April Alliance, and the whole was immediately laid before the Confederate Diet for its acceptance.

In this additional clause, Prussia extended the promise of protection of Austrian territory so that it might also apply to the Austrian troops in the principalities, and both Powers declared that they would together try to induce Russia to accept the four required points. All promises, however, of resorting to war in the event of Russia's refusal, and of assisting Austria in any armed aggressive step, were, as before, strictly avoided. They very soon were seen, too, to be superfluous; for as early as the 28th of November, the ambassador, Prince Gortschakoff, announced to Count Buol that the Emperor Nicholas accepted the four requisitions as they stood. It might now be believed, that the way was opened to successful peace-negotiations.

But a new surprise was in store for the Prussian Government, indeed a much greater one than ever before, and prepared for her by her "close ally" of April 20th.

It had not been the exact truth that Count Buol had stated when he said the details of the application of the four points were being discussed with the Western Powers. He had in the last few weeks been at work upon important matters of quite another character. It appears that he had become weary of the long postponement of the crisis; and since the finances were exhausted, the army must either be reduced to a peace-footing or must fight. For fighting, however, there was need of more certain help than Germany was willing to offer. Therefore he turned to the Western Powers, and begged of them a treaty establishing a closer alliance.¹

This request found willing ears both in London and in Paris, especially because the tenacious resistance of Sebastopol made it vitally important that a threatening attitude on the part of Austria should prevent Russia from collecting an overwhelming force in the Crimea. Accordingly, Count Buol declared himself ready to take part in the war, if Russia should decline to fulfil the demands based upon the four points. The Western Powers did not at first wish to limit themselves still to those four requisitions, but finally contented themselves with the reservation which had been already made on the 8th of August, namely, that new conditions might be added according to the course that events should take in the war.

Count Buol then further proposed, that, so soon as

¹ Speech of Lord Clarendon in the House of Lords on the 26th of June, 1855.

war broke out between Austria and Russia, an offensive and defensive alliance of the three Powers should come into force, which should insure for Austria the assistance of the allies by land and by sea. He also demanded the settlement of some definite date upon which this alliance should begin to take effect, in case a general European peace should not have been already concluded, and proposed as such a time the last day of that year. The representatives of the Western Powers could give their consent to all this, and the diplomatists came to an agreement about the middle of November.

The Emperor Francis Joseph had as yet raised no objections. When Count Buol, however, now laid before him the accomplished fact, he wished to hold aloof. His personal feeling for the Czar Nicholas rebelled against a step that according to all human calculation would make a war inevitable with the Sovereign whom he had formerly so highly respected. But Count Buol, it is said, explained to him that the interests of his empire demanded the measure; that under the circumstances the choice lay only between a break with Russia and a break with the Western Powers; and that he himself, if the Emperor persisted in his passive delay, would be constrained to ask for his dismissal.¹ Thereupon, the Emperor, though painfully affected, granted his approval.

Up to this point, no one in Berlin had any idea of all that was going on. Count Buol now remembered

¹ *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*, December 14th.

Harcourt, *Les quatre ministères de M. Drouyn de Lhuys*, pp. 76, 88.

his promise of November 9th, and thought — for indeed the new treaty of alliance had not yet been officially signed and sealed — that he would literally fulfil it by a message to Herr von Manteuffel. So the Austrian ambassador, Count Esterhazy, on the 1st of December called upon the Prussian Minister and read to him (but did not give into his hands) a despatch dated the 28th of November, in which Count Buol informed him that the Western Powers had imperatively demanded further and greater requisitions than those included in the four points; that Austria had stood out against this until she had become convinced, that, in order to make her opposition of any effect, it would be necessary to enter into closer relations with these Powers; that this involved definite mutual pledges and obligations; and that the result of the negotiations which had been held so far had pointed to the conclusion of a treaty of alliance, which, to be sure, had not yet been signed nor drawn up, but which had been agreed upon in its main points. Then followed a *résumé* of the above-mentioned details of the agreement, with the observation that Austria would hold the treaty of alliance open to Prussia if she chose to join.

On the following day, the 2d of December, the ambassador at Vienna, Count Arnim, telegraphed that the treaty of alliance had already been definitely concluded.

The effect of this circumstance was violent excitement on all sides. Russia appreciated the correctness of what Prince Schwarzenberg had once said: that Austria would astonish the world by her ingratitude.

Prince Gortschakoff was dumfounded when Count Buol informed him in a few words of the contents of the treaty. At first, he was about to ask for his passports; he complained that he had been deceived, and that, although the Russian assent to the four points had been graciously accepted only three days before, a compact of war had been immediately afterwards entered into, which was especially directed against Russia. He declared finally, that he could make no reply until he received further instructions from St. Petersburg; and left the Minister, filled with enduring hatred, not against the Western Powers, with whom Russia was in open war, but against the faithless Austria.

Likewise beside themselves, in view of the present imminent danger of war, were the ambassadors in Vienna of the German Lesser and Petty States, and soon, too, the German Courts themselves, so that for a moment it seemed doubtful whether the Confederate Diet would accept the additional clause of the 26th of November. The prevailing opinion in Berlin was, that such an open declaration of hostility was not advisable; and so the Confederate Diet, on the 9th of December, signified its approval, although it was done in a way that excluded every obligation to act upon the offensive against Russia, and the Diet instructed its military commission to propose the necessary measures for securing the safety of Germany.

In Berlin, as one may readily imagine, there was only one opinion concerning the craftiness of the Vienna policy and the unreliableness of such a Con-

federate ally. The King, seriously offended in his inmost heart, at first declared with external composure that he would simply persist in his promises made on the 20th of April. But his constantly-varying temperament and his ever-active fancy were excited, as ever, in different directions. Certainly he did not wish to have anything more to do with Austria. But her new alliance became a source of anxiety to him by making his fear of the hostility of the Western Powers doubly vivid. The rumor already gained ground that Prussia would not be admitted to the future peace-conferences unless she joined the new Triple Alliance.

Such an exclusion, however, seemed to the King to be quite as dishonorable as it would be, after Austria's conduct, to join the Alliance. He meditated and meditated how he might avoid both courses, and settled upon the plan of declining the Vienna treaty on the one hand, and on the other, of offering to the Western Powers a special Prussian alliance of the same import as the instrument of December 2d, and of promising, should peace not be effected, to station an army upon her eastern frontier, upon the borders of Russia. He would consent to do all this, however, upon two conditions: first, he required a guaranty that the kingdom of Poland should not be restored by a revolution (for the strategic move of stirring up a rebellion among the Russian Poles in order to cripple Russia's forces in that quarter would be attained by the above-mentioned location of Prussian troops upon the frontier); and secondly, a guaranty that no foreign troops would

presume to march through Prussian or German territory.

He wished to make these proposals first in London, and selected for this purpose a diplomat of a liberal complexion, namely, Count Usedom. The King recommended him and his mission to Queen Victoria by an autograph letter of the 14th of December. "He is," said the King, "the bearer of weighty matters, which I put confidently into your hands. As one of the world's Great Powers, and as the greatest Protestant Power, Great Britain *must* not leave Prussia to the fate that is planned for her. Usedom's mission is merely an expression of confidence in Your Majesty; you yourself, Most Gracious Queen, shall then decide whether he shall consult with your ministers. The *arrière-pensée* of severing the connection between England and France is entirely foreign both to me and to my Government."

This message achieved no more than the sending of Count Pourtales before. The Queen of England instituted no public discussion over the matter; and when later something of the contents of the message became known in Paris, the Minister, Drouyn de Lhuys, said very sharply that all this seemed to have been done in order to prevent a French invasion of Poland, and to defend for Russia her weakest frontier. "It appears," he said, "as if Usedom had had several alliance-drafts in his trunk, and had by mistake offered in London the one intended for St. Petersburg."

Thus everything came about as Bismarck had pre-

dicted on the 19th of December to Baron Manteuffel. He had written: "I believe that any one-sided negotiation with England will make our relations with the Western Powers rather worse than better; for England will only turn us off, and we shall have given out of the whole cloth an evidence of our uneasiness."

Simpler and more practical than this intermezzo was the action of the Prussian Government, when on the 16th of December the ambassadors of the three Powers officially presented the document of their alliance, and requested a statement regarding Prussia's willingness to join it. In his answer of the 19th of December, the Minister von Manteuffel showed how much good Prussia had already accomplished in the Eastern Question; the Western Powers had used arms, Prussia had confined herself to diplomacy, and had contributed no less to the results that had been secured; though different means had been employed, the same end had been in view; but now Prussia was to join in the war against Russia, unless the latter before the close of the year should accept the conditions of peace imposed by the allies; yet it lay in the very nature of the case, that Prussia must before all things be made acquainted with these conditions of peace, for she could never consent to pledge herself to assist in a war which was being waged for the sake of gaining unknown ends; everything depended for the time upon the construction put upon the four demands; and therefore Prussia begged the Powers to acquaint her with what they had already determined upon.

There could not be much objection made to this. But Prussia would have immediately introduced the desired information into further negotiations, and against this France and England decidedly protested. Accordingly, Count Buol, on the 24th of December, replied that he could not say anything about the construction to be put upon the four points by the Powers, because they had as yet come to no agreement upon the matter among themselves, and that furthermore any such agreement was impossible so long as the war was raging. This bold statement, that conditions of peace could not be formulated so long as the war lasted, left in Berlin only the two alternatives of believing that the logic of the Viennese was a strange science, or that they intended openly to mock the Prussians.

So much the more drastic was the impression that was produced, when on the same day another despatch from Count Buol arrived, likewise dated the 24th of December, in which Prussia's holding aloof from the Triple Alliance was regretted, and in which, with all the coolness possible, the request was made, in view of the evident immediate danger to Austrian territory from Russian attacks after the opening of the new year, that, agreeably to the military convention of the 20th of April, the mobilization of 200,000 Prussian troops determined upon in such an event should now take place. Notice was also given that Herr von Prokesch had received instructions to request the corresponding mobilization of half or the whole of the Confederate contingents, and their assignment to the

Austrian and Prussian armies. Evidently Count Buol flattered himself that just after the close alliance of Austria with the Western Powers, no German Government would have the courage to make any resistance to the demands of the Court of Vienna.

Yet after all, it became evident, soon after the sending of the two despatches, that although peace would not be assured by the end of the new year, and consequently the offensive and defensive alliance would come into force, yet Austria would by no means begin at once a war with Russia. However angry the Czar Nicholas might inwardly feel at Austria's hostile turn, yet Russian interests too evidently depended upon preventing an open rupture. Prince Gortschakoff accordingly received instructions to begin negotiations upon the basis of the four requisitions.

The first conference between him and the representatives of the three Powers took place on the 28th of December. At this conference certain demands were made by the allies, to which Gortschakoff was again obliged to reply that in his instructions and full powers those points had not been anticipated, and that he therefore must ask for a respite of two weeks that he might receive fresh information. However much Count Buol sighed at this loss of time and money, the request could not be refused, especially since the unusual severity of the winter made all military operations for the moment out of the question.

Furthermore, a dark shadow had already fallen over the Count's affection for the Western Powers, from

the circumstance that Napoleon — we already know his motives — had in the course of December held negotiations with Sardinia with regard to her joining the Alliance and her sending troops to the Crimea. England, owing to the paucity of her soldiers, had eagerly favored this scheme and promised Victor Emanuel a magnificent donation of money; and upon that, the treaty of alliance was signed on the 26th of December between Sardinia and the Western Powers.

Nothing more disagreeable or more alarming could possibly have happened for the Court of Vienna. The champion of Italian Unity, the patron of all Italian revolutionaries, the mortal enemy of Austrian dominion in Italy, was to win claims upon the gratitude and support of the Western Powers, and above all of that Italian conspirator who had made himself the absolute *Imperator* of France! “Never!” exclaimed Count Buol to Baron Bourqueney, “never can the standards of Piedmont, though side by side with those of France, become for us any other than the banners of the enemy.” However much Drouyn de Lhuys emphasized the fact that the treaty was purely a military and temporary one, yet Count Buol’s mistrust was not in the least allayed, and all the more anxiously did he await the reply of Prussia to his despatch of the 24th of December.

This reply came to hand on the 5th of January, 1855, and was precisely what the situation of things made alone possible. It was to the following effect: the April treaty and its additions aimed only at the ward-

ing off of Russian attacks, and there is less reason now than ever to expect that such an attack will be made; if Austria, on the other hand, should aggressively invade Russian territory, that is no concern of Prussia's, nor could Austria in that case lay any claim to assistance from the German States; moreover, the additional clause of the 26th of November presupposes a common support of the four points by both Powers: therefore so long as Austria continues to exclude Prussia from the Vienna conferences, the clause does not in the least bind Prussia; consequently, there is no reason for a mobilization of Prussian troops; yet as a matter of fact, Prussia has so far quietly continued to prepare her troops for the possibilities of war, that if necessary they can appear upon the scene in much less time than the thirty-six days mentioned in the treaty of April.

Thus Austria saw upon one side the threatening attitude of Sardinia, and upon the other the flat refusal of support from Germany. Count Buol's courage sank, and in the heart of the Emperor Francis arose again the old unwillingness to wage a war with Nicholas.

Meanwhile, Prince Gortschakoff was prepared on the 7th of January to lay before the conference the assent of his Government to the demands made by the allies on the 28th of December; so that nothing stood any longer in the way of bringing forward the special conditions of peace.

Count Buol, however, still considered it advisable to try once more his success with the remaining German states. He sent word to them in a circular note dated

the 14th of January, that, in spite of Prussia's difference of opinion, the imperial presiding deputy of the Confederate Diet had received the order to propose to that body the mobilization of half or the whole of the Confederate contingents, and also the election of a Confederate commander-in-chief. To provide for the very probable event of the failure of such a motion to pass in the Diet, the Count also took on the same day another step, by sending a confidential note to several of the German Courts, in which he asked whether they would be willing individually to place their troops at the disposal of Austria, in return for a guaranty of the protection of their present possessions, and a proportionate share in the profits of the war. Certainly, it would have been hard to tell what advantages Würtemberg or Hanover might gain from a war in the Orient!

Although the Austrian proposals were seconded by very harsh and urgent notes from Drouyn de Lhuys, yet the result of these measures was merely a new defeat of the Vienna policy. Bavaria and Saxony answered immediately in the negative. Several of the smaller states instructed their deputies in the Confederate Diet to vote for every motion brought forward by both of the Great Powers, but for no others. Even ever-loyal Darmstadt was not willing to send away her troops in Austria's service into unknown lands. At last, Brunswick alone remained at Austria's side.

On the 8th of February the vote of the Confederate Diet was passed, that, in the absence of any danger whatever of a Russian attack, there was no occasion for

mobilization, nor for the election of a Confederate commander-in-chief; yet in view of the uncertain state of things in Europe, the Confederation, conformably to its duty to care for the independence and inviolability of Germany as prescribed by Article II. of the Act of Confederation, ordered the contingents to be so far prepared for war that they could be ready to march from headquarters within fourteen days after being called out.

This note translated into practical language meant: We will have nothing to do with any aggressive war-policy, but will defend ourselves against every one that may try to break down our position of neutrality.

The anger of Count Buol over this unfavorable result knew no bounds. There followed, during February and March, a very lively correspondence between Vienna, Berlin, and the Lesser States, which was carried on in an irritated and threatening tone on the part of Austria, and on the part of Prussia with cool non-compliance.

The situation was not at all changed by this correspondence, but the breach between Austria and Germany grew constantly wider.

CHAPTER IV.

RESULTS.

MEANWHILE the opening of the peace-conferences was delayed from day to day, and from week to week. Before the claims in detail could be proposed to the common adversary, they must, of course, each be agreed upon by the three Powers among themselves. But in these consultations, difficulties arose over almost every word, for the simple reason that the mighty allies no longer, as on the 2d of December, had the same thing in mind. The Western Powers wished to make such demands as seemed to them imperative, and then to continue the war if these were refused; whereas Austria, after her recent experiences, wished to impose no conditions that seemed beforehand likely to be rejected, and thus likely to prolong the war.

At first, France opposed this tendency on the part of Austria with reference to several articles, while England favored and upheld it; and after that, Drouyn de Lhuys declared that if such a lame conduct was to continue, France would conclude a simple peace with Russia, and leave to the allies alone the business of restricting Russia's power in the Orient. Then came a change of ministry in England, which brought in place of the peaceful Lord Aberdeen the warlike Palmerston

at the head of the Cabinet, so that soon the English demands were more pronounced than the French, and Count Buol could find no other excuse for Austria's holding back than Prussia's heinous friendship with Russia, over which he constantly grumbled.

In the midst of these distressing quarrels came then the news that the Emperor Nicholas, in consequence of a neglected attack of la grippe, which had developed into pneumonia, had died on the 2d of March. His career, once so famous as he stood upon the pinnacle of glory, had ended in darkness. His powerful constitution, exhausted already by chronic disease, had been at last completely broken down by the fearful mental strain of the last year. Fallen from his position as paramount sovereign of Europe, he had seen the errors into which his vanity had led him, condemned by the whole world, his gigantic empire become more and more defenceless, his army reduced by enormous losses, his fleet half destroyed, and his finances seriously disordered.

But all this had made him hold only the more tenaciously, till his last breath was drawn, to the *rôle* in which he had his whole life long appeared before the world. As he had from no motives of selfish ambition drawn the sword in 1828 to protect the Christian Greeks, and as he had in the same spirit in 1848 opposed the Revolution, so, too, he announced in a manifesto a few days before his death, that it had been fully free from selfish considerations, and only for the liberation of the orthodox church, that he had begun the war. Truly, this was not hypocrisy from the lips

of him who was at once a political and an ecclesiastical autocrat. If in the event of a successful discharge of such holy duties, an extension of Russian territory came about as a secondary result, then it was only a confirmation of the truth that to those that serve the Lord, all things work for good.

Inasmuch as the young Emperor Alexander II. declared on his accession to the throne that it was his intention to continue in every respect the policy of his father, this change of rulers had no further effect than to postpone the beginning of the conferences for two weeks, to enable Prince Gortschakoff to secure his new credentials. During this time the allies came to an agreement in regard to the details relating to the first two of the four requisitions: the position of the Danube Principalities and the freedom of navigation upon the Danube River. And then, after the arrival of a Turkish plenipotentiary, the deliberations could finally begin on the 16th of March.

It became evident very soon that no serious difficulties were to be experienced in the settlement of those two points, and after six sessions a long list of articles relating to them received the approval of all parties. But it was different with the third point, the revision of the treaty of 1841. Every one knew already that in more than one detail there would be dissenting opinions, and that consequently upon this point turned the question of peace and war.

The treaty of 1841 provided that in times of peace no war-ship should pass the Dardanelles. But since

that time Russia had built upon the Black Sea a fleet far exceeding in strength the Turkish navy; and the true question at issue in the discussion of the third point was the abolition of this Russian preponderance of power upon the Euxine. When Prince Gortschakoff gave his assent on the 7th of January, it was with the reservation, strongly emphasized, that no sovereign right of the Czar's should be encroached upon by the measures which were to be introduced.

The question was now, whether it would be at all possible to gain the object desired and to respect this reservation. One method would have been the abolition of the treaty of 1841, and then the establishment of permanent naval stations of the Western Powers in Turkish ports on the Black Sea: Russia would at that time have raised no objection. But England found in such an arrangement numerous difficulties, and proposed, as at once the simplest and most effective plan, the neutralization of the Black Sea; that is to say, the exclusion of all war-ships and naval stations from this whole region.

England made this proposition in spite of the fact that Russia would most probably reject it. Accordingly, whoever was anxious for a speedy conclusion of peace, must devise some mediatory measure: in place of complete neutrality some limitation of the navy to be maintained by either country upon the Black Sea. This end might be attained either by forbidding an increase in the size of the fleets as they then stood, or by determining for each of the two countries a certain per-

missible number of ships. In the latter case the matter could be determined either by the conference or by an independent treaty between Russia and Turkey.

The affair was considered so important, that at the end of March both England and the Porte each sent one of their most prominent ministers to the conference; namely, Lord John Russell and Ali Pacha; Drouyn de Lhuys also secured from Napoleon an appointment to undertake the same mission. Thus the conference of ambassadors became a conference of ministers; and one that was to be of great moment, not only for the issue of the Crimean war, but also for European politics during the whole of the next decade.

Drouyn de Lhuys was a well-informed and able man, firm and consistent in his convictions, not demonstrative in his actions, brought up under Catholic influences, and trained in the old school of French diplomacy. As a statesman he was thoroughly conservative and free from every trace of that kind of ambition possessed by the first Napoleon. He strove neither for glory in wars nor for reforms, but was convinced rather that for the maintenance of a high position among the European states nothing could be more beneficial for France than the order of things sanctioned in 1815: union and consequently strength in the French nation, disunion and consequently weakness in her neighbors, that is, in Italy and Germany.

His repugnance to Italian Unity was increased by the fact that it was connected with danger to papal dominion; for he honored the Catholic Church not

only as the guide to heavenly bliss, but as a conservative element in internal government, as an ancient ally of the French Nation, and as contributing largely to the great influence of the French in the Orient. In Germany he entertained a decided dislike for Prussia with her Protestant and unifying tendencies; for both of these qualities seemed to him to be ineradicably grounded in the nature and in the history of that State, however graciously Frederick William IV. granted complete independence to the Catholic Church, and however ostentatiously he pretended to have great respect for the sovereignty of the German princes.

As the result of all these considerations, Drouyn de Lhuys looked upon the imperial State of Austria, the protector of the Pope and the anchor of the German Confederate Diet, as the best possible ally that France could find in Europe. He probably also thought to himself that such connections would prove to be not only a support, but a check as well, to the restless policy of his master. Therefore he was very anxious to see the league, entered into with Austria for the Crimean war, develop into a permanent alliance. He determined to leave no stone unturned in Vienna in the endeavor to remain united with Austria, whether for peace or for war.

Prudent diplomat that he was, he went first to London that he might know how to anticipate possible English obstructions to his plans. While he expressed himself there as being decidedly in favor of the neutralization of the Euxine, he nevertheless said he expected

that Austria would hardly accede to such radical demands, and consequently would not consider their rejection as sufficient ground for the declaration of war. He declared, however, that it was of the very greatest importance that Austria should engage in active warfare, and this would most probably be brought about, if Russia should also refuse a more moderate demand in the way of a limitation placed upon her navy.

Therefore he proposed: That Russia and Turkey shall each be allowed only four ships of the line upon the Black Sea, four frigates and a corresponding number of smaller vessels; each of the three allied Powers shall maintain the half of that number; Russia shall be denied the privilege of sailing out into the Mediterranean; the Porte can in case of imminent danger summon all the allied fleets into the Black Sea. The English lords declared themselves in favor of this whole plan; and Drouyn de Lhuys then started for Vienna, where after a rapid journey he arrived on the 6th of April.

Two days later he had an audience with the Emperor. He began with a few words about his master's firm and honest determination to co-operate with his allies either to bring about a lasting peace or to continue a just war. "Yes," exclaimed the Emperor, "let us secure peace!" Thereupon, the Minister explained his plans in reference to the third requisition: in the first place, the neutralization of the Euxine; in the second, limitation of the fleets. He called attention to the energy with which in the last few days France had advocated the

points relating to the Principalities and the navigation of the Danube, points which above all interested Austria; and he now hoped that Austria would be equally resolute with regard to the third point, which was of vital importance, to the maritime Powers.

He then enlarged upon the common advantages of a close union between France and Austria. "To strengthen the tie that binds her crown-lands together, to assert her high position in Germany in the face of a dangerous rival, to stop the encroachments of Russia on the Danube, to suppress anarchy and socialism, and to promote the internal prosperity of the empire — these," said he, "are certainly the aims of Austrian politics! Now, what ally could contribute more to the attainment of these ends than France? The great problem is, to check the Revolution without the aid of Russia, and to check Russia without the aid of the Revolution. For thirty years the problem has been unsolved, and the result has been the simultaneous triumph of Russia and of the Revolution. To-day the solution is to be found in the alliance of Austria and France. What has brought me to Vienna is not at all so much the wish to conclude peace with Russia as to confirm and render fruitful an alliance with Austria. In the eyes of true statesmanship, the Eastern Question, in spite of its significance, becomes in comparison with this other one a matter of only secondary importance."

The Emperor replied to this with a few general observations. He considered it impossible for Russia

to accept the plan of the neutralization of the Black Sea, and accordingly favored the system of limitation of the fleets. The French Minister went on to say, that the plan of campaign brought to Paris by Count Crenneville was entirely acceptable to Napoleon, and that it might therefore at once receive the form of an element of a mutual treaty. Francis Joseph, somewhat embarrassed, answered that he presumed it would be necessary to wait with that matter until the end of the conference, since it would not before that be quite certain whether Austria would be called upon to take part in the war.

After this conversation, Drouyn de Lhuys attended the conference with far less hope of accomplishing his purpose. He saw very clearly that Austria made no objection to Russia's being pressed with warnings and urgent demands, but her former thirst for war had gone by. The plan which he had proposed in London, of reducing the Russian fleet to four ships of the line, etc., was positively declined by Gortschakoff, and the Western Powers now awaited with suspense a declaration of war on the part of Austria. Count Buol, however, insisted that the possibilities of finding a pacific solution were not yet exhausted, and made to the French Minister a proposal, by which indeed the Russian fleet on the Black Sea would fare decidedly better: it should not be limited to four ships of the line, but simply not increased beyond its footing in 1853.

“That is,” said Buol, “Austria's ultimatum. We

consider it unfitting to impose harder conditions upon Russia, but the rejection of our offer we shall answer with a declaration of war." Drouyn de Lhuys, delighted now with the prospect of being able to carry out his scheme of a European system, agreed to this, and, while Gortschakoff's language was growing more and more defiant, extorted from the somewhat more cautious Lord John his final consent. On the 21st of April, accordingly, both Ministers telegraphed to their Sovereigns for ratification of their action.

For the cause of German and Italian Unity this was a very critical moment. A close alliance between Austria and France would have meant the ruin of these national hopes for a long time to come. Fortunately for both people, it was not the lot of Drouyn de Lhuys, any more than of Prince Schwarzenberg four years before, to give the decisive and permanent turn to the destinies of Europe.

The sentiments of the Emperor Napoleon coincided, it is true, with those of his Minister in so far as he who had no military vein in his body did not, like his uncle, contemplate the conquest of the world. But in other respects his wishes and aims stood in striking contrast with those held by Drouyn de Lhuys. The Emperor resembled his uncle in possessing no spark of French patriotism: brought up in exile, educated at the Augsburg gymnasium, having received his military training in German Switzerland, having drifted as pretender to the throne and conspirator to Italy, England, and America, and having been acquainted in

France only with the walls of his prisons, he was cosmopolitan in his ideas and feelings. The government of France was not the goal of his efforts, but had become the means to a more remote end.

He was a good artillerist, and thoroughly versed in the history of his own family: but further than this, his education in the course of his irregular life had been superficial. That most necessary training-school for a statesman, an exact historical knowledge of the development and the needs of the European nations, was entirely wanting. So in the long years of his exile, without the constraint of regular occupation, he had given a loose rein to his restless morbid fancy. He everywhere believed that he had discovered in the existing state of things the most serious defects; and he convinced himself of the ease with which a scheme of reform comprehending all Europe might be carried out, always on the supposition, of course, that the champion of the reforms was strong enough to bring them forward to the attention of the European Great Rulers as one among them and in every way their equal. After he had, then, by the fame of his name and by inciting the masses and the soldiers, in a way as clever as it was unscrupulous, raised himself to the French imperial throne, he did not hesitate to begin the realization of his world-embracing projects.

The first necessary condition was the overthrow of the alliance of the three Eastern Powers, which hampered him in every direction; and we have seen how conveniently the vanity of the Emperor Nicholas

played into his hands. So far triumphant, he doubted no longer of his further success. He considered that the very nature of things required the amalgamation of Spain and Portugal into an Iberian, and of Sweden and Denmark into a Scandinavian, Union. To his mind, justice and humanity demanded the freedom of Poland from Russian, and of Italy from Austro-Papal, oppression; for Germany, too, the removal of the cramping influence of the Eastern Courts would be a blessing.

Most certainly he did not aim at the national unity either of Italy or of Germany; on the contrary, the former seemed to him likely to be inconvenient, and the latter truly dangerous. But by supporting effectively in the one country the small yet ambitious Piedmont, and in the other the state of Prussia, which had been since 1850 very much undervalued, he hoped to gain for himself the influential position now held by Austria, and then to be able to bring about prosperity and thrift throughout the whole wide circle of the nations. For in this remarkably-organized brain, despotic, revolutionary, and humanitarian purposes were incessantly running into each other. As the Emperor Nicholas coated over his love of ruling with his suppression of the Revolution and his propagation of the orthodox Faith, so Napoleon III. did the same with his ideal democratic scheme of making everybody happy.

Italian affairs lay naturally nearest of all to his heart, as an old member of the secret Italian league; and consequently, opposition to Austria became the main-

spring of his future policy. However friendly his conduct was at this time towards Vienna, in order to incite Austria into an open war with Russia, and perhaps in this way to secure even now the restoration of Poland; and however much he praised to this end his Minister's wise speech to Francis Joseph, — yet he was as far as possible removed from sympathizing with Drouyn's endeavors to establish a permanent alliance with Austria. He had no idea of lowering unduly for the sake of that object the demands to be made upon Russia; and such seemed to him, as well as to Lord Palmerston, to be the effect of the proposal of Count Buol on the 21st of April. He telegraphed immediately to Vienna that this could not for a moment be entertained.

That meant the discontinuance of the conferences, and also the separation of Austria and France. Count Buol declared that Austria considered any increase in the severity of the requisitions inadmissible, and that since the Western Powers insisted upon such increase, Austria would take no part in the war. Again he tried by changing its form to make his proposal acceptable to the Western Powers. Drouyn de Lhuys decided to return immediately to Paris, and try to change by personal persuasion the verdict of his master. At his final audience with Francis Joseph, the latter expressed his hope that a permanent alliance with Austria for the common protection of Turkey might eventually appear in the eyes of Napoleon also as of more importance than a greater or less number of Russian ships.

This hope, however, was destined not to be of long

duration. A few weeks later it was announced that Drouyn de Lhuys was no longer in the Ministry, and on the 2d of July Napoleon opened the session of the legislative body with a speech that unreservedly complained of the conduct of Austria: "We are still waiting," were his words, "for Austria to fulfil her obligations, which consisted in making our treaty of alliance offensive and defensive in case the negotiations proved fruitless." There was no longer any doubt in Vienna about Napoleon's disfavor.

Also in Germany, the discontinuance of the peace-conferences that had been looked forward to so long, and the subsequent relapse of Austria into utter inactivity, produced a great excitement of public feelings. With deepest shame the people saw that enigmatical adventurer, at whose feet France had thrown herself, deciding the destiny of two great sections of the world; and where was Germany? Indeed, how could that mighty nation have played its proper part, wretchedly dismembered as it was, wanting any united, strong, and national organ, and crushed by a load of slothfulness, cowardice, and jealousy?

For the first time since 1850 the cry for a reform of the Confederate Constitution went again through the newspapers, and soon also through parliamentary circles. In the course of the summer of 1855, motions and resolutions sounding the same note followed in the Chambers of Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Gotha. That pregnant word, "popular representation," was also heard in the Confederate Diet. Count Buol, at that

time, as we know, thoroughly exasperated over the Confederate Diet, was foolish enough to allow himself to be drawn into those discussions. To the complaints about Austria's Oriental policy, which had involved an expense of one hundred and sixty million florins, and had been entirely fruitless, he ordered in September the newspapers that were controlled or supported by him to print the following categorical reply: "Most certainly is the present Confederate Constitution insufficient, and it has been the cause of the recent failure; it ought never again to happen that in the time of war one member of the Confederation should be left in the lurch by the others; there must be a Confederate court of arbitration, and a powerful authority, an *Emperor*, must watch over the execution of its decrees; above all things it must be agreed that the claims of Austria, based upon historical foundation and development, shall receive their due consideration."

It was soon very evident that such words as these were not especially adapted to increase Austria's popularity in Germany. Inasmuch as Bavarian newspapers had published them, Minister Pfordten very deliberately sent a note to Vienna inquiring whether these newspaper articles expressed the sentiments of the Imperial Government. Buol then retreated and answered: "The Confederate Constitution is surely open to many improvements; and in any case, the future of the German federative system depends upon the action of the Confederation in the Eastern Question."

But by saying this, he lost favor completely in the

eyes of his estimable Confederate associates; and Manteuffel was applauded on almost every side, when a few weeks later he explained that no more ought to be required from a confederation of sovereign states, like the German one, than it can accomplish, and further, that in no case could a critical examination of the present form of the Constitution have the least possible connection with the Eastern Question.

While all this ink had been flowing without furthering the German Cause a single step, immense streams of blood shed in the East had brought the European crisis at last to a close. When on the 23d of September, 1855, after a gigantic struggle of twelve months, Sebastopol, had at last fallen, and the martial ambition of the Western Powers had been thus satisfied, and when thereupon, on the 15th of November at the close of the World's Exposition at Paris, Napoleon gave solemn expression to the peaceful sentiments of France, then the Vienna Cabinet made a new attempt to mediate; and to begin with, it sounded the Western Powers in regard to the conditions which were to be imposed by them.

The result was an Austrian despatch to St. Petersburg dated the 16th of December, containing a detailed discussion of the four requisitions, and emphatically insisting upon the entire neutrality of the Black Sea, and upon the cession of a small tract of country in Bessarabia, whereby the mouths of the Danube were wholly withdrawn from Russian supremacy.

At the same time the Czar Alexander, after the

honor of the Russian banners had been maintained by important victories in Asia Minor, determined upon a more compliant course than in April, and sent, on the 23d of December, an offer on his part to Vienna, which contained only insignificant deviations from the Austrian proposition. Count Buol, however, now again anxious to recover the favor of the Western Powers, replied by announcing the unchangeableness of his conditions and the immediate cessation of diplomatic relations in the event of a refusal. The Russian Government thereupon overlooked its scruples, and expressed its willingness to sign the preliminaries according to the wording of the Austrian draft. Yet the angriest possible feeling at this domineering conduct of Buol remained deeply rooted in all Russian hearts; with malevolent eagerness they awaited a rupture with their ally that had once been rescued by themselves.

The definite document of peace was then to be drawn up at a great congress of the Powers. At the choice of the place of meeting, the pre-eminence was manifest, which the mighty deeds of France had already won for the Government of Napoleon; neither Vienna nor London could secure the fulfilment of its wishes; the Congress was summoned to meet at Paris by a vote which was at last unanimous.

To Austria's great displeasure, Sardinia appeared at Paris as one of the military Powers: on the other hand, Prussia, as a non-participant in the war, received for the time no invitation. When Austria and Russia in

the second session, on February 28th, 1856, proposed that Prussia also be summoned, Lord Clarendon succeeded in having the motion passed, that this should not be done until after the Congress should have already arrived at an understanding about the main points at issue. In Berlin this was keenly felt as a humiliating isolation, and the Liberal Opposition lost no opportunity to throw this in the face of the Ministry as the natural result of their sorry policy. As a matter of truth, however, it was nothing more than a senseless expression of English vexation at Prussia's neutrality; but by her firm persistence in this policy in spite of all threats and ado, she had at last again shown herself to be an independent Great Power. If the plan of excluding her from the Congress had been kept up, it would have been no worse for Prussia, but rather for those Powers that took part in the Congress, for the simple reason that in that case the Berlin Government would not have needed to be bound by the decrees of the Congress. Two weeks later, however, the Congress sent its invitation; and on the 18th of March the Prussian plenipotentiaries were received, Minister von Manteuffel and Count Hatzfeldt.

We have no reason here to follow in detail the course and the result of the negotiations of the Congress. It will be enough to take note what shape the mutual relations between the Powers gradually took during the same, especially in the last few sessions after the peace had already, on the 30th of March, been concluded; for in these sessions several other Euro-

pean matters and troubles were talked over without any binding decisions. France had from the very first day shown herself in every question about detail as deferential as possible to Russia, and agreed now with her proposition for the future union of Roumania, under the lively protest of Turkey and Austria.

Then Count Walewski, the successor of Drouyn de Lhuys, regretted the mismanagement in Naples and in Rome, which, he said, was constantly producing numerous followers for the cause of the Revolution, and made necessary the hateful presence of foreign troops in the States of the Church. Thereupon Sardinia's great statesman, Cavour, complained of the Austrian garrisons in Tuscany, Parma, and in the Legations.

Count Buol solemnly objected to the continuance of this discussion, which did not, he said, in any way belong here, and was entirely out of place; but he received no attention from any quarter. In the last question England inclined to the French side, and in the one concerning Roumania, to the Austrian. Manteuffel held his tongue; yet in his few and prudent remarks one could not fail to perceive aversion to Austria. On his part he might have mentioned here the claims of his King to the restoration of Neuchâtel; but he carefully avoided bringing forward definite motions, which might have disturbed the social good feeling in these conversations. The most obvious features of these conferences were the isolation of the Court of Vienna and the lively sympathy of France for Sardinia.

Thus the covetous, changeable, and at last inert policy of Count Buol, although attended with enormous expense, had in no particular reaped any harvest. In Berlin there was rejoicing at having enjoyed the blessings of a continuous peace at less cost, the Government had preserved its warm friendship with St. Petersburg, and, after the fall of Drouyn de Lhuys, received from Paris only marks of affection and of good-will. In the Confederate Diet Prussia had at this time far outstripped Austria in influence. Yet she was soon to learn how inconstant was the friendship of the Lesser States.

The course of events in the Eastern crisis had both in Munich and in Dresden raised to a high degree the feeling of self-satisfaction. "We cannot, it is true, rule Europe," Baron von der Pfordten used to say, "but we are strong enough to be the little weight that turns the scales of Germany. Just as in 1850 we prevented Prussia from forcing Austria out of Germany, so now we have made it impossible for the Court of Vienna to gather about itself Germany without Prussia. We need the presence of two Great Powers in the Confederation. Then is the Confederate Diet the only salutary representation of Germany as a whole."

CHAPTER V.

THE CLOSE OF THE REIGN OF FREDERICK
WILLIAM IV.

THE general political situation continued to be very much the same as it was left at the conclusion of the Paris Congress. Napoleon, his mind already occupied with Italian plans and the hostility to Austria involved in these, showed uninterrupted friendliness toward Prussia and Russia, and beheld with satisfaction the feeling in regard to Austria engendered by the events of the Crimean War; that is to say, in Berlin a suspicious coolness, and in St. Petersburg openly-expressed hatred. When Count Buol once talked of the restoration of Austria's old relations with Russia, Prince Gortschakoff told the Prussian ambassador that he would have nothing to do with Austria's friendship, and that in any case he must await Prussia's approval before listening to any advances from that direction. In the Government circles at Berlin there was no one who would not have looked upon such an arrangement with entire satisfaction.

This ill-feeling showed itself strongly on every occasion. The Congress of Paris had left many particulars in the provisions of the peace to be settled by mixed commissions, among others the new boundary

between Russia and Wallachia, and the internal affairs of the two Danubian Principalities. In regard to the first question Russia put forth a claim to the city of Bolgrad and the Serpent Islands; in this she received support from Prussia and France, but decided opposition from Austria and England.

Still more decided was the disagreement between these parties, when Russia, Prussia, and France renewed the demand already announced at the Congress for the union of the two Principalities. England and Austria entered a passionate protest against this; and Prussia especially took occasion to find fault with the tone and the methods of their opposition. The haughty attitude of England was complained of, "where unfortunately there was no prospect of improvement, so long as Palmerston's malignity and Clarendon's infatuation gave the tone to the English policy." No less dissatisfaction was felt in Berlin at the attitude adopted in Vienna. "Austria's behavior toward us," wrote Mantuffel to the ambassador in Vienna, "shows at once undue reserve and lack of consideration."

In fact, Count Buol was now acting on precisely the same principle which he had followed when once, during the course of the war, he said to the ambassador of Würtemberg: "Würtemberg must learn that it is Austria's right alone in all Germany to pursue an independent policy." The Count made complaints at Berlin that the Prussian commissioner allowed himself to take part with France against the German allies of his Government; and he also sent to Frankfort to the presiding

deputy of the Confederate Diet, Count Rechberg, a copy of the negotiations in Paris, in order that Rechberg might use them to prove to his fellow-members the un-German tendency of Prussia's action. It is easily understood that under these circumstances there was no talk of an extension of the April Alliance: the idyllic state of things in which the unity of Germany was represented by the harmonious accord of its two Great Powers was as far removed as possible.

In the mean time the impressions, made among the German Lesser States by the demands for a popular representation in the Confederation, urged by several Chambers, and for an Empire with Austria at its head, urged by the Press that favored an entire Germany, had by no means disappeared. King Max of Bavaria would hear nothing of either of these demands. To him, the independence of Bavaria and the maintenance of his royal rights in his own state were the most important considerations; and from this point of view, the Constitution of the German Confederation was entirely satisfactory to him. So much the more did he complain because this excellent institution had by its complete barrenness fallen into so great contempt among the German people; and he therefore desired, with all the ardor of which his mild nature was capable, to assign to the Confederate Diet an extended sphere of usefulness and the solution of important questions of general interest.

But with this he also combined another idea. In his well-meant efforts, both for the increase of the Bavarian

military force and for the improvement of the Bavarian system of education, he found himself only too frequently hindered by Nativists and Ultramontanists in the Press and in the Chambers: he thought that if, according to his plans, the Confederate Diet should once have shown itself to the people as the author of great material advantages, it would then, as in 1820 and in 1850, be able to act for the strengthening of the princely dignity against cross-grained penny-a-liners and parliamentary haranguers. His Minister, Baron von der Pfordten, was not without grave doubts in regard to these plans of his master, which, in certain circumstances, might also result in seriously limiting the independence of Bavaria; but he was nevertheless obliged to send to Frankfort on the 10th of November, 1855, the proposal that the Confederate Assembly should consider the preparation of "Acts for the general good" concerning a German system of commercial law, a common citizenship throughout Germany, common coins, weights, and measures, and concerning German emigration.

Now it was well-known, that, according to the principles of its Constitution, the Diet was authorized to establish institutions of common utility, but for every decree of this kind a unanimous vote was required. Such a vote was, however, in most cases impossible, or could only be brought about by compromises, by which no one was entirely satisfied. Once decided upon, however, any such decree was unalterably fixed; for its repeal or change demanded again a unanimous vote.

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Whenever, therefore, the need for an institution of this sort had arisen heretofore, those interested, Prussia especially, had preferred to attain their object by a free and easily dissoluble agreement, either by arousing interest in the matter in the Diet, or by acting entirely independently of the Confederation.

Prussia was the less inclined to abandon this method, inasmuch as during the last few years it had become more evidently Austria's intention to use the majority of the Diet (which was subservient to her) in interfering with the independence of Prussia's policy. Bismarck developed this principle on the 26th of November, immediately after the appearance of the Bavarian proposal, in a detailed report, which at once met with the entire approval of Minister Manteuffel. This view was further confirmed by the fact, that Count Buol expressed himself strongly in favor of the Bavarian proposal, in order, as Bismarck observed, to draw the objects of the same within the sphere of action of the Confederation, and if possible within that of the presidency.

Bismarck, however, out of consideration for public opinion and for the real advantages contained in the substance of the proposal, constantly warned the Government not to make open opposition, but during the course of the negotiations to manage in such a way as to take the solution of the question out of the hands of the Diet and to transfer it into the field of voluntary agreement. When, in February, 1856, Bavaria proposed that the Diet should at once proceed to the

consideration of a German system of commercial law, the action taken by Prussia was based upon the view above explained.

But King Max was not long left alone in his efforts to extend the authority and the functions of the Confederate Diet. How could it be expected that that most active statesman of the Lesser States, Baron Beust, would not have something to say in the matter?

Already in October, 1855, on the occasion of the above-mentioned correspondence brought about by Austria, Herr von Beust had replied to Count Buol that Saxony also regarded Confederate reform as an urgent necessity, for Germany was actually under the dominion of anarchy. "While Coburg," he said, "in questions of public domain disregards the decrees of the Confederation, the Sovereigns of Hanover and Nassau have assumed for themselves rights beyond all bounds. In the same way a sharp contradiction exists between Article XIII. of the Act of Confederation, which provides for constitutions based upon the Estates, and the inroads made by Franco-English constitutionalism: either the latter must be rooted out in the individual States, or it must also be introduced in the Confederate Diet."

That Von Beust by no means favored this latter alternative was shown by a memorial sent by him at the end of June, 1856, to the chief Ministers in Vienna, Berlin, and the Lesser States, a private document, as he called it, concerning which he asked his colleagues for a preliminary judgment. In this he dwelt first

upon the revolutionary character of those demands which sought German Unity by the complete subordination of the Sovereigns to a central authority in both military and diplomatic matters. "All the Governments in the Confederation," he declared, "should join in a Confederate decree proclaiming that they would no longer suffer the expression of such demands. The groundlessness of the reproach, that the Confederation accomplished nothing for the external safety of Germany, has been clearly manifested in 1830, in 1848, and in 1854.

"The defects in the sphere of internal policy," he continued, "are of more importance. The fostering of material interests is certainly greatly hindered by the fact that unanimous votes are required. But in the line of the constitutions of individual States much might be done. We have no intention of breaking entirely with the representative system. But even a curtailing of the sessions of the provincial parliaments, which are forever talking and amending, would be a great gain. In the consideration of the budget, these parliaments should only be allowed to vote upon any increase in special items of expense and upon the reports of the auditors of accounts. The Chambers themselves would see the advantage of this and agree to it. The general adoption of such principles as these would also afford the possibility of a complete assurance to the states of the protection of their rights. In constitutional disputes, the members of the Confederate Diet would not, from the nature of their position, be

fitted to give an impartial judgment. Only a Confederate court of arbitration would answer the purpose in such a case; but in order to make such a court possible, a similarity of the constitutions based upon a Confederate law would be a necessary condition."

All this amounted, then, to a simple proposal to suppress by police measures every manifestation throughout Germany of a tendency towards unity or towards a more restricted union, and, in the individual States, to subject the authority of the Chambers to a decided limitation; in short, as Bismarck said, it was a proposal to renew the Carlsbad decrees of 1819. That the proclamation of such a plan should call forth a storm of indignation among all the liberal parties was natural enough: but it was an indication of changed times, that now Herr von Beust's plan hardly found any recognition even among the Governments.

His friend, Herr von Dalwigk, called the memorial an admirable literary production, that contained much that was true and little that was new. The King of Hanover was well pleased with the idea of suppressing the enthusiasts for unity, but he had grave doubts about the establishment of a Confederate court of arbitration. On the other hand, in Stuttgart, the creation of a Confederate court of arbitration was considered much to the purpose, but the other propositions were held to be unpractical. The Elector of Hesse would not listen to any changes in the existing Constitution; the limitation of the rights of the Estates proposed by Von Beust, he had long ago carried out in his

own country. King Max of Bavaria took exception to Beust's indifference to the extension of the activity of the Confederation in the line of material reforms. From Berlin, Minister von Manteuffel sent to Beust an abundance of appreciative expressions, together with questions implying doubt, and closing with a request for a more detailed exposition of the practical application of his principles. Count Buol alone expressed, towards the middle of August, his entire satisfaction, and declared himself prepared to take part in preliminary conferences of the principal Ministers of all the German States, after the fashion of the convention at Carlsbad.

But before any action could be taken in the way of introducing these endeavors to secure German national rights, an event of a very different nature occurred, which, springing from an insignificant cause, threw the whole of Prussia and soon all Europe into feverish disturbance.

We have seen above with what eager longing King Frederick William clung to the idea of rescuing his beloved Neuchâtel from the clutches of the Swiss democrats. The number of those inhabitants of the little country that shared this wish was not small, since the rule of the Prussian kings, during the century and a half of its continuance, had been always mild and beneficent, and had not disturbed any of the ancient customs and institutions. In 1847, things in Neuchâtel were very much the same as in 1747: in the country, the controlling influence of the great nobles; in

the towns, the rule of the old citizen families, in which no new intruder had a share; everywhere a peaceful repose, with moderately comfortable conditions of life, and evidences of an active piety.

In 1848 the stream of revolutionary democracy had poured over all this, had abolished all differences between the Estates, had established everywhere municipal governments based on universal suffrage, and had given cantonal citizenship to every Swiss after two years' residence; so that in 1856 almost half the population of Neuchâtel consisted of new accessions of this description. It was natural that so far-reaching a change should hurt deeply both the feelings and the interests of a great number of the old inhabitants; and the nobles, especially, addressed urgent petitions to Berlin to be delivered from the democratic yoke.

The London Protocol of 1852, in which all the Great Powers recognized the right of the King, raised the expectations of these people. They could not be surprised that during the great war in the Orient there was no talk of Neuchâtel; but when in 1856, at the Congress of Paris, Prussia's reference to Neuchâtel fell flat to the ground, the last hope of foreign aid was extinguished, and the malcontents determined in despair to help themselves, after the ancient Swiss fashion, by a sudden uprising. Some of their leaders went to Berlin and laid their plans confidentially before various influential persons. Minister von Manteuffel urgently dissuaded them from their project; the King held back in silence.

This silence was taken for consent. On the night of the 2d of September, two small columns under Lieutenant-Colonel Meuron and Count Friedrich Pourtales put themselves in motion, surprised and captured the Castle of Neuchâtel, arrested the authorities, and on the next day published their manifesto for the restoration of the royal government. But the revolt had been insufficiently prepared: there was no co-operation among the towns that were royalist in their tendencies. The Republican party, on the other hand, rose all the more eagerly in La Chaux de Fonds and Val Travers, as did the new citizens throughout the whole Canton. Some Swiss Confederate soldiers were also at hand; and on the 4th of September, Meuron with his men was overpowered, and the royalist movement was everywhere put down.

Two commissioners of the Swiss Confederate Council hastened thither from Berne. Some five thousand men of the militia of Aargau and Vaud took military possession of the little country; a number of arrests followed, and sixty-six prisoners accused of high treason were held for a state trial before the Swiss Confederate Court of Justice. The royalists who had not been imprisoned were pursued by party hatred in the same way that the Elector of Hesse had in 1851 persecuted the officials who remained true to the Constitution; that is, by quartering upon them great numbers of troops, the maintenance of whom ruined even well-to-do persons, and in a short time brought the poorer peasants to beggary.

The news of these proceedings now struck blow after blow upon the heart of the King. It disturbed and overwhelmed him. His own right of possession became a secondary matter in his feelings, when he considered the misfortune of those brave men who, out of loyalty to him and reverence for his right as recognized by Europe, had risked their lives in a hopeless undertaking, which he had not indeed instigated nor commended, but yet had known of and had not checked. He was beside himself with grief and anger at the thought of seeing his faithful followers brought before a tribunal as common criminals, and threatened with an imprisonment of many years. This could not and must not be: it seemed to him a most vital point of honor to use all means, and to put aside every other consideration, that they might be rescued and set free.

He was at that time in East Prussia, and at once commanded that letters should be prepared to the Sovereigns of the four Great Powers, urgently requesting that they would support his demand addressed to Switzerland for the unconditional liberation of those who had been imprisoned. His Ministers were at the same time to appeal to the Cabinets of the Powers to the same effect.

But in this direction the King was doomed to unpleasant experiences. The Emperor Alexander of Russia gave assurances of warm sympathy, and promised to do what he could; but considering his geographical position, he had little to offer but good words. In Paris, Count Walewski declared that the King's right was

undoubted; but, he said, it was an unfortunate affair. Switzerland also felt herself in the right in regard to the existing state of things, and would hardly interrupt the course of legal proceedings. Napoleon, moreover, at that time in Biarritz, expressed himself to the same effect, that Neuchâtel would be no gain for Prussia, but a burden, and for Europe a constant source of embarrassment.

The answer of Count Buol sounded in Berlin almost like mockery: Austria, he said, would gladly support Prussia's wishes, but she saw no possible means of doing so, and would be grateful if Prussia would point out any to her. The English Cabinet was indeed entirely ready to interpose in behalf of mild treatment of the prisoners, but had no other advice to offer than that the King should procure their freedom by speedily renouncing his sovereignty over Neuchâtel. An appeal to the English recognition of this sovereignty in 1815 and in 1852 made no impression. "Many compacts and protocols," said Lord Palmerston, "have been destroyed by the power of facts; to-day it must be confessed that peoples do not exist for princes, but princes for peoples, and that the right of a sovereign vanishes when the consent of the people is withdrawn from it."

In a still sharper tone did the Swiss Federal Council refuse the demands of the Prussian ambassador for the cessation of legal proceedings, unless the King would first renounce all claim to Neuchâtel. The Radical party at that time held control in Switzerland, and the

President of the Federal Council, Stämpfli, was a Radical among Radicals. "Neuchâtel," he said, "acted in 1848 no otherwise than did once the Forest Cantons against their Austrian governors; in such a way the entire Swiss Nation has been founded, and the popular will has been the inviolable basis of her rights. The Federal Council is not competent to stop the legal proceedings, and even if it wished to propose such a thing to the Federal Assembly, it would be swept from its seats by the indignation of the sovereign people, like chaff before the wind. Against threats of an armed interference, too, the Swiss Nation will rise like a single man."

Whoever read the Swiss newspapers at that time found all this abundantly confirmed. The people felt that they were entirely in the right, and, what counted for quite as much, that they were perfectly safe. At first they pretended a contemptuous disregard for Prussia. Her cowardice at Olmütz and her dread of war during the last few years were talked about, and gross insults to the person of the King were indulged in. On the other hand, the friendship of neighboring states was dwelt upon, and the active commercial intercourse with the South German States, who would certainly not be desirous to see Prussian troops fighting with Swiss on their frontiers and perhaps in their own territory.

Above all, the Swiss thought it unlikely that France would suffer such proceedings, would allow the neutrality of Switzerland, which protected her own

boundaries, to be violated, or would look calmly upon the march of a Prussian army through Baden. Napoleon had once dwelt as a fugitive upon Swiss soil: the Swiss Confederacy had boldly protected him against the threats of Louis Philippe; it seemed out of the question that the Emperor should ever allow a Prussian attack upon Swiss territory.

The legal proceedings against the prisoners were therefore allowed to pursue their course uninterrupted, and the Swiss Nation shrugged its shoulders with cheerful indifference at the stories of the impotent wrath, the letters, and representations of the Prussian King.

In the mean time, however, the King himself had seen where the critical point lay. His judgment in regard to Napoleon had undergone an essential change by reason of the course taken by the Crimean War and the bearing of French policy since that time. He had reconciled himself to the idea that in the present state of affairs Neuchâtel must be renounced, and that an understanding on the subject was at once to be entered into with the Great Powers; but his determination was all the more fixed to begin no negotiations until Switzerland should first have set free the prisoners unconditionally. If the Powers should leave him in the lurch on this point, he would, by means of Prussian troops, possess himself of Schaffhausen and Basle as pledges, until his just demands were satisfied.

On the 16th of September, in a second letter written with his own hand, he communicated these intentions

to the Emperor Napoleon. "The tone of my official letter to Your Majesty," he said, "was cold, and lacked the warm expressions which my heart and my confidence in Your Majesty would dictate. The moment has come when it depends upon Your Majesty to win a faithful friend that can be counted on in every trial, and who is an admirer of those great abilities which have restored safety and peace to Europe."

After he had dwelt upon the good qualities and the misfortunes of his abused followers, he declared that, if worst came to worst, he should not hesitate to fight for them. "I know," he said, "that Your Majesty might stay my arm at the instant of victory; but I do not fear this. Yet I shall be ready, so far as the Powers are concerned, to make any concession compatible with honor." He concluded by saying, "I write this letter with a bleeding heart and with tears in my eyes."

In the Berlin Cabinet these outpourings of the King's heart on political questions were not very popular; but this time the letter gained its object. "The King's letter," said the Empress Eugénie to Count Hatzfeldt, "moved the Emperor deeply. What could have been more desirable for him for his future plans than such a disposition on the King's part? The satisfaction of the King's wishes would render likely the long continuance of a close understanding between the two Powers."

Napoleon answered at once on the 24th of September from Biarritz. He did not conceal from the King that

as sovereign of France he could not look upon a Prussian army in Switzerland without anxiety, but all the more decidedly did he offer his aid in taking peaceful measures to oblige Switzerland to release the prisoners. In fact, an official letter was sent from Paris to Berne, in which the attention of Switzerland was energetically called to the serious danger to her own interests involved in the continuation of the legal proceedings, and which conveyed the Emperor's earnest advice that concessions should be made on this point. Napoleon, the letter said, would then do all in his power towards a final solution of the whole question. In addition to this, however, Count Walewski sent word to the Federal Council, that, in case of refusal, Prussia, with the support of the South German States, would march an army into Switzerland.

The King was in the highest degree satisfied with all this. He desired war as little as did Napoleon; but he entirely shared the Emperor's hope that the latter's mighty word would be sufficient to bring about a favorable decision, certainly, if the other Great Powers were willing to express themselves to the same effect. In fact, what room was there for doubt? The liberation of the prisoners did not involve any actual danger for Switzerland. It was a question of principle and of honor. The liberation did, indeed, mean recognizing that the prisoners had been in the right, and Switzerland in the wrong. For this very reason the King had demanded it, and Switzerland had refused it. But now a Power which was in no way concerned, which

was at once the mightiest neighbor and the best friend of Switzerland, called upon her in her own interests and in those of France, not at Prussia's demand, but at the request of France, to abandon legal proceedings: what reasonable ground could prevent Switzerland from fulfilling this wish? Without any loss of honor, she could, on this basis, enter into a negotiation that could result in nothing else than the King's renunciation of his claim to Neuchâtel.

But it was destined to turn out otherwise.

In spite of the energy with which Walewski had spoken, the Federal Council did not believe in the seriousness of his words. The liberal or democratic tendencies of the masses of the people in France and Germany had been, indeed, since 1851, kept under repression, but they nevertheless existed in all the greater intensity, and showed themselves in the Neuchâtel question just as they had done during the Crimean war.

There was an overwhelming preponderance of opinion in favor of Switzerland; it was held to be both absurd and monstrous, that the Prussian people should be forced into a serious war, for the sake of thirteen square miles of isolated territory, that had nothing whatever to do with the Prussian State. Now it was very well known in Berne how much attention was paid by Napoleon and the South German Courts to the public opinion of their people; the conviction was therefore felt, that, however hostile these Governments might be, they would not venture actually to permit the Prussian army to cross their territory.

There was another consideration.

Switzerland, without doubt, would even now have yielded to a demand made by the Great Powers collectively. But, as we know, since the Congress of Paris, the Great Powers had been divided into two groups, and this, too, made itself felt also in the Neuchâtel question. While France supported the Prussian Cabinet, the Russian ambassador in Berne seconded the French with uninterrupted zeal. The representative of Austria, on the other hand, acted with extreme coolness, proposed, indeed, the liberation of the prisoners, but, after this had been refused, took no further steps. And the English ambassador, Gordon, even had daily consultations with Stämpfli, as to how the King of Prussia could be forced, first to renounce his claim, and so to purchase the freedom of the rebels.

Under these circumstances, the Federal Council, after two days' deliberation, decided to say in reply to the French Government, that the liberation of the prisoners could only take place after the beginning of a negotiation, based upon the King's renunciation of his right to Neuchâtel. "I hope," said Count Walewski, thereupon, to the Swiss ambassador, "that this refusal will not be your last word: it is not advisable for any one to cast to the winds, through obstinacy or carelessness, the earnest counsel of the Emperor of the French."

The King, who in his excitement clutched at any straw that might prove of use, then seized upon the idea of summoning the German Confederate Diet. Count Buol declared this to be an excellent measure, but

said that everything irritating must be avoided, every assertion of rights, and especially every threat. The Count had now the peculiar satisfaction of seeing the Prussian representative in the Diet induce his Government to limit its proposition entirely in accordance with Austria's wishes, that is to say, to the participation of the Confederation in the London Protocol, and to the demand for the liberation of the prisoners, to be made in the name of the Confederation by all the German ambassadors in Berne. Only by implication did the proposition contain the expression of a hope, that, in case of necessity, the individual Governments — not the Confederation — would allow the Prussian troops to cross their territory.

In regard to this, Bismarck had called Herr von Manteuffel's attention to the fact that nothing ought to be required of the Confederation that would not be unanimously agreed to. "It would be extremely dangerous," he said, "to declare a majority decision admissible and binding in this case; by so doing, we should expose ourselves to the possibility of being obliged sometime in the future, to recognize the validity of majority decisions concerning the defence of Austria's possessions in Italy." That Napoleon was occupied with plans in regard to these possessions, Bismarck had already perceived after the Congress of Paris, and he had communicated his view to his Government.

This consideration makes Austria's attitude seem all the more incomprehensible, in that she did not take advantage of this unusual opportunity, and use every

means to encourage Prussia in military action against Switzerland, so that a probably unanimous vote might be secured, to the effect that loyalty to the Confederation imposed as a duty the protection of every member of the Confederation, even in its non-German possessions. It would have been an important gain for Austria in the future, and would not have involved the least danger to her in the present. For nothing is surer, than that Switzerland would at once have yielded, so soon as Austria should have joined in the threatening attitude of Prussia and of France.

Instead of this, however, we see Count Buol everywhere, in Berne, in South Germany, and in Frankfort, offering hinderances to the wishes of Prussia, whereby he constantly wounded and irritated the King's mind, and intensified the secure self-confidence of the Swiss. It is easily understood, that, this being the state of affairs, the Federal Council rejected the request of the German Central Authority, exactly as they had done all former demands.

Meanwhile Napoleon, much annoyed at the rejection of his advice, had by no means abandoned his activity. He at once asked the King for a private communication of the conditions upon which, after the liberation of the prisoners, he could bring himself, in conference with the Powers, to resign Neuchâtel. He received the answer that the King reserved further details for the beginning of the negotiations, but would finally, at the request of the Powers, content himself with these three points: the continuance of the title of Prince of

Neuchâtel, the recovery of the princely domains, and the restoration of the old citizens to power in the Neuchâtel towns, together with a guaranty for the maintenance of the charitable institutions. This, it was remarked, was communicated in profound confidence to the Emperor, but was not to be made known to Switzerland; so far as that country was concerned, the King was determined to insist upon the unconditional liberation of the prisoners as a preliminary. Napoleon was entirely satisfied with this, but conceived the idea of hinting to the Swiss Government, through the French ambassador, how cheaply he could obtain for it the King's renunciation upon the release of the prisoners, and of thus inducing it to fulfil his own wishes.

But this good intention was rendered abortive in the moment of execution, by an almost comic occurrence. The English ambassador in Berlin had, by not wholly unusual means, become acquainted with the three points, and had at once communicated them to the Minister, Lord Clarendon. The latter, in his turn, had speedily made them known to the ambassador Gordon in Berne. The news then spread rapidly through the world, that England had proposed to the Federal Council to call in the mediation of the two Western Powers, on the basis of the three points and of the royal renunciation, which would be followed by the cessation of legal proceedings; it was also added, that the Federal Council had hastened to accept this friendly offer.

The best card in the Emperor's game had thus been taken from his hand, and given to his opponent. Napoleon was indignant, and now announced to the Prussian ambassador, that, as English interference had taken away from the French Government the means of further action, he would throw his own personal influence into the balance. He invited the commander-in-chief of the Swiss Confederate army, General Dufour, his former instructor in military science, to come to Paris; he depicted to him the settled determination of the King, the unavoidable necessity of yielding in the matter of the prisoners, and the certainty of the consequent royal renunciation. He concluded with the definite declaration, that after the liberation of the prisoners he would support Switzerland in every way, but that, unless that liberation took place, he would in no way hinder the march of a Prussian army. At the same time, the representatives of France at the South German Courts received instructions to express themselves to the ministers there in the same way; and Count Walewski quietly suggested to Count Hatzfeldt, that Prussia should make some military preparations: that, he said, was the only, but also the most effective, method of bringing the Swiss to their senses.

Since in taking warlike measures the thing most to be considered was the relations with France and the South German States, the President of the Prussian Ministry invited Count Hatzfeldt and the representative in the Diet to come to Berlin, for a conference, on the 2d of December. At this conference, Bismarck,

in entire agreement with Napoleon, declared that the sole means which would be effective against the reluctance of Switzerland and the Powers, was a serious commencement of preparations. No one, he said, desired war; and for that very reason, Prussia would obtain what she desired if only there was no doubt left, that, in case of her failing to do so, war would ensue.

It was finally decided to act on this theory. To be sure, no very great appropriations were yet made to cover the expenses, but various arrangements were made such as are usually preliminary to a mobilization. It was decided that each of the nine army corps should contribute one division, with its militia, to the campaign, making in all about 160,000 men, of whom six divisions were to occupy Schaffhausen and Basle, and three to form a reserve. Military plenipotentiaries were sent to Darmstadt and Carlsruhe, to Stuttgart and Munich, in order to arrange in detail for the maintenance and lodgement of the troops on the march. All this was not made public, but was communicated to all the Governments with the observation that an ultimatum would at once be presented to Switzerland, and that, if the prisoners were not liberated by the 2d of January, the mobilization would take place on that day; and after that, more extensive demands would be addressed to the Swiss Confederacy.

A secret intrusted to so many naturally found its way into the Press; and a great rattling of sabres at once took place in the Swiss newspapers, with the cry for an offensive war for the overthrow of all the thrones in

Germany. The Federal Council was still reluctant to take the Prussian threat, or Napoleon's approval of it, in earnest. But on the 17th of December, the imperial *Moniteur* published a sharp note, portraying, on the one side, the unquestionable right and the long-continued moderation of the King of Prussia, and, on the other, the violence and obstinacy of the Swiss Federal Council, and concluded by saying, that, in view of this, Switzerland could not wonder, if she received in the future less consideration than had been shown her hitherto.

The effect of this public avowal was great. The Federal Council hastened to convene the representative gathering of the sovereign people, the Federal Assembly. There was still a hope that the Prussian minie-balls could be kept away from Schaffhausen; for it was known that Austria was employing every means to hinder the movement of the Prussian army.

In fact, Count Buol declared, in Berlin, that Prussia had promised in the London Protocol to take no steps on her own part during the continuance of those negotiations, by which the Powers were to endeavor to secure a recognition of her rights in Switzerland: from which it followed that she ought now to despatch no troops without first obtaining the approval of the Powers. The answer to this was simple: "For four years the Powers have neglected to begin any negotiations, and, consequently, we now shall do on our own account what seems to us proper." At the same time, Count Buol declared, that the passage of the Prussian troops through the south of Germany could be author-

ized only by the Confederate Diet, and not by the individual States ; but to this he received from all sides the reply, that the reverse of this was true by reason of the sovereign independence of the German individual States.

Quite as fruitless were the Count's diplomatic efforts at the various Courts. When the anxiety about French intervention had disappeared, the ruling feeling in these Cabinets was the mere satisfaction that a severe lesson was at last to be given to the revolutionary element in Switzerland.

The sole result of Austria's attitude was a daily-increasing bitterness on the part of the Prussian King, whose nerves were disturbed anew by every despatch from Vienna. In spite of everything, the old friendship was not yet quite stifled in his heart. At the end of December, he sent Colonel Manteuffel once again with a long autograph letter to the Emperor, who was then in Venetia. In Vienna there was a heated discussion between the Colonel and Count Buol, in which each persisted in his own view ; and when the Emperor Francis Joseph a few days after received the Colonel, though his manner was gracious, he spoke substantially to the same effect as his Minister.

At this same time, the Swiss Federal Council despatched one of its members, Furrer, a prudent and moderate man, first to Frankfort, where he had a long consultation with the presiding deputy, Count Rechberg, and then to the three South German capitals, to inquire with regard to the passage of the Prussian

troops through South Germany. The reply was everywhere the same: the passage of the troops had been approved of and provided for; it would certainly take place after the period specified had elapsed, unless the prisoners should be set free within that time. At Napoleon's request Prussia had extended the time until the 15th of January; before that, the Emperor thought, the pear would be ripe.

And, in fact, so it was. While the Federal Council with great haste and very serious expense was getting together several divisions of militia, and pushing them toward the threatened boundaries, the martial ardor of the people, in spite of all the haughty newspaper articles, was gradually collapsing. Fifteen hundred soldiers deserted from Neuchâtel across the French frontier, in order not to be obliged to fight against their King. The remaining cantons showed little desire to engage in a struggle with Prussia for the sole purpose of carrying to the end the drama of a criminal suit brought against sixty royalists. It was certainly not pleasant to be forced to yield to the threat of a Prussian attack; but in the mean time, Napoleon came to the assistance of his old friends in this difficulty with a new declaration. This was, indeed, only a repetition of what he had said in October; namely, that after the liberation of the prisoners, he would exert himself actively for the interests of Switzerland; but by means of it the Federal Council could now, without mentioning the Prussian army, bring forward in the Federal Assembly a proposition for friendly acquiescence in the

wishes of France; that is to say, for the cessation of legal proceedings and for the liberation of the prisoners. On the 15th of January, just before the expiration of the period fixed by Prussia, the Assembly gave this proposition their approval.

The danger of war was thus averted. Three months earlier the sons of Tell and Winkelried might have obtained this result more cheaply and more honorably. But at the same time, as good men of business, they had some ground for consoling themselves. The longer and the more intensely the King's zeal, and with it the excitement of Europe, had been concentrated upon the question of the legal proceedings, the more certain was it that, after the settlement of that question, a general relaxation of interest and indifference on the part of the other Powers would ensue, which would lead to a speedy recognition by all Europe of the territorial rights of Switzerland.

For this object, Napoleon eagerly urged the assembling of a conference of the Great Powers at Paris. England hesitated for a time, and would rather have transferred the negotiations to London; but she finally yielded, and on the 10th of February, Count Walewski sent the invitations to the four Cabinets, as well as to Switzerland. On the 5th of March a meeting of the representatives of the four Great Powers took place, and at this — since the King on the 4th of March had with an aching heart once more expressed to the Emperor Napoleon in a private letter his willingness to make a sacrifice — it was unanimously decided to ask

the King, in the interests of Europe and of Neuchâtel, whether he would be willing to give up his right to the possession of that country. In regard to the method of carrying on the negotiations, it was agreed, that, if Prussia imposed conditions to her renunciation, the representative of Switzerland should be summoned to the consultation, the arguments and counter-arguments should be heard, and then each point should be voted upon and settled by itself.

As to the probable outcome of all this, Count Hatzfeldt could not hold out to his Court any very great hopes. England, he said, would certainly favor very urgently every claim of Switzerland; the other Powers had no other wish in the matter than to bring it to a speedy conclusion, and would therefore be very reluctant to meet England with any serious opposition.

At this news, the King was once more greatly disturbed. He had expected that the Powers, on the basis of the Protocol of 1822, would begin with a renewed recognition of his right, would then come to an understanding with him as to the conditions of his renunciation, and would afterwards present the result of this to Switzerland as their unanimous decision. Instead of this, he saw himself obliged to treat with the Swiss Democrats, as a simple party in the same cause and on an equal footing before the tribunal of Europe. He indulged in very violent outbursts: "This is a case," he said, "in which we must speak straight out from the heart."

On the 18th of March Count Hatzfeldt received

instructions to make a complaint in the Conference that the Powers had abandoned the ground taken in 1852. "The King," he was to say, "has right on his side, and consequently it belongs to him to fix the conditions of the sacrifice he is to make. It has never been his right, that has involved dangers to Europe or to Neuchâtel, but the infringement of the same by the upholders of the Revolution. He will not, however, enter into any further discussion of the matter before Europe; he is willing to give up his right on the following conditions which he presents as an indivisible whole; so soon as they shall have been accepted by the Powers, he will make them known by an open letter, together with the renunciation of his sovereignty over Neuchâtel."

The conditions introduced with such stormy words were themselves exceedingly moderate, since many of the wishes formerly expressed by the King had been demonstrated to him by the Neuchâtel royalists themselves to be impracticable. For himself, the King asked for the continuance of the title of Prince of Neuchâtel, and Count of Valendis, as well as the payment of two millions of francs — the capital corresponding to the civil list of one hundred thousand francs formerly received yearly from Neuchâtel. The remaining articles concerned the protection of the Neuchâtel royalists. They included complete amnesty for all political offences before and since the event of September; the assumption by the Swiss Confederacy of all expenses arising from that event, so that Neuchâtel and its inhabitants should only contribute their proportion like

all the other cantons; the restoration to the former ecclesiastical authorities in Neuchâtel of such church property as had been secularized since 1848; a guaranty to insure the inviolability of all charitable institutions and bequests throughout the country; and finally, at the end of a year, the convening in Neuchâtel of a constituent assembly elected only by the long-resident citizens of the canton, the new arrivals in the country being excluded.

When Count Hatzfeldt, on the 24th of March, laid these instructions before the Conference, the introductory remarks caused opposition from many sides, and produced in general a painful feeling. It was decided to invite the Swiss representative, Dr. Kern, to be present on the 25th of March, that the Prussian conditions might be communicated to him. After hearing them, he naturally said that he must make a report to his Government; the actual discussion therefore could not begin before the 31st of March.

In that session, as well as in the following one on the 1st of April, great differences of opinion became manifest. To the greater part of the articles concerning the protection of the people of Neuchâtel, Dr. Kern had no serious objection to make; but he declared the restoration of the church property to be impossible, as well as the exclusion of the new citizens from the elections to the constituent assembly; he further entered a protest against the King's continuing to bear the title of Prince of Neuchâtel; and he rejected, with the greatest imaginable energy, the payment of the two

millions. The discussion continued both days for four or five hours. Finally the four Powers agreed that the continuance of the title would do harm, and the principle of a money compensation should be commended to the consideration of the Swiss. "Even if the principle must be admitted," cried Kern at this, "at least let us not have this crushing sum of two millions!"

It was evidently impossible for the two parties to arrive at an agreement. "You might perhaps have obtained a great deal," said Count Walewski to the Prussian ambassador, "if you had not imposed on Switzerland such an overwhelmingly burdensome demand of money." The four neutrals now decided that the next thing was to agree among themselves upon a programme of mediation. They spent several weeks on this, for they also differed among themselves, England always taking energetically the part of Switzerland, while the three others favored Prussia, though Austria was the most inclined to yield to the English claims.

England would at first hear nothing of the Swiss Confederacy's making a money payment, and finally declared it would be a great concession if the King were to receive a million. The Powers were unanimously in favor of striking out the article in regard to the constituent assembly: on the other hand, the amnesty and the costs of the September uprising were settled in accordance with the Prussian proposal. Lastly, the church property was to remain in the hands of the State, but the churches were to receive compen-

sation for the loss of income from the same. The representatives of the Powers then declared it indispensable — since the renunciation of the King involved a change in the Act of the Vienna Congress — that all these provisions should be drawn up in a formal compact, and signed by six contracting parties: the four neutral Powers, Prussia and Switzerland. In a separate protocol the Powers alone were to recognize the King's right to continue to bear the princely title. These propositions were communicated to the two parties on the 20th of April.

All this disturbed the temper of the King afresh. He could not, indeed, from his own standpoint, deny at all the necessity of adopting the form of a compact; but the thought was horrible to him of taking such a step in common with the Swiss rebels. With lofty pride, he said that a protocol concerning the princely title was superfluous; that would only mean his keeping what he had already; who would take it away from him? And in a still higher tone he continued: "I demanded two millions, not because I am anxious for the money, but because the payment would have involved a final recognition of my right; this principle has been quite as well expressed by the decision of the Powers; I am satisfied with that, and make no further demands concerning the payment; I will not haggle about money with Switzerland."

After this his Minister believed that he would now receive instructions to accept the remaining propositions of the Conference. But the intense bitterness

of the King's feelings would not allow his anxious mind to rest by day nor by night; he suddenly gave orders that the announcement of his acceptance should be communicated to Paris, with the condition that all his rights should again be valid, if Switzerland failed to fulfil the smallest point of the compact.

This reservation seemed natural enough, and Balan began to draw up the papers. Then Frederick William's feelings changed again, and there came a royal letter, to the effect that a compromise must be attempted, and that the Conference should be informed that all claim to payment would be given up, if Switzerland would agree to the articles concerning church property and the constituent assembly. "They will refuse it," said the King, "but I shall have done my best, and afterwards *nous verrons.*" So it stood on the 26th of April.

What was to happen afterwards was seen soon enough. On the 28th of April, the Swiss Federal Council, in confident expectation of a ratification by the Federal Assembly, unanimously accepted the outline of the compact proposed by the four neutrals. This decided the matter unmistakably. Bismarck, who had shortly before been at Paris, had on the 24th of April already pointed out to his Government what must follow. For Prussia, he said, it was a matter of small importance whether the King accepted the compact or not. But the rejection of the same would leave the Neuchâtel royalists, for whose protection the whole matter had been undertaken, either helpless in

exile, or defenceless against all sorts of party-machinations at home. Any step that the King might try to take in their favor in future would be met by the Powers only with the regret that Prussia had rejected the compact. There would then be no further talk of any possibility of military action.

In the beginning, the King was reluctant to accept this view; but on the 28th of April the force of an accomplished fact put an end to his doubts and his hopes. Beside this, he heard from all sides that the acceptance of his last proposition by Switzerland was out of the question. And when, on the 6th of May, the Emperor Napoleon in a confidential letter announced to the King the visit of Prince Napoleon to Berlin, expressed in warm terms a desire for true friendship in the future, and for loyal co-operation in all European affairs, and added the hope that the compact would be accepted, Frederick William, although with a heavy heart, finally made up his mind on the 10th of May, and wrote to the Emperor in reply on the 13th that he had no desire to take money from the Swiss, and further that he would agree to the outline of a compact proposed by the Conference. On the 16th, corresponding instructions were sent to Count Hatzfeldt, and on the 26th all parties joined in signing the compact.

This was the outcome of an affair that for nine long months had troubled and vexed the heart and the nerves of the King more seriously than any event since the March days of 1848. He had, indeed, obtained practically everything that could be expected under

existing circumstances. But this consideration did not remove his sorrow at the loss he had sustained; and the sting remained deep in his soul, that the horrors of Revolution had won a new victory with the sanction of Europe.

There was, however, no further thought of any material injury. The possession of Neuchâtel was of no value to Prussia; on the contrary, it was a great advantage to be hampered no more by the anomalous position of that country.

The indirect consequences of the long struggle were even more important; and among them the development of closer and more friendly relations with France. We have remarked above, that Napoleon's moderation in the use of his victory had diminished the King's old dread of the revolutionary upstart. Now, in the place of this, a warm personal feeling had arisen between the two sovereigns. In June, Napoleon declared in a private letter to Frederick William that he hoped the feeling which ten months before had led the King to offer him loyal friendship still existed; he said that on his part, he remained convinced that for the development of Prussia's power and greatness, nothing could be more desirable than a close connection with France, whose interests were everywhere the same with hers. The King answered at once, concurring amicably in all that the Emperor had written.

From this to an alliance with France was certainly a long step. In the very circle of men that were personally most intimate with the King, the leaders and

protectors of the *Kreuzzeitung* party, so powerful in internal politics, aversion to the Heir of the Revolution still continued undiminished. General von Gerlach with this feeling wrote vigorous letters to Bismarck, when the latter, in accordance with his observations made in Paris, mentioned to the King Napoleon's desire for harmony, and pressingly urged him to take advantage of this good-will on the part of the Emperor. Bismarck justified his view in several brilliant memorials, written with that perfect clearness of his vision which embraced at one glance the past and present of Europe. With convincing energy he pointed out the error of considering as of the greatest importance in foreign policy, not the aims, but the legitimate origin, of a neighboring sovereign; and he made clear by his conciseness and the incontrovertibility of his arguments the necessity for Prussia, considering the chaotic state of German affairs, to acquire a firm support by means of external alliances, and especially of being, or seeming to be, upon friendly terms with France.¹ How much consideration these views met with at that time in Berlin, I do not know. But although Gerlach and the *Kreuzzeitung* continually opposed them, their accuracy was daily confirmed by the behavior of no less persons than Count Buol in Vienna and Herr von Beust in Dresden.

The cool reception which in the summer of 1856 had been given to the memorial of the Saxon Minister on the subject of Confederate reform, that is to say, on the

¹ *Preussen im Bundestag*, vol. 4, p. 264, ff.

subject of restrictions to be imposed upon the Press and upon the rights of the Estates, had not frightened that ambitious statesman in the least. He knew that in his efforts for these objects he could count upon Austria's support, and he therefore determined in the spring of 1857 to make the contents of the memorial, now formulated in definite propositions, the subject of fresh negotiations.

He had already found in March a rival in the person of the Baden Minister, Baron Meysenbug, who appropriated to himself one of Beust's propositions, the establishment of a Confederate court of arbitration, and brought it forward officially in Frankfort. "The proposal," said Bismarck, "owes its origin without doubt to a desire for popularity. It seems at the first glance very fine, that, in the future, constitutional disputes should be settled no longer by the assembly of diplomats at Frankfort, but by an independent tribunal; unfortunately, the pleasure caused by this will not last till one has read to the end of the proposal."

In fact, everything which the other paragraphs took away from the Confederate Diet, Meysenbug restored to it by the simple clause, that, in any particular case of dispute, the Confederate Diet was to decide whether or no the authority of the tribunal extended to that case. Instead of this, Baron Beust would have preferred a provision according to which the Confederate Diet should have the right to interfere only when the tribunal should overstep the limits of its authority; but he did not allow himself to be deterred by this from

welcoming his co-worker in Baden; and at the end of April he laid his plan in its new form before the Governments, with the proposal that a grand conference of ministers should be assembled as soon as possible.

The judgment of the majority of the Governments, nevertheless, remained the same as in the preceding year. In Munich, King Max, indeed, angered by the resolute obstinacy of his Estates, was inclined to favor measures like those suggested by Beust; but his ministers argued that it was better to carry out such measures on his own account in his own country, than to run the risk of injuring Bavaria's sovereignty by proposing them in the Confederate Diet as a law for all Germany. "I do not see," said Baron Pfordten to the Prussian ambassador, "that we have, generally speaking, any ground for altering anything in the existing Confederate Constitution. So far as Herr von Beust is concerned, if a subject for political activity is not at hand for him, his energetic mind is only too ready to find it for himself."

Bismarck reported to Berlin: "All that Beust proposes amounts simply to a new edition of the exception-laws of 1819 and 1834, an extraordinary means for elevating the Confederate Diet in the eyes of the nation." Minister von Manteuffel adhered to this view entirely, and expressed it without reserve to the German ambassadors then at Berlin. Upon this Baron Beust communicated to him a copy of an Austrian despatch, in which Count Buol declared to the Saxon

Minister his warm approval of all the propositions, and at the same time his deep regret that he was hindered for the time by Prussia's manifold scruples from taking energetic steps to carry out the reform; it was not Austria's fault, therefore, if this time as well no desirable advance in the German question could be made.

The close connection of the Courts of Dresden and Vienna in opposition to that of Berlin was thus made as evident as possible. The proceeding caused the Prussian Court all the more dissatisfaction, since shortly before, in the west of Germany, a similar conquest made by Austrian influence had become manifest, and that, too, in a place where, considering the near relationship of the princely House with that of Prussia, it was least to be expected, namely, in Baden. Even since Herr von Meysenbug had undertaken the management of affairs, he had shown everywhere a tendency to turn away from Prussia and to look to Austria. In the affair of Neuchâtel, he held back much longer than the other states in the matter of the passage of Prussian soldiers; although, so far as the Swiss Radicals were concerned, he would have been quite willing to see them punished for the hostility they had displayed toward the Jesuits in 1847. But an open dispute was at length brought on by the complicated negotiations about the fortress of Rastadt.

As early as the summer of 1856, there had been a lively discussion in regard to further grants of money for the completion of the fortress. Austria and the South Germans had shown themselves ready to give

freely, but Prussia and some of the Northern States were of the opinion that these demands must at length come to an end. After a sharp debate, a compromise was unanimously agreed upon; but the struggle was renewed with redoubled vehemence, when in May, 1857, Austria and Baden proposed in the Diet that the peace garrison of Rastadt, which, according to a unanimous vote of 1841, consisted of 2,500 Badenens, should be henceforth doubled, and 5,000 Austrians added to it.

In the beginning, the Prussian King was not indisposed to agree to the change; but Bismarck pointed out that although the proposal (offering as it did a guaranty for the active participation of Austria in the defence of the upper Rhine) was advantageous to the interests of the Confederation, yet it was impossible for Prussia to allow such a permanent increase of Austria's power in Baden without a corresponding gain for herself. He therefore received instructions to act accordingly.

The proposal had first to be reported upon by the committee on military affairs and by the military commission on technical details; but even in these preliminary deliberations it became evident that a fierce battle was in prospect. For the majority were favorable to the proposal, and they made no effort to conceal their opinion that their decision on the subject would be binding: while Bismarck disputed their authority as a majority, besides opposing the motion itself, and demanded that any change in the existing state of things should be decreed unanimously. Every contro-

versy on this subject, however, concerned, as we know, the very foundation of the Confederate Constitution and brought the whole existing system into danger.

With such uncertainties in prospect for the future, Bismarck was asked by the President of the Ministry to sketch out an answer to the above-mentioned propositions of Buol and Beust on the subject of Confederate reform. In this work, which was completed on the 1st of July, 1857, Bismarck paid back the Vienna Cabinet with interest for the accusation that Prussia was the obstacle to reform. With abundant praise for the patriotism and insight of Beust's efforts, he pointed out to him the necessity of keeping his work far removed from any resemblance to the Carlsbad Decrees. "The chief difficulty," he said, "in regard to the main idea of the plan, the bringing about of greater uniformity in the constitutional rights of the German states, lies in the peculiar conditions of the Austrian monarchy. These conditions hinder the Government from granting to the parts of its country belonging to the German Confederation a representation of Estates which should be sufficiently similar to that of the remaining German states to render possible the general application of uniform principles to all the members of the Confederation. This is true also of the proposed Confederate court of arbitration. If all the members of the Confederation would submit themselves to such a court, Prussia would gladly give up the objections she has hitherto made. But it is evident how difficult the solution of such a problem would be for Austria. And

to establish institutions in this direction that would be inapplicable to so important a member of the Confederation as Austria would not further the unity of the Confederation, but would confirm the tendency of the different parts to separate from one another. Above all things, therefore, the Saxon Minister must inform himself what Austria's position is in respect to these questions."

Herr von Manteuffel prepared his despatch to Dresden quite in accordance with this outline, and communicated the contents of the same to Vienna. We will not attempt to describe the vexation of Count Buol. There was nothing to be said against this exposition of the state of things, but it was all the more annoying, because it disclosed with so much coolness the weak points of the absolute Imperial Government, or rather because it presupposed them as being naturally already well known. The Count made up his mind very decidedly not to remain in debt for an answer.

Meanwhile, for the moment, the diplomatic correspondence was interrupted by a hasty decision of the King of Prussia. The anxious and irritable state of mind in which the King had issued from the Neuchâtel trouble had since that time been constantly made worse by the increasing difficulty with Austria. For in this case, as so often, his heart was moved by conflicting feelings. He saw clearly that his duty as a ruler forbade him to yield any further, but, in spite of all the slights he had received, the idea of a complete breach with the Imperial House was still most distressing to

him. The fairest recollections of his youth were rooted in the brotherhood-in-arms of 1813, his riper years had been penetrated with the spirit of the Holy Alliance, and his accession to the throne had been accompanied by the last admonition of his father, that he should hold firm to Austria and Russia.

In the storms of the revolutionary time, he had indeed often been angry with Austria, but in the end the avoidance of war had been to him the greatest of all joys, and nothing had remained in his memory except their common action in the suppression of the Revolution. Since that time, he had year after year experienced a long succession of unvarying acts of hostility, first at the hands of Schwarzenberg and then at those of Buol, in matters connected with the Tariff-Union, with the Confederate Diet, with the German Cabinets, and with the European Powers, all having one end in view, either to surpass Prussia or to cripple her, to disturb her prosperity and to hinder her growth. Until within a short time he had endured this diplomatic skirmishing with indifference, as being necessarily connected with the politics of Kings; but the constant irritation gradually proved too much for his nerves.

In this situation, the idea came to him of making a last attempt in person. As he had once written to Queen Victoria, that where the skill of the diplomats fails, the sovereigns themselves must interpose, so he now determined upon a journey to Vienna, in order, if possible, to restore by a brotherly interview the ancient friendship. He set out with little hope, and returned

completely undeceived. Filled with sad thoughts, foreseeing serious misfortunes in every direction, he arrived at Dresden, where he was to stay for a short time.

But here, too, disagreeable discussions awaited him, in which he proved unable any longer to control his excitement. Immediately after one scene of such a nature he swooned away; what he had endured in the last few years had consumed his strength; a stroke of apoplexy had fallen upon him. Hopes were still entertained, as several milder attacks of the same sort had occurred since the tremendous days of 1848, attacks in which memory was lost, or the King sank into a silent state of apathy from which it was dangerous to arouse him. These former crises had, however, passed away, and now also, after a short time of uncertainty, his condition improved; he reviewed troops, made a short journey, and presided once more at a session of the Ministry, at which one occurrence seemed afterwards to have been especially tragic. Since the March days the gloomy idea had possessed his mind that, for his own atonement and penance, God had appointed him to be the instrument for the punishment of all sinfulness. This showed itself among other things in the fact that he, who was by nature so mild and cheerful, could after that time, only with great difficulty be induced to grant a pardon in serious criminal cases (while the reverse of this was true of his successor). At the sitting above-mentioned it happened that the Minister of Justice, Simons, made a report concerning thirteen death-sen-

tences, which had been passed during the time of his illness. The King confirmed eleven of them. It was his last official act as a ruler.

The brain trouble once more appeared ; the life of the spirit was enveloped in darkness ; and towards the end of October a royal decree appeared, appointing the King's brother, William, Prince of Prussia, to represent the Sovereign in the affairs of the Government for the next three months. To this decree the Prince appended a declaration, that he would undertake the charge and that he would carry on the government in accordance with the principles and intentions of his Majesty, which were well known to him.



BOOK VII.

*FIRST YEARS OF THE RULE OF
KING WILLIAM I.*



CHAPTER I.

BEGINNING OF THE REGENCY.

WILLIAM, Prince of Prussia, was sixty years old, when, in the autumn of 1857, he assumed the control of public affairs, as representative of his royal brother. In later years he used to say often in his homely way, "When I was young I never thought of the possibility of my ascending the throne; I learned then how to command an infantry division properly, but I never troubled myself about affairs of state." As a matter of fact, the young officer did give himself up to his military duties body and soul, and Prussia gained by it; for under a vigorous leadership the military calling affords an excellent training-school for a future ruler, by accustoming him to quick decision, to firm command, and to unconditional obedience. It is true that his education was, for a long time, somewhat one-sided, but, owing to his earnest industry, it was all the more thorough within its sphere; and thorough work of any sort calls forth all the energies of the mind, making it ready, when the occasion comes, to find itself at home even in unaccustomed occupations, while *dilettante* buzzing in all directions dissipates the force of the intellect and weakens the judgment.

We have seen how, after such a training, the Prince,

having reached maturity, began his political activity; how he retained at all times an independent view of things; how with serious misgiving he gave his approval to the Constitution based upon the Estates; and then how, after the King's decision had been taken, he entered without weakness or reserve into the new path and allowed himself to be neither led astray nor embittered by the insults of the Berlin street and newspaper mob in 1848. As we have observed, he had not always been contented with the Prussian policy: he would never have gone to Olmütz, he would never have allowed Prussian troops to leave the field in the presence of the enemy without a fierce contest. Soon after came the Crimean war, and during that the sharp collision with his brother, and the necessity of bearing, with a careless countenance, the blows aimed at him in secret by the ruling party. Thus ripened in the harsh school of life, settled in his political judgment, with an enlarged circle of interests, he now stepped into the most exalted position upon earth, a figure of extraordinary dignity, firm in step, bearing in his face an expression of unsought mastery, of mild earnestness, and of hearty good-will.

Let us try to present to ourselves a little more nearly his personality.

He was a devout Christian, who with simple conviction took his stand on the creed of his forefathers. He was neither a sceptical philosopher, like Frederick the Great, nor a liturgist or theosophist, like Frederick William IV., and he was far from entertaining the idea

of becoming a reformer of the Christian churches. His piety was, as the Gospel prescribes in the sixth chapter of Matthew, neither attended with pride nor with a sad countenance, neither dogmatic nor intolerant. But it was the bread of life to him, the consolation of his sorrows, the standard of his actions. There grew up out of his belief an unbounded confidence in God, which filled his whole being and sustained him in all difficulties, quite in the spirit of the old saying: Because I know that I am powerless in God's hand, I am strong in the face of the world. Thus he was anxiously conscientious in deliberation, but absolutely fearless in danger. It was not mere chivalric courage arising from nervous excitement or from the love of honor; the words *fear* and *danger* had for him no meaning at all. He passed through life, never trembling, and never boasting, firm in the even balance of his soul.

He did not belong to the inspired or *daemonic* natures, which either by supreme spiritual power open new paths for their age, or with irresistible passion hurl down themselves and their people from giddy heights into fearful abysses. He cannot even be called clever, in the sense in which the word can be applied to his elder brother. But, on the other hand, he was, as a contemporary chronicler says in praise of Rudolf von Hapsburg, a man who put things through (*ausrichtiger Mann*). His whole nature was directed toward practical action and qualified for it; he had the natural gift of perceiving what was attainable, and an unembarrassed clearness of view, which was shown, above

all, in his almost unerring judgment of men. Besides this, he had a rare combination of firmness and flexibility of mind, such as characterizes the statesman as distinguished from the *doctrinaire*. Until his death he remained unshaken in his conservative principles; yet he recognized, without contradiction, that the means of retaining power must alter with altering conditions, and that progressive reform is the permanent condition on which alone any government can be maintained.

It is unnecessary to say that he was thoroughly convinced of the necessity of a strong monarchy in a country like his own, which had been built up by its kings, which consisted of isolated provinces, and which was surrounded by jealous neighbors. In such a country he felt that there must be a central power guided by decided political traditions, independent of the daily variations of public opinion; the necessity of a change of ministry with every change of the majority in the parliament would be a mortal danger, not only internally to the dignity of the throne, but also to the external safety of the state.

But the Prince was far from deducing from these arguments the necessity of an absolute government. "I will not examine," he said to King Max of Bavaria, "whether constitutions are good things in themselves. But where they exist they should be maintained, and not falsified by forced interpretations. I have watched long enough the harm done by Manteuffel's ministry in this way. The constitutional idea, that the measures

of the Government should be made public, and that the people are entitled to a share in legislation, has sunk deep into the popular consciousness. To oppose this is very dangerous, since it indicates mistrust of his people on the part of the ruler. Not by restrictions on the Constitution, which imply just such mistrust, but by a wise slackening and tightening of the reins is the power of the Government to be confirmed. The process may be compared to the controlling of the course of a river. The banks must be strengthened, the dikes must be made neither too near nor too far apart, but above all you must not build square across the stream. In England the dikes are too far apart; in Hesse-Cassel and Hanover too near. I hope we shall attain the true mean in Prussia.”¹

These words contained no political theory. But it would be difficult to depict the obligations of a constitutional ruler with an apter expression or a more liberal sentiment.

Not less decided than his opinion on the constitutional system, was his view in regard to Prussia's position in Germany.

Like his brother, he was disposed by youthful associations to a warm friendship with the House of Austria; and he was wholly inclined, by reason of his conservative and loyal tendencies, to respect the rights of the other German princes in a very wide interpretation. Only he desired to receive the same consideration that he accorded to others, requiring that Prussia

¹ Autograph Memorandum of the 20th of June, 1860.

should be regarded as on an equal basis with Austria, and that her honor and the conditions essential to her existence should be respected in the German Confederation: the sacrifice of the interests of his own country to consideration for his brother princes, which Frederick William IV., out of generosity or magnanimity, had so often allowed himself, would to Prince William have been impossible. The weak points of the Constitution of the German Confederation were manifest to him, and from the very first he meditated his proposals for reform, though certainly with little hope himself of a good result. He had learned in the stormy years of the past, that Austria's opposition and the individualistic tendencies of the Lesser States could not be overcome by parliamentary decrees nor by popular agitation. He saw clearly that a war against Germans must be fought, but only in the case of unjust attacks upon Prussia, and not an offensive war merely with the object of transforming the Confederation; therefore he believed that the realization of German Unity would not come in his time.

As he was on the point of taking the field against the Baden rebels in 1849, he wrote, on the 20th of May, to General von Natzmer: "Whoever aspires to rule over Germany, must seize it for himself; *à la* Gagern, there is nothing more to be done. Whether the time for this Unity has arrived, God alone knows. That Prussia is destined to stand at the head of Germany, lies written in our whole history — but the when and the how? There is the point." And again, on

the 4th of April, 1851: "Yes, indeed! In November, 1850, we had a second 1813, and perhaps a more exciting one, because it was not a foreign yoke riveted during seven years that had brought about an uprising of the nation; it was a universal feeling that the moment was come when Prussia should possess the position assigned to her by history. — It was not yet time, and I see no prospect of its coming *so very soon*. The attempt must have been premature, and I think that *we* shall never see the hoped-for position attained by Prussia."¹

Two other expressions of opinion uttered by the Prince may here be given, because, supplementing one another, they complete the full circle of his views in German matters.

A few months after the beginning of the Regency, the German world — we shall soon see for what cause — was in great excitement. The Prince received at that time a visit from the King of Saxony, with whom he was intimately connected by mutual friendship and respect. The King observed that all the German princes were afraid that Prussia would swallow them up. The Prince energetically denied the imputation, calling attention to the often manifested sentiments of his brother and himself. The King cried in reply: "But all the street gamins of Berlin are talking of it." "Yes," remarked the Prince, "the street gamins must certainly know more about it than I." He repeated his assurance, but declared at the same time that it was

¹ G. von Natzmer, *Unter den Hohenzollern*, Vol. IV., p. 141.

indispensable that, on the other side, nothing should happen which might threaten the existence of Prussia. "Look here," said he, and pointed to the position of Hanover on the map, "under no circumstances can I permit a power to arise between my provinces that can possibly take hostile steps against Prussia."

At the end of January, 1863, he had a long conversation with the English ambassador, Sir Andrew Buchanan, in regard to the affairs of Poland. Buchanan showed him soon afterward his report which was to be sent to London, and the Prince made the following correction: "I did not say that neither I, nor my son, nor my grandson, would see a united Germany; on the contrary, I said that I should probably not live long enough to behold such a thing, but that I surely hoped that the unity would be realized in the time of my son or of my grandson."

He assigned, then, to the future these German hopes which always stirred his heart and were always held at a distance by his sense of duty, while he applied his whole energy to his immediate preoccupation, the administration of the Prussian Government. The unselfish, unwearied devotion to duty which he displayed in this field till his last breath, till the hour when he spoke those touching words: "I have no time to be tired," — all had its foundation, like his fearlessness, in the underlying religious element of his nature. Perhaps without knowing the words of his great ancestor, who called himself the first servant of the state, he regarded a ruler as called by God to serve the welfare

of his people. In this service he was zealous, but more exacting towards himself than towards others. He entered into business with indefatigable industry; what had formerly been indifferent to him he now strove to learn as belonging to his office, and with what ardor did he learn it!

When the great reform of our jurisprudence was in preparation, he, at seventy years of age, ordered a course upon the general science of law to be read to him; "By no means," he said, "for the purpose of criticising men of the profession, but that I might understand the explanations in regard to some difficult points, and might have some idea of what was to become law by means of my signature." After his death numerous closely written sheets were found among his papers, covered with extracts from all branches of the drafts of laws which had been laid before him, and by this means he had made their meaning and importance clear to himself.

In comparison with his brother, his æsthetic interests were naturally limited, and his scientific knowledge by no means extensive, but in these lines also he knew what is incumbent on a king, and under no former government has so much been accomplished in Prussia for art and science, as under his. In this direction, also, the work, undertaken in the beginning from a feeling of duty, soon aroused his receptive mind to sympathy with the object itself. When, on the occasion of some military manœuvres, he was travelling in the Rhine Province, and the painters of Düsseldorf

gave him a brilliant artists'-festival, he wrote to them on the following day these hearty words of thanks: "I was led from the troubles of the present into the past days of Germany tinged with a poetical glamour: I saw myself, after the rough toil of the martial exercises dedicated to the protection of the Fatherland, transported into a fairy realm so cunningly devised, that I could only with difficulty tear myself away from such a kingdom of enchantment."

With the same penetrating comprehension he studied, further, the plans for the new building in which the Reichstag was to sit; and it is well known how, with his practical insight, he suggested several essential improvements in the same. To his personal decision, made in opposition to the recommendation of his Ministers, the world owes the completion of the excavations at Olympia. And he listened for an hour with lively interest to a report on the historical significance for Art of the Pergamene altar, made to him by the directory of the Museum, which had at once been raised by this valuable antique to the position of an institution of European importance. Thus it was in all branches: his life was work, work in every department of the administration, work for the happiness of others.

Wherever he felt there was occasion, he was ready to display royal pomp in full measure; but in his own habits he was extremely moderate and simple, a veteran soldier, and a frugal manager. His personal relations were at all times distinguished by cordial friendliness

tempered by kingly dignity; he was anxious to communicate the quiet cheerfulness of his own spirit to all about him. For the opponents of his policy he had always the lofty maxim: to forget nothing and to forgive everything; when he had once given his friendship, he remained unalterably faithful; and in his heart that source of the purest joy that is given to mortal man, the joy of making others happy, never failed.

When, twenty years later, he stood on the pinnacle of power and greatness, and an abandoned criminal had dared to try to assassinate him, the first and most trusted of his servants could say of him,¹ "Here we have an old man, one of the best men on earth, and yet his life is aimed at. There never was a man of a more modest, more noble, and more humane disposition than the Emperor. He is totally different from men born to such a lofty station, or from the greater part of them. They lay little stress upon the feelings and wishes of others; they think that much is permitted to men of their caste; their whole education seems aimed at stifling the human side in their natures. The Emperor does not regard himself as any such Olympian; on the contrary, he is a man in every respect, and bows himself to every human obligation. He has never in his life done injustice to any one, never hurt any one's feelings, never been guilty of an act of harshness. He is one of those men whose amiable disposition wins the heart; he is constantly occupied with the welfare of those about

¹ Prince Bismarck to General Grant. According to Grant's memoranda, given by Simon: *L'Empereur Guillaume et Son Règne*.

him, and of his subjects, and is endowed with all the high qualities of a Prince and with all the virtues of a private man. It is impossible to conceive a finer and more beneficent type of gentleman."

The task that fell to the Prince in 1857, that of governing according to the intentions of his brother, was neither easy nor agreeable. As his own intentions had a very different direction, great self-denial was required for him to adapt himself to his brother's purposes. This he practised, with his usual uprightness, to its fullest extent. That he would leave his brother's Ministers quietly in possession of their offices, was to be expected; but the extent to which he carried the observation of this rule, even into the minutest details, is shown by a single example. A *littérateur* of bad reputation, Lindenberg by name, had shortly before been guilty of wretched intrigues against the Prince, but on an influential recommendation the King had held out to him the prospect of a petty office in Posen. The patent now came up for confirmation, and the Prince signed it without changing countenance.

In the beginning of the year 1858, the Government by Deputy was extended for another three months, though, indeed, all hope of the King's recovery had even then vanished. A meeting of the Parliament was near at hand; and the Minister of Justice, Simons, was in doubt whether a government by deputy so long continued was constitutional, and whether the regency prescribed by the Constitution in the case of permanent incapacity on the part of the King ought not now to be

established. It was, indeed, well known that at the King's Court at Sans Souci a great repugnance to this plan prevailed. Queen Elizabeth, who watched over her husband with devoted self-sacrifice, feared that such a course would produce a bad effect on the condition of her patient. The leaders of the "Kreuzzeitung" party, hitherto the trusted supporters of the King, the Gerlachs, the Uhdens, the Götzes, feared lest an administration of the Prince should bring about a change of policy and the loss of their influence. It was said among them, that he must be a bad Royalist, who would dispute the King's right to do what was in the power of every property-holder, to choose his own administrator.

In view of this fine theory, Simons laid before his colleagues an opinion given by Friedberg, the late Minister, which declared the Regency necessary. He then, as a sort of middle course, proposed that the King should issue a decree, out of his own sovereign right, inviting the Prince to assume the Regency; upon this, the Prince should issue a decree, declaring himself ready to undertake the office, in consideration of his right as heir; and finally the Parliamentary proceedings prescribed by the Constitution should take place. But this was zealously opposed by the Ministers of the Interior and of Education, Westphalen and Raumer; and therefore Manteuffel, though himself agreeing with Simons, let the matter drop.

The Prince, who likewise expected that the Regency would begin in April, had meanwhile, with this idea,

meditated a transformation of the Ministry; and as he disapproved of the men of the "Kreuzzeitung," he had cast his eye on the former Minister of Finance, von Alvensleben-Erxleben, a strongly conservative official of considerable information and insight, as we have seen in his work at the Dresden Conference. By him the Representative in the Diet, Von Bismarck, was suggested as Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Prince, who had long ago become convinced that Bismarck had grown far beyond the range of vision of the "Kreuzzeitung," agreed, and Bismarck also declared his willingness to accept. But before the end of March, Alvensleben died after a short illness, and on this the whole plan fell to the ground. Under these circumstances the Prince accepted the prolongation of the Government by Deputy without opposition; and contrary to all anticipation, the Parliament passed over the question in silence. The feudal party had, for the present, accomplished their desires; but the Prince could not but see in their behavior a fresh personal slight, and he turned all the more decidedly to their opponents, at least to those of them whom he could count upon as cherishing monarchical sentiments.

His confidence, at this time, was placed chiefly in Herr Rudolf von Auerswald, a man of single mind and of warm love for his Fatherland, combining devoted loyalty to his King with moderately liberal principles, by his temperament more inclined to conciliatory than to radical measures, in the strife of party more ready to see the points of resemblance than of

difference, and in every negotiation anxious for concession and agreement. His connection with the Prince dated from their boyhood, from the time of the exile to Königsberg, after the Peace of Tilsit. Auerswald, while Minister in the summer of 1848, had boldly defended the rights of the Prussian Crown against the encroachments of the Diet at Frankfort and of the Prussian Parliament; but in 1852 he had been removed from his position at the head of the administration of the Rhine Province, on account of his opposition to the "feudal" policy of the Minister Westphalen. During this whole time the Prince's affection for him had been unchanged. In the summer of 1858 the Prince invited him to make him a long visit at Baden-Baden; and there they came to the decision, not to allow the existing Ministry to remain any longer in office than was absolutely necessary.

The advice of Baron von Schleinitz was to the same effect. This nobleman had been Minister of Foreign Affairs under Count Brandenburg; and his brilliant conversation and attractive manner had made him, since 1849, an always welcome guest at the Court of the Prince and Princess of Prussia. In politics he was without very decided opinions, as a diplomatist not unskilful, but incapable of independent decisions and lacking in firmness; his effort was always to avoid difficulties, rather than to overcome them, to maintain Prussia's position as far as possible, but, above all things, to proceed by mutual concession, and, especially, never to come to an open breach with Austria. He

now proposed that the Prince, after the dismissal of the existing Ministry, should form his Cabinet of new men, as yet free from political hostility, and should, therefore, give up all thought of himself and Auerswald. No decision in the matter was reached at that time; but for the position of official President of the future Ministry, Prince Anton von Hohenzollern was proposed, a man of patriotic spirit and of upright and honorable character.

Meanwhile another prolongation of the Government by Deputy had been brought about, as if it were the most harmless thing in the world. The feudal party, seeing that the Prince was reluctant to act, grew so confident that they publicly declared that any one would be an enemy of the King, who should venture to propose a Regency in any case; for it was an inherent right of the Prussian Crown to appoint a representative according to its own pleasure, a right which could not be limited by the articles of a Constitution on paper.

But the hour that was to awake them from their dreams was at hand. The patience of the Prince at length became exhausted; and, on the 8th of August, he required of the Ministry an opinion, as to whether the existing state of things could be prolonged any further without infringing the Constitution. The crisis was all the more urgent, as the parliamentary period was coming to an end, and a general election was imminent. The Ministry held several councils to consider the question. Herr von Westphalen, for the above-mentioned reasons, persisted in advising a rejection of

the Regency, and proposed, at least, a postponement of the matter till after the elections should be completed. The two Ministers von Manteuffel declared themselves emphatically on the other side, urging that it would be simply abominable to hold out as a party cry for the approaching electoral contest the question of "King, or Regent," which had already been hotly discussed by the Press. The majority concurred in this view; and the Report of the Ministry decided, on the 6th of September, for the Constitutional necessity of a Regency, and for the establishment of the same by the methods proposed by the Minister of Justice.

A few more weeks of consideration elapsed. The Prince, in his conscientiousness, weighed unceasingly his duties towards the State, towards his brother, and towards himself. The nearer the hour of decision came, the greater did he find the burden of the responsibility resting upon him. He sought a personal interview with the Queen, but this was prevented by an accident. Manteuffel also failed in obtaining an audience from the Queen, though he twice requested it. On the 20th of September, the Prince held a council of the entire Ministry, when Simons and Westphalen once more discussed the pro and contra, while the Prince himself expressed no opinion; but immediately afterwards he informed the Queen that he shared the view of the Majority. She was obliged to yield to the inevitable, and sent word by the Minister of the Household, Von Massow, to his colleagues, that, although in great anxiety, she was ready to lay the question of

the Regency before the King; but if it injured his health, the Ministry must bear the responsibility.

An anxious moment followed. By the advice of his physicians, it was decided that the King should pass the winter in Italy. On a day when his mind was clear, on the 7th of October, the Queen told him that, as they were preparing for a somewhat lengthy absence, the Prince must receive fuller powers, and become Regent. The King calmly expressed his assent, and she therefore brought him the document to sign. The King read it in silence, and signed it, still without uttering a word; then he covered his face with his hands, burst into a flood of tears, and left the room.

Thereupon the Prince wrote to his wife, "The decisive step has thus been taken. May God give his blessing to the solemn work which now begins for the Fatherland by my hands! You can imagine in what a state of excitement I am, and how I could only strengthen and confirm myself by prayer, and recommend myself to the gracious goodness of God!" He then related to her the course things had taken, and added, "Although by this a burden is lifted from the hearts of so many, for me now first begins the real care and trouble, which is hardly likely (considering the improbability of the King's recovery) to be taken from me again. I close with the request that you will pray for me and for the Fatherland, and for the royal pair in their grievous sorrow.

Your affectionate

WILLIAM."

The royal proclamation which summoned the Prince to assume the Regency was made public on the following day. The first measure of the Prince was the immediate dismissal of Westphalen, and the invitation of President von Flottwell, a worthy and much-respected public servant, though now somewhat feeble with age, to take his place.

Not with a light heart, but with firm determination, the Prince began his government, which was to be on its own basis from this time forth. Even before the end of October he summoned the Parliament for the recognition of the Regency, and took the oath to respect the Constitution. He pronounced the words in solemn earnest, although more than one provision of the Constitution had been long ago regarded by him with anxiety.

He intended then, as he once wrote afterwards to the Grand Duke of Weimar, to show the world that it was possible to govern, even under an objectionable constitution, if one only remained firm upon a conservative basis, and chose honorable men as helpers in carrying out one's system. He had now finally decided upon a Hohenzollern-Auerswald Ministry, and in this combination there was certainly no place for Bismarck. Ministers of special departments without pronounced political tendencies were Herr von Flottwell, Herr von Schleinitz, and the Minister of War, General von Bonin, the Prince's fellow-sufferer in the disgrace of 1854. The party of the *Preussisches Wochenblatt* supplied Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg as Minister of Education, and

Count Pückler as Minister of Agriculture. The Department of Finance was offered to the President of the Board of Commerce, Otto Camphausen, younger brother of Ludolf; but he declined on some technical pretext, because he had no confidence in either the strength or the permanence of the Cabinet. At his suggestion, Auerswald invited to Berlin Herr von Patow, a leader of the Liberal opposition against Manteuffel.

Shortly before, on the 30th of October, the Ministers then in office had sent the Regent a memorial, in which they explained that it was necessary, for the good of the State, that they should retain their places, but the Regent had left the communication for a time unanswered. But now that, on the 4th of November, an understanding with Patow had been reached, the former Ministers were to be told, in reply, that Prince Hohenzollern had formed a new Cabinet, and that the Departments of Trade and Justice, hitherto controlled by Herren von der Heydt and Simons, would for the time be managed by the under-secretaries of those offices.

But suddenly a new difficulty arose. Herr von Patow, during the negotiation which had been carried on with him, had suggested that he doubted whether the King would approve of his being appointed. This caused the Prince a sleepless night. He asked himself whether Patow was not too liberal, and on the following morning he announced that he did not wish to have him as Minister. For a few hours the state of things was critical, till Auerswald's talent for adjusting difficul-

ties again displayed itself. Patow was notified of his appointment in the evening, after the Prince had consented to retain the two former Ministers, Von der Heydt and Simons, so bringing about a strengthening of the conservative element, and a restoration of continuity with the old Ministry.

I have related these particulars thus in detail, because they bring the intentions of the Regent into even clearer light than does the solemn declaration with which he opened the first session of the new Cabinet on the 8th of November. But in this also he announced emphatically, that there was not then, and never would be, any question of a break with the past, but that only a careful and improving hand was to be laid where anything arbitrary or unsuited to the time might show itself. The welfare of the Crown and of the Nation were inseparable, and must rest on a conservative basis. The Government must not let itself be urged by so-called liberal, but in fact exaggerated, ideas, into a shadowy region of uncertainty; true political wisdom was founded in an accurate knowledge of existing needs, in honesty of purpose, in respect for the laws, and in consistency; by means of these a Government was strong, because it had a clear conscience, and had thus right on its side in opposition to everything evil.

But when the Regent touched upon the different branches of the administration, the methods of the former Government were subjected to so searching a criticism in several directions, and especially the amal-

gamation of political and ecclesiastical interests was judged with such severity, as begetting not piety, but hypocrisy, that the feeling spread far and wide through the country that a new day had dawned for Prussia, and the Hohenzollern Cabinet received among the people the title of "Ministry of the new era." Less attention was paid to the Regent's words in regard to the pressing necessity of an improvement, even though costly, in the condition of the army. In what concerned foreign politics he contented himself with the statement of a few general objects to be aimed at. He should seek peace and friendship with all the Great Powers, but there was to be no limiting of Prussia's independence by premature agreements. In Germany Prussia had moral conquests to make by the wisdom of her own legislation and by the employment of various means tending toward unity; for instance, of the Tariff-Union, which, however, certainly needed reform. The world must learn that Prussia was ready everywhere to defend the right. All these statements, regarded generally, as they appeared in this speech, seem partly meaningless and partly dangerous; but in the intention of the Regent, they all had their application to German questions then hanging in the balance, and we shall soon see how justly and accurately they were adapted to these.

The establishment of the new Ministry with some Liberal names connected with it soon had a great effect, both far and near. In Munich a sharp struggle between the Government and the Second Chamber had

been long going on, and was constantly increasing in bitterness, so that, with the consent of the King, the Ministers, Von der Pfordten and Count Reigersberg, the one led by his sanguinary, and the other by his arbitrary, disposition, began to meditate a small *coup d'état*, dissolution of the Chamber, proclamation of a new electoral law, and the other usual accompaniments of such a means of salvation. Evidently it was necessary to stop all this when the Prussian crisis came: with a Liberal movement going on in Prussia, an infringement of the Constitution in Bavaria was quite out of the question. But then the Bavarian Ambassador in Berlin sent most joyful news: the Manteuffel Ministry stood firmer than ever; he had learned it in the last days of October, from the very best sources, naturally from Herr von Manteuffel himself.

After this, the appointment of Hohenzollern came to Munich like lightning from a clear sky. Pfordten hastened to the King; after long deliberations, continued during several months, the unavoidable decision was reached, that on certain points concessions must be made to the Chamber. "But how is that possible," the King then exclaimed, "after all that has passed, without a humiliation of the Crown?" — "Nothing is simpler," replied the imperturbable Pfordten; "Your Majesty puts forth a manifesto: 'My Ministers have latterly had various difference with the Chambers, *but I am determined to be at peace with my people.*'"

The plan was adopted; and Pfordten gave up his position to the Representative in the Diet, Baron von

Schrenck. The sentence devised by the Minister who had advocated the *coup d'état* — “I am determined to be at peace with my people” — became a popular watchword which, in the midst of the ensuing constitutional complications in Prussia, was pointed at by every Bavarian with patriotic pride, and without the slightest suspicion that Bavaria's undeniably great glory, never to have had her Constitution infringed, was mainly owing to the Prince of Prussia.

In Prussia itself the dawn of the new era was greeted by the great majority of the people with a delight before which the angry apprehension of the feudal party and the studied indifference of the Democrats sank into insignificance. It is characteristic of this agitation, that people's minds were filled with exuberant hopes of universal happiness, but there was no trace of the usual radical or republican ideals. At the beginning of the general elections to the Parliament, the programmes announced contained the exact contrary of what had been customary with the preceding administration: they were directed especially against the points on which the pressure of the old system had been most severely felt, against political arbitrariness, against the equivocal interpretation of the laws, against ecclesiastical narrowness and love of persecution, against party-favoring of manorial proprietors, and against the violent influencing of Parliamentary elections. All this, compared with the Regent's speech, could certainly be regarded as an intensified echo of the same.

Another not less significant characteristic in this

electoral agitation was the ready assent which was yielded, when the Ministers publicly announced that the removal of abuses that had endured for years was not an easy task, that it was much more difficult to realize even reasonable desires than to express them, and that the country must, therefore, give the Government its confidence, and not increase the difficulty of its task by being over-anxious to accomplish something. Every one was willing to agree to this; the caution, "only do not urge things too much," became a watchword of the Liberal party. Everywhere the tone was given by the leaders of the old Liberal school. The object was to get rid of the feudal opponents of the Government, but not to cause embarrassment by the election of Radicals; and the result was a thorough defeat of the feudal party, a complete exclusion of the Democrats, and an overwhelming majority for the new Ministry. For the first time since the beginning of constitutional government in Germany, Liberal electors and representatives counted it an honor to be called the Ministerial party.

There were, indeed, exceptions to this feeling, even among the prominent Liberals; there were men who, in view of the different elements in the new Cabinet, could not feel secure. Georg von Vincke observed casually that the Parliament must keep a doubly careful watch on a popular Ministry, and Count Schwerin declared to his constituents that he was a warm friend of the Ministry, yet that he could make no decisions at their nod, but must act on his own independent con-

viction in every particular case. He did not then know that in a few months he would be Minister himself. But in spite of these few individuals, the Prussian nation in general was strong in the feeling that the new era was a liberal one, and that any lack of harmony between the Ministry and the representatives of the people was out of the question.

The Prince Regent could not, at any rate, help being pleased with all this evidence of approval of his Ministry. But the very disproportion of the result obtained at once raised doubts in his prudent mind as to the permanence of the general joy, and called forth, at the same time, the question, how far it would be possible to justify expectations so highly raised.

Influences of another sort were at work upon his decisions in regard to foreign politics. We must here return once more to the summer of 1858, to the days of the Prince's stay at Baden-Baden.

As we have seen, the Crimean War had left many problems unsolved, in the discussion of which the Great Powers separated into two parties, Austria and England on one side, France, Russia, and Prussia on the other. This dispute occupied at that time the stage of Europe, and everywhere a feeling of oppression prevailed, that seemed to forebode a storm. The alliance of the three Eastern Powers, which, since 1815, had secured the condition of Europe according to the stipulations of treaties, was now thoroughly dissolved; in regard to the future designs of the French upstart, who had so suddenly raised himself to the pinnacle of

the continent, an anxious uncertainty prevailed, which was not at all diminished by the fact that Bismarck's view, expressed in 1856, that Napoleon was thinking of directing his immediate action against Austria's supremacy in Italy, was now very widely held.

Cavour was at Baden-Baden in the summer of 1858, and there talked with the Prussian statesmen, though with a confidence that had some reservations. He said that he had just discussed the condition of Italy with Napoleon at Plombières. The Emperor was not wholly free to act in the matter, as he had to take into consideration the French clergy and their sympathy with the Pope, and consequently with Austria; but this much was certain, that in case of a break between Sardinia and Austria, Napoleon would be found on the side of Sardinia. A Russian diplomat, Herr von Balabin, who was present, observed on this, "If you march, the Russian Guard will march also." The Prince of Prussia, to whom the Sardinian statesman described the melancholy condition of Italy, had no hesitation in declaring to him his readiness to co-operate for the amelioration of the same, though in doing this he certainly had no other thought in mind than a reform of the partly stagnant and partly despotic administration of the Italian countries. In every respect, Austria's position was by no means an agreeable one. France in covert, and soon, perhaps, open hostility; Russia in a state of unfeigned and bitter anger; Prussia sorely irritated by the Neuchâtel affair, and by German matters in general, and very near an open breach, — such was the state of

Europe during the government of the Prince of Prussia as Deputy.

It was natural that every friend of Austria's should look upon a restoration of the good understanding between the two German Great Powers as the most effective means of protection against all these dangers, and should desire to see such a restoration brought about. In the first rank of those who held this view stood England; that is to say, both the Tory Ministry of Lord Derby, and Queen Victoria with the Prince Consort personally as well. The Royal Personages had just entered into close family connection with the Prince and Princess of Prussia, through the marriage of their children, Prince Frederick William, and the Princess Royal, Victoria (January 17th, 1858); and by this, between the two mothers especially, a bond of warm friendship had been established. Soon after the betrothal of the young couple, the Princess of Prussia wrote, on the 12th of April, 1856, to the Duke of Coburg, "May God bless this union for the dear children, for our family, and for the poor German Fatherland, which, in the nature of things, can only be raised from its present condition through an alliance with England."¹

But in 1858 alliance with England meant nothing less than friendship with Austria. The movement in this direction was seconded also by King Leopold I. of Belgium, who in former times had thought himself out of favor with the Prussian Court, and for this reason

¹ Ernst II., *Aus Meinem Leben*, vol. ii. p. 347.

had attached himself firmly to Austria, but who now looked with anxious suspicion on his dangerous neighbor in the Tuileries, and exerted all his diplomatic influence for the controlling of French ambition, and consequently for a firm accord between Austria and Prussia. Besides this, there were the efforts of the South German Kings, whose hearts sank within them at the horrible thought of a war between France and Austria, and who therefore, for the time, looked upon the otherwise not undesirable coldness between the German Powers as the acme of misfortune. The King of Würtemberg went himself to Baden-Baden, to use his personal influence with the Prince of Prussia in this direction.

Among those about the Prince, Herr von Schleinitz was disposed, as always before, to speak in favor of harmony between the two States. Herr von Auerswald was not strongly inclined to the yellow and black, but thought peace with Austria more desirable than terms of hostility. The Prince had no objection to make, but felt that, for the time, in the settlement of the pending difficulties, everything depended on a favorable disposition on the part of Austria, and that there had as yet been no sign anywhere of anything of the sort. Out of the dispute in regard to the Rastadt garrison there had again arisen, as we have seen, the dangerous question as to whether the matter could be decided by a majority-vote in the Diet, or whether unanimity was required. Bismarck had been anxious that the protest against deciding the matter by

a majority should be accompanied by a threat of withholding Prussia's contribution; and Manteuffel, though he had erased the threat, had sent the protest in its full energy to Vienna. Then came the further news, that Austria continued firm in her intention, on the expiration of the Tariff-Union, which was now near at hand, either to enter the same, or to form a Tariff-Union on her own account with South Germany, and thus, in any case, to break up the Prussian hegemony in this direction also.

Such methods were not likely to increase the friendly feeling of Prussia, and, in consequence, the Prince was not at all disposed to listen to the following offer, with which, at the end of June, the Imperial Court surprised the Prussian Cabinet: that some Prussian battalions should be admitted into Rastadt, if Prussia would promise, as in 1854, to guarantee to Austria all the latter's German and non-German possessions,—very much as if an elderly lady should write to a young friend that she would give him a fine puppy-dog, but expected that he would marry her in return. It is hardly necessary to say that the Prince declared very decidedly, that he hoped for a good understanding with Austria, but that he was not willing to bind himself by too hasty agreements. Schleinitz's mild advice to the Prince fell, therefore, on stony ground; and the latter summoned Bismarck three times to Baden-Baden, and even consented that Manteuffel should take up his abode there for a few weeks.

For in July a special occasion called for important

and vigorous action on the part of the Confederate Diet. Since the beginning of 1857 the Assembly had been occupied with a complaint made by the Holstein Estates — we will return later to the details of the matter — on account of the action taken in contradiction to constitutions and treaties by the Danish King against the Duchies. After long deliberation, and much writing hither and thither, the Diet in February finally passed decrees which imposed definite requirements on Denmark. The latter took time for her answer, and at length, on the 15th of July, declared herself prepared, not indeed to fulfil the requirements, but to negotiate about them, as had been done six years before. Austria, considering her former friendship with Denmark, and the South German Governments, following in Austria's train, declared themselves perfectly satisfied.

At this point, however, the Prince of Prussia interfered decidedly. On the first rumor of the Danish answer he telegraphed to Berlin that it was insufficient, that the Diet must resolve on energetic measures, and that Prussia must take the initiative in them. It was the memory of Olmütz that now burned within him; it was the feeling that had made him say, on the 8th of November, that Prussia was always ready to defend the right. Bismarck was summoned to Baden, the Prince came to an agreement with him in regard to the course to be followed in the Diet, and in a few weeks a decree of the Diet was drawn up, which threatened the King-Duke with chastisement if he remained obstinate.

The Rastadt difficulty was settled by a compromise toward the end of the year, and thus the outward harmony between the two Great Powers was restored. More than this was not accomplished. The Prince Regent persisted in his determination to keep his hands free, as far as any obligation to Austria was concerned.

Only too soon, however, events occurred which rendered it necessary not only to avoid rash obligations, but to adopt a positive policy. The Regency was exposed to a severe trial on the very threshold of its activity.

CHAPTER II.

THE ITALIAN WAR.

ON the 1st of January, 1859, the Emperor Napoleon, at the formal audience of congratulation, said to the Austrian Ambassador, "I regret that the relations between our Governments are no longer so good as formerly, but I beg you to assure your Emperor that my personal respect for him remains unaltered."

These words echoed like a thunder-clap through all Europe. Every one took them as the forerunners of a declaration of war. The rates fell in all the Exchanges.

Nor was every one in the wrong, though Napoleon shortly afterwards expressed his wonder that there should have been such a misunderstanding. He said that, on the contrary, he had declared that in spite of some difficulties, his peaceful disposition toward the Emperor Francis Joseph was unaltered.

As a matter of fact, he had come to an understanding with Cavour in regard to a war against Austria. It had been settled at Plombières that the Sardinian King, Victor Emanuel, should have Lombardo-Venetia, Parma, and Modena, while France, in return for assistance rendered, should receive Savoy and Nice. As a pledge of this alliance, the cousin of the Emperor,

Jerome Napoleon, was to marry a daughter of the King. The question of how Italian affairs were to be arranged after the expulsion of the Austrians from Italy, was, for the present, left to the course of events. Napoleon thought of an Italian Confederation under the honorary presidency of the Pope; and Cavour made no objection to this, provided no foreign prince should be numbered among the members of the Confederation.

As for the bringing on of the war, there was naturally no intention of provoking Europe by announcing off-hand the overthrow of the territorial conditions established by the compacts of 1815; on the contrary, the proceedings were to be based firmly on the ground of these compacts. Napoleon would first propose to the Court of Vienna that the Pope should be urged to reforms in the Papal States, as a consequence of which the French and Austrian garrisons there should become unnecessary. Then Austria, the great stickler for formal legality, Austria herself would be accused of a breach of the compacts of 1815. These had proclaimed the sovereign independence of the Italian States; and now Austria had concluded alliances with many of these States, by which powerful influence upon the internal affairs of those States was conceded to the Court of Vienna, and their independence, consequently, seriously trenched upon. On this point, then, it was proposed to take a stand, and, on the ground of the Act of the Vienna Congress, to demand that these unauthorized alliances should be given up; in case of

a refusal, an eminently proper excuse for a declaration of war would be provided.

The refutation of this argument would certainly not have been difficult. If those Italian States were independent, they clearly had the right to purchase Austria's powerful protection by certain limitations of their own supreme authority. But, unfortunately, this reply, in itself decisive, could have but little effect in the mouth of Austria, since in 1850 she had used against Prussia exactly the same argument that France was now trying to bring forward: she had then said that because the Act of Confederation proclaimed the German princes to be sovereign, it was not allowable for those princes to resign certain of their rights of supremacy to Prussia, as Head of the Union.

While Napoleon was silently preparing this diplomatic machinery, Cavour and the National League had been occupied, during the whole autumn, in arousing the popular feeling. In all parts of the Peninsula arose the cry that Italy must be freed from the yoke of the foreign oppressor, and that the severed members of the Fatherland must be united. The Press, the debates in the Chambers, the League, all worked together, and with the greatest indifference to precaution or concealment, for one object: to harass the enemy in Vienna, and to provoke him to unguarded steps.

This effort succeeded to their wish, and even beyond. In Vienna there was great indignation. The slightest concession was thought incompatible with the dignity

of the Empire. The Government did not, indeed, wish to attack, but they longed for the moment when the enemy would offer them an occasion, that they might seize it and strike a decisive blow. An Austrian statesman said to Herr von Bismarck, "Since Sardinia has become a constitutional state, our officials have found any systematic administration in Lombardy impossible; it is for us a matter of life and death that we should compel Sardinia to get rid of her Constitution, and renounce ideas of Italian Unity." Just in the same way had Metternich called the idea of German Unity abominable, and Schwarzenberg used every effort for the overthrow of the Constitution in Berlin. Certainly it is neither an imposing nor a safe position, when one is obliged to regard the misery of one's neighbors as a necessary condition of one's own existence.

However, things had been developing in this direction for more than a century, and the Court of Vienna longed for war with no less passion than did that of Turin. Hardly had Napoleon's New Year's greeting resounded through Europe, when Austria threw thirty thousand men into Lombardy, and added re-enforcements week by week. Upon this, Sardinia naturally declared herself threatened by such an accumulation of troops upon her borders, began to make preparations on her side, of course, only for defence, and, to Austria's infinite disgust, called to her banner volunteers from all Italy, who then formed a special division of the army, under the great revolutionary leader, Garibaldi.

This time the Court of Vienna was led to make use of popular agitation, however little such a course was adapted to its usual political methods. But in this connection everything depended upon obtaining the help of the German Confederation; for the announcement that such help was to be given might perhaps avert the French attack altogether, and would, at any rate, draw the French army to the Rhine, and keep it away from Italy. While, therefore, the Imperial diplomats were moving heaven and earth in their effort to represent to the Princes that the support of the leading Power of Germany was a self-evident patriotic duty, in which assertion they were readily listened to by the majority, in the South German Press the watch-word resounded day after day, that the ancient enemy should be crushed with Germany's united strength. Never must that happen again which had happened in 1805 and 1807, that Prussia should leave her Austrian brothers in the lurch, and then, after a short interval, be herself destroyed in her isolation. If Austria was attacked in Italy, Germany was also indirectly threatened thereby, for the Rhine could not be defended without the possession of the Po. The French despot had stifled all freedom in his own dominions; now he was attempting to transplant, not freedom, but revolution, into other countries, exactly as former Kings had burned Protestants at home, and supported them abroad against Emperor and Church, by this means succeeding in robbing the Empire of Alsace and Lorraine. Whoever should be a laggard

in this holy war would betray the Fatherland, and assist in dismembering the German Nation. Such words were thundered forth in Munich and in Augsburg, in Stuttgart and in Darmstadt; with noisy terrorism every opposing opinion was crushed, and the Governments were unceasingly urged to speedy armament. The effect was great; the hearts of the South German people were set on fire. Never since 1848 had German honor and German unity been so highly cried up as in this newspaper storm which had its origin in the Vienna Press.

Quite different was the feeling in the North of Germany. There neither Schleswig-Holstein, nor Olmütz, nor the dangerous crisis in the matter of the Tariff-Union, had been forgotten. Among the great majority of the Prussian people liberal sentiments and the desire of national unity carried in their train a dislike of Austria, while Italy's efforts towards freedom and unity found a lively sympathy. Moreover, Napoleon's cleverly calculated attitude contributed to confirm the public opinion of Prussia in this tendency. In marked contrast to the war enthusiasm in Austria, there was in France no talk of serious military preparations. A small army was assembled on the frontiers of Savoy; but, apart from this, profound peace reigned in the country, and the fleet lay unprepared in the harbor of Toulon. The Prussian Government, therefore, saw in this state of affairs no occasion for warlike decisions. Even supposing that, for not unnatural reasons, a violent excitement arose in Piedmont, the little State

would not venture to take up arms without Napoleon's aid; and Napoleon had hitherto demanded nothing further than that, on the basis of the compacts of 1815, there should be an improvement in the state of things in Italy, — a state of things which, in Prussia's judgment also, had become intolerable.

The Prince Regent, consequently, had not a moment's hesitation in deciding that, so far as could be seen at that time, the German Confederation had nothing at all to do with the matter, and hence that Prussia would take part in the negotiations, not as a member of the Confederation, but independently as a European Power. Herr von Schleinitz, in spite of his friendship for Austria, was above all an enemy of critical, and possibly dangerous, decisions, and did everything in his power to confirm his master in the view the latter had adopted. In the Confederate Diet, Bismarck gave place to Herr von Usedom, a sympathizer with the new era, in order that the former might represent Prussia at St. Petersburg. These two gentlemen were not over-fond of each other in general, but agreed entirely in regard to the matter then in hand, Bismarck looking upon Austria as the chief opponent of Prussia, while Usedom was enthusiastic for the independence of Italy. Such opinions as these were generally held in Berlin among the leaders and the majority of the deputies; no one had any desire to break a lance for Austria's misrule in Italy, or in defence of the Curia.

As for the other two neutral Great Powers, Russia and England, there was in St. Petersburg only one

feeling, — delight at the prospect of a humiliation of Austrian pride ; and this feeling prevailed to such a degree that the Emperor Alexander did not conceal his intention of himself opposing any one who should show a readiness to assist Austria. In England the predominant feeling was a desire for peace ; though the Tory party then in power inclined rather to the Austrian side, while the Whigs distinctly favored the cause of the Italian patriots. The Minister, Lord Malmesbury, at once made an attempt at mediation, ordering the English Ambassador at Paris, Lord Cowley, to go to Vienna, and there to urge emphatically a consideration of the French proposals for internal reform in Italy. The Ambassador was received with the words, "We need no mediators, but allies." His proposals to guarantee to Austria the possession of the territory she then held, provided she would agree to the reforms, was received with an answer half accepting and half evading.

But before the negotiation had resulted in anything definite, it was thwarted by a proposition coming from Russia, that the affairs of Italy should be arranged at a Congress of the Great Powers, to which representatives of the Italian States should be admitted. The proposal was accepted by France with eagerness, and by England and Prussia without hesitation, but in Austria it aroused the bitterest indignation. What ! Were they to condescend to appear before the tribunal of the European Powers, in name, indeed, as equal among equals, but in fact as defendants against the

detested Sardinia? Were they to allow strangers to interfere in their sovereign rights, which had been created by Europe, and exercised for a generation? "I would rather go to the gallows than to this Conference," is said to have been the exclamation of Count Buol.

The proposal was not rejected in so many words, but delays were introduced in matters of detail, first in regard to the meeting-place of the Congress, and then in regard to its preliminaries. All negotiation was declared impossible so long as Sardinia did not dismiss Garibaldi's volunteers, and place its army on a peace-footing. Austria would then disarm as well, and take part in the Congress. Russia and England thought that Piedmont was much more threatened by the force of its enemy, which was double its own, than was Austria by the small army of the Piedmontese. They therefore proposed mutual disarmament. Napoleon all the time kept up a peaceful appearance, accepted every proposal of mediation, and troubled Cavour not a little by this boundless submissiveness; but at the same time the Emperor whispered in the ear of the Sardinian Ambassador, "Do not be anxious; all this will come to nothing."

He had judged the Austrian Cabinet rightly. Count Buol did, indeed, begin to hesitate a little, in the fear of taking some false step, which might turn the favor of Europe towards his opponent. But the decision lay no longer in his hand. The leaders of the officers of high rank and of the clergy, the Head of the

Ministry of War, Count Grünne, and the Archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal Rauscher, urged the Emperor not only to reject every thought of concession, but to begin as soon as possible the Holy War against Revolution as proclaimed openly in Berlin, and as hypocritically veiled in Paris. Every day there was an increasing impatience to turn to account the preparations which had been so energetically begun, and which were so exhaustive for the severely taxed Treasury, and to crush Sardinia before the French military arrangements could be completed.

The Archduke Albert came to Berlin to give assurance of the love of peace which animated his Court, and to hold out the prospect, in case of war, of the appearance on the Rhine of an Austrian army of two hundred and fifty thousand men, under the Emperor in person, requesting at the same time a similar manifestation on the part of Prussia and the German Confederation. But when asked the object of such a war, and some more particular questions about its management, he had nothing to answer, and therefore the Prussian reply was non-committal.

Nevertheless, at this very moment the rage for war at Vienna broke through all bounds. Yet once more Count Buol uttered a warning, and delayed the momentous step for three days; but then the decision was given against him, so that he presented his resignation, and was soon afterwards replaced by the Representative to the Diet, Count Rechberg. Thereupon, on the 28d of April, an Austrian officer appeared in

Turin with the ultimatum, either complete disarmament or war within three days. Cavour breathed again. He sent back the envoy with the answer that the question of disarmament could only be decided with that of the Congress. He knew now that all Europe would lay the blame of the breach of the peace upon Austria. And so it was. In England, where, hitherto, Napoleon had been regarded with great mistrust, people became enthusiastic for the resurrection of Italy. Russia mobilized four *corps d'armée*, in order, if war should occur, to prevent an Austrian triumph. Prussia declared, in a circular-letter of the 26th of April, that she would confine herself henceforth to the defence of the Confederate territory, and beyond this would remain neutral.

But a new turn of affairs was at hand, which once more, to a certain extent, inclined the feelings of the Regent toward Austria. While the French troops were being transported in great haste towards Italy, the people of Parma rose and drove out their Government. On the 3d of May, Napoleon declared that Austria, by passing the Ticino, had broken the peace; by Austria's fault the question had been brought to this: either Austria's rule must extend to the Alps, or Italy must be free to the Adriatic. This, however, was entirely contrary to the ideas of the Prince Regent. With all his sympathy for the wretched condition of Italy, he was indignant at the Napoleonic insolence, which undertook of its own authority to subvert the arrangement of Europe agreed upon forty years before. He desired salutary reforms in Italy, but no overthrow

of thrones, no displacement of boundaries. It was precisely the same standpoint as that from which he viewed, and wished to treat, the German situation, so similar to the Italian. However firmly he was convinced that from this situation German Unity must be eduved by the sword of Prussia, he was determined to persist in the path of legitimate reform, and to respect the rights of his German brother princes so long as they did not, on their side, by hostile steps taken against Prussia, force the sword into his hands. He purposed to set the same limits to the action of the French Emperor, and to interfere energetically when they were transgressed.

In this manner he formed the plan of an armed mediation at the right moment. He at once did what every state does on the outbreak of a great war among its neighbors, — put the Prussian army in the so-called state of readiness, the preliminary of mobilization. He was by no means inclined, by a premature manifestation, as, for instance, the placing of an army of observation on the Rhine, to divert the French attack from Italy to Germany. Rather, he wished the armed mediation to take place only when the French army, whose victory over the Austrians he regarded as certain, should have advanced so far into Italy that, in the case of a declaration of war, the German army on the Rhine might enter upon the contest with a decisive superiority. For the time, therefore, he allowed the noise and outcry of the South German Press to pour over himself and his Government, perfectly clear

about his course for his own part, though he was, indeed, somewhat feebly supported by his Ministers, since Prince Hohenzollern was not inclined to stand sufficiently firm against the pressure from South Germany, and Herr von Schleinitz and his Under-Secretary of State, Von Gruner, were somewhat beside themselves over the danger of deciding upon any active proceedings.

In the mean time the war went on, though in the beginning very slowly. General Count Gyulay, with one hundred and twelve thousand men, crossed the Ticino into the Piedmontese territory on the 29th of April; and as, up to that day, only a small French detachment had arrived in Piedmont, it was generally believed that within a short interval he would have overwhelmed the Sardinian army, which was only half as strong as his own, have entered Turin, and closed the passes of the Alps. But nothing of the sort happened. When he had occupied the nearest Piedmontese province, Lomellina, he remained inactive week after week, as if he had no other task than to await there the arrival of the French, and to greet them with a brotherly embrace.

At this time the Prince Regent decided to despatch the younger General Willisen to Vienna, not exactly to conclude any binding agreement, but for an exchange of opinion in regard to Prussia's purposed mediation. Prussia, said Willisen, was willing to interpose for the maintenance of Austria's authority in her Italian possessions; but, in order to give her action

due weight, she must have full control over the forces of the Confederation, in which case an Austrian army might actually undertake the defence of the Upper Rhine, and a South German contingent be assigned to it. At first the Vienna statesmen took a lofty tone. They said they had expected something better than a cold mediation from their German brothers in the Confederation. It was not enough that Prussia should raise her voice for Austria's supremacy in Lombardo-Venetia. Austria required also the maintenance of the compacts of protection which she had entered into with the Italian States; not only must Sardinia be made incapable of doing injury, but the insolent Parisian Usurper must be overthrown, and in France the legitimate King, Henry V., must be placed on the throne. Only by such measures as this could the blessing of universal peace and order be restored to Europe, and the demon of Revolution be bound firmly and permanently. They therefore allowed themselves to hope that, with Prussia's co-operation, the entire strength of Germany would rush to arms for these legitimate and noble objects.

Willisen could answer all this only with a distinct refusal, announcing that Prussia would bind herself neither in regard to the compacts of protection, nor to the overthrow of the Sardinian Constitution, nor to a change of dynasty in France. But while these negotiations were going on, one hundred and fifty thousand French had arrived in Piedmont, by whose assistance a decidedly superior force had been able

to march against Count Gyulay, and the first battle of importance, fought near Montebello, had turned out unfortunately for the Austrians. Count Rechberg, therefore, decidedly lowered his tone, declared himself ready to agree to the Prussian propositions, and suggested, accordingly, that by exchange of diplomatic communications a written compact should be framed, containing mutual obligations to the following effect: that Austria was to consent to give Prussia undivided control over the Confederate army, and Prussia to promise to begin her mediation, on the basis of the maintenance of Austria's authority in her Italian possessions.

Such an arrangement was, however, declined by Herr Schleinitz in a despatch of June 14th, which the Prussian Ambassador was to read to Count Rechberg. The ground of the refusal was the natural one, that after the conclusion of such a formal compact, Prussia could not possibly assume the part of a mediator; as a matter of fact, the despatch really restated the original Prussian position, to the effect that Prussia would undertake an armed mediation for the maintenance of Austria's authority in her possessions, and, according to the result of the same, would act further as her obligations as a European Power and the high position of Germany should dictate. On the same day the Prince Regent arranged the mobilization of six *corps d'armée*, — that is to say, a force of one hundred and eighty thousand men, — and made a proposal to the Confederate Diet for the formation of a corps

of observation of sixty thousand men, to be taken from the two South German Confederate contingents. It seemed as if such a preparation might have been sufficient to prove the seriousness of Prussia's action.

But in Vienna a different view was held. It is true that on the 4th of June Count Gyulay had lost a battle near Magenta, had then evacuated Lombardy, and had withdrawn beyond the Mincio; at the same time, the people of Tuscany, of Modena, and of Bologna, had driven out their Governments, and had furnished a considerable accession to the Sardinian army. But in spite of all this, the courage of the Austrian Cabinet was still unbroken. The soldiers had fought well; and it was hoped that, with better leadership and vigorous re-enforcement, a brilliant victory would finally be obtained. The Emperor Francis Joseph hastened to Verona to take command in person. His Chief of Staff was General Hess, who had fought with honor in Italian battles. Over forty thousand fresh troops were added to the army, so that two-thirds of the entire Austrian military power were now assembled on the Mincio, and could advance against the enemy with a decided superiority in numbers.

While such hopes were entertained, considerable coldness was felt toward the German Confederate Princes, who talked a great deal about their good intentions, but were unwilling to undertake any obligation that implied active assistance; and on the 22d of June Rechberg sent a despatch to Berlin, in which

he asserted that it was Prussia's duty, as a member of the Confederation, not only to protect all Austria's possessions, but to maintain the Austrian compacts with the Italian Governments; he also reserved a free right of action, on the part of Austria, in all the transactions of the Confederate Diet. This simply meant persistence to the fullest extent in Austria's own demands, and rejection of the only demand of Prussia. But this arrogance was soon followed by retribution. On the 23d of June Francis Joseph led his army across the Mincio toward the French and Sardinians, and at evening reached the heights of Cavriana and Solferino.

On the morning of the 24th he was there attacked by the enemy, and an obstinate and extremely bloody contest ensued, in consequence of which, after his centre had been broken, he was forced to retire once more. Over twenty thousand dead and wounded covered the dreadful battlefield, and the two imperial generals shuddered at the sight of this incalculable amount of misery. General Benedek, the only one of the Austrian leaders who, on the unlucky day, had fought with success, related afterwards that, in the council of war on the following morning, he had urged an immediate renewal of the battle, arguing that the French had had quite as severe losses, and had fewer fresh troops in reserve than the Austrians; but the Emperor cried out, with tears in his eyes, "Rather let us lose a province than go through such horrible things again!" The army retired beyond the Adige,

to the shelter of the canon of Verona. Lombardy was surrendered.

On this very day, the critical 24th of June, the Prince Regent, unaffected by the rebuff received from Rechberg, sent a despatch to London and one to St. Petersburg, to announce the beginning of Prussia's armed mediation on the twofold basis of a maintenance of the *status quo* as far as territory was concerned and of the introduction of political reforms in Italy, and to desire the support of the two Great Powers in carrying out this programme. At the same time, the Regent ordered the mobilization of his entire army, and made a motion in the Confederate Diet for the assembling of the two North German Confederate contingents. Within two weeks after this, nearly four hundred thousand men would have been on the Rhine ready for battle, a force nearly twice as great as anything France could at that moment produce in opposition. If Napoleon hesitated to abandon Lombardy, the German army, even without the Austrian contingent, had the prospect of great triumphs before it.

But just then a change took place upon the scene of war that astonished all Europe.

The two Emperors were both equally weary of the contest. Napoleon found himself before the celebrated Quadrilateral, and had to face the prospect of severe battles before he could conquer it. He dreaded serious difficulties at home from the anger of the Clerical party over a war, that now threatened even the temporal supremacy of the Pope. He perceived that his

friend, the Emperor of Russia, looked very unfavorably on the revolutionary movement in Italy. Even to himself Italian national feeling appeared in a much less rosy light since his cousin, Jerome, to whom he destined the throne of Tuscany, had written to him that he had not been able to secure a single voice for his candidacy.

In the midst of all this, there came to him from London the news of Prussia's threatened mediation, and of the first stipulation of the same: the inviolability of the Austrian possessions in Italy. After his agreement at Plombières, and the manifesto, "Freedom as far as the Adriatic," this stipulation was wholly out of the question for him; yet, if he did not accept it, he ran the risk of a perilous struggle with all Germany, without the hope, which he had had in the beginning of the war, that Russia would attack his foe in the flank. Under these circumstances he suddenly adopted the resolution of escaping the mediator by making a direct agreement with his enemy. On the evening of the 6th of June he sent his adjutant, General Fleury, across to Verona, in order, to try the expedient of proposing a truce to the Emperor Francis Joseph.

The envoy found a state of mind there quite similar to that in his own camp, — an eager desire for the conclusion of the war, grave anxiety about disturbances in Hungary, decided dislike to Prussia's mediation. The Cabinet of Vienna cared less about Prussia's promise to save Lombardy than about her refusal to uphold the compacts of protection which insured to

Austria an indirect control over Central and Southern Italy; and most horrible of all was the idea that, after Austria's own failure in Italy, Prussia might perhaps win great victories in France, and raise herself, by that means, to the headship of Germany.

Just before this, on the 4th of July, Prussia had made a motion in the Diet that all the Confederate troops should be placed under her command; and on the 7th, appeared Austria's counter-motion, that the Prince Regent should be chosen General, according to the principles of the hallowed Confederate military organization, that is to say, with seventeen Confederate commissioners of inspection in his headquarters, and with the condition that all orders should be subjected to the consideration of the Diet. This meant forbidding Prussia to make war, for it was well known that the Prince would never condescend to put himself in such a position. The necessary consequence of this was a greedy acceptance of the offers of peace held out by Napoleon.

As early as July 8th a truce till the 15th of August was concluded. On the 11th of July a personal interview between the two monarchs took place at Villafranca, when Napoleon attempted to reconcile his Austrian opponent to peace by means of a story of his own invention, that with the consent of England and Russia, Prussia, as mediator, was about to make a demand that Venice should become an independent State under an Austrian Archduke, that Lombardy, Modena, and Parma should be given to Sardinia, and Tus-

cany to the Duke of Parma—as a matter of fact, he had himself made such propositions in London—but that he, Napoleon, was ready to grant far better conditions to the Emperor, whom he highly revered. He then agreed, without objection, that Venice, as well as Mantua and Peschiera, should remain Austrian, as heretofore, and that only Lombardy should be given up. He was ready to consent to the restoration of the banished Princes of Tuscany and Modena, of course on the condition that this should not be done by force of arms. Francis Joseph accepted this condition, in the optimistic belief that, if those countries were once evacuated by the foreign troops, the inhabitants would hasten to call back their beloved sovereigns with joy. The Italian States were then to receive, with the approval of Austria, a Confederate Constitution, under the presidency of the Pope; Austria was to grant liberal institutions in Venice, and the Pope was to be requested to introduce the necessary reforms in the States of the Church. In a conference of a few hours these preliminaries of peace were harmoniously discussed. Napoleon then committed them to paper with his own hand, partly at the dictation of Count Rechberg. They were to be worked out more in detail at a conference to be held as soon as possible in Zurich.

A singular peace this, by which the victor gave up all the hopes for the sake of which he had begun the contest, and by which the vanquished lost, indeed, an Italian province, but received a newly-assured

supremacy over the whole of Italy. King Victor Emmanuel was most deeply wounded by this breach of the promises made at Plombières, and Cavour, at first utterly overcome, retired immediately from the Ministry. At no price would he have shared in the execution of this treaty. For an Italian Confederation, with the Pope as President, and with Austria and the two branches of her Imperial Family in Tuscany and Modena as members, would not have lightened the burden of Italy's servitude, but would have rendered it permanent, and, above all, have extended it to Piedmont. Before this Cavour had, as we have seen, entered into the idea of an Italian Confederation controlled by Italians; but he now turned his back upon every scheme of the sort, and the more harshly Fate seemed to oppress him and his people, the more did he raise demands for an Italian nation in the future. "Since our Princes are of a foreign race and the vassals of foreign potentates, there is left only one way of salvation for Italy, consolidation into one sole and united State."

No longer as Minister, but as leader of a party, he sent words of encouragement to the chiefs of the revolt in Parma and Modena, in Florence and Bologna, urging them to hold their position at any cost, to make the return of the former rulers impossible, to prevent any violent or communistic disorders, and to bring about a union with Sardinia by the general voice of the people. Then it was shown how much the Italians had learned in the school of life. These instructions

were carried out with exemplary firmness and unanimity; and before the end of August the four provinces had determined on annexation to Piedmont, and had sent their homage to King Victor Emmanuel.

For the moment, the King was obliged to proceed cautiously. He received the announcement of the decisions of the people with thanks, and promised to recommend their wishes most earnestly to the consideration of the Great Powers. We need not describe the indignation aroused in Vienna by this action. The Pope hurled the thunders of excommunication at rebellious Bologna; but both he and Austria were afraid to take action in common in the matter. Everything now depended upon Napoleon, who saw what was going on with vexation and embarrassment, but did not know how to prevent it. He himself, at Villafranca, had prohibited any restoration by force of arms. He himself was ruling in France on the basis of the universal will of the people. How could he oppose with brutal violence that universal will as manifested in Florence and Bologna? He had allowed the floods to swell and gather together; mighty as he was, he now lacked the power to control them at his will; in spite of his frown, they burst irresistibly through the dams he had ingeniously devised. A broad foundation was laid for the future unity of Italy.

The excitement which the progress of the war had aroused in men's minds was hardly less in Germany than in Italy; but on the north side of the Alps it produced only too insignificant, if not utterly fruitless, conse-

quences. In the beginning of the war we saw the waves of excited feeling in the north and in the south of Germany clash harshly with one another. In Prussia Liberal sympathy for Italy had decidedly the upper hand, while in Bavaria and Württemberg the Ultramontane party urged on the whole people to enthusiasm for the black and yellow. Many Liberal patriots, both then and afterwards, have complained that Prussia here, as in the Crimean War, threw away the opportunity of seizing, by a quick and energetic war policy, the leadership of the national enthusiasm, and of so placing herself at the head of the Fatherland. But in regard to 1859, it would first of all be necessary to answer the question, which enthusiasm the Prince Regent should have favored, the enthusiasm of the six million South Germans for Austria, or that of the twelve million Prussians for Italy. If he had chosen the former, his friend in the Confederation, Austria, would have taken excellent care that German Unity and the Prussian Headship should come to nothing; if the latter, then the work would perhaps have been accomplished, but it would have been branded with the stain of foreign aid, and France, as an ally, would doubtless have taken care to inoculate it with the virus of more than one disease. With good reason, then, did the Prince avoid both these courses alike.

The reproaches of hesitation and uncertainty which have been cast upon the Prince's policy are likewise without justification, and spring from ignorance of the

facts of the case. We have seen that his determination was fixed from the very first, and was afterwards carried out step by step firmly, and with proper adaptation to the changing course of the war.

But it is another question whether the programme of the proposed mediation was the right one, and accorded with the actual condition of affairs. The result showed the contrary. Prussia experienced what has so often happened to well-disposed mediators: the plan of mediation proposed appeared so unacceptable to both parties, that they agreed among themselves upon the exact contrary of this plan. The Prince, guided by his own feeling of justice, wished to secure to Austria the possession of Lombardo-Venetia, but to combine with this a renunciation of her hegemony in Central Italy. Instead of this, Austria gave up Lombardy, and Napoleon held out to her the continuance of that hegemony. Clearly the Prussian Cabinet had not at that time sufficient information in regard to Italian affairs to lead them to the only reasonable conclusion, that in this case no mediation whatever was possible, and every reform of the government must necessarily carry with it the overthrow as well of the Austrian as of the Papal supremacy. If they did not wish to give Austria armed assistance unconditionally, there was nothing left for them but unconditional neutrality, until, after the French occupation of Venetia, the war had died out of itself at the frontiers of the German Confederation.

Be this as it may, the Cabinet of Vienna was filled

with bitter indignation against Prussia, especially after they had heard the insinuations of Napoleon. Immediately after Villafranca, Napoleon, indeed, announced to the world that he had made peace in order to avoid the threatened outbreak of a new and perilous war with Prussia and Germany; but Francis Joseph, on his side, was not deterred by this from making publicly, in direct contradiction to this declaration, the charge against Prussia that he had been driven to sacrifice Lombardy because he had been abandoned by his nearest, his natural allies in the Confederation. The Prince Regent, who had just ordered his army to advance toward the Rhine, was indignant. Between the two Cabinets there arose a violent diplomatic quarrel. The bitter feeling grew to such a height, that a newspaper statement announcing that the two Governments were about to renew friendly relations, was emphatically contradicted on the Austrian side, both in German and French newspapers. In this way wild rumors soon began to be rife of an agreement — if not an alliance, at least an understanding — between Vienna and Paris for the humiliation of Prussia. As far as we know, this was groundless, but the state of things was serious enough.

It was natural that such a strained situation should produce a strong reaction in the public opinion of the German people. On all sides warning and threatening cries arose. Even before the conclusion of the peace, in June, assemblies in Nassau and in Frankfort had passed resolutions that Austria must be assisted, and

that Prussia should receive the leadership. About the same time, in Stuttgart, the *Schwäbischer Merkur* brought out a declaration on the part of Württemberg patriots, announcing that the Fatherland needed Prussia's leadership and a German Parliament. After Villafranca, the Hanoverian deputy, Rudolf von Bennigsen, with thirty-four others, published a declaration of a similar nature, and defended it brilliantly in the Second Chamber against the attacks of the Minister, Von Borries, so that the declaration received seven hundred signatures within two weeks.

With this encouragement the same cry ran like an electric spark through North and Central Germany. Whether Prussia's behavior up to that time was to be praised or blamed, it was undeniable that Germany's strength without Prussia amounted to nothing; that Germany's Confederate Constitution without an instrument of the national will must remain crippled and powerless. The citizens of Stettin transmitted to the Prince Regent a petition for a Central Government; the citizens of Gotha sent to Duke Ernest a deputation, which asked for a new Constitution for non-Austrian Germany, and the Duke, who had always been liberal and national in his tendencies, gave them a favorable answer.

On the 14th of August an assembly met in Eisenach, which resolved upon convening as large a number as possible of German patriots in Frankfort, for the formation of a German National Association, and for the renewal of the work of German Unity, which had been

abandoned for the last ten years. The summons had a marked effect. In Frankfort appeared Liberals of all shades, and from all parts of Germany. They all agreed about the uselessness of the Confederate Diet, and about the need of a German Parliament; but when it was proposed that a vote should be passed calling Prussia to the control of national affairs, the wrath of the South Germans, which had been gathering since the spring, burst forth so violently that finally the other party was obliged to be satisfied with proclaiming the need of a central authority, without specifying who should be invested with it. Thus the National Association, like the old Assembly in the Cathedral of St. Paul, was constituted with an express disregard of the question on which everything depended.

The Diet, which bristled up at the words, "German Unity," like a turkey-cock at the sight of a red rag, succeeded in expelling from Frankfort the managing committee, which was to organize the activity of the Association; but a sure retreat was found for it in Coburg, under the protection of Duke Ernest, who for years had desired, and himself often urged, the formation of such an association on a national basis. The committee, for its part, labored entirely with the object of a non-Austrian Germany in view, and sought, so far as possible, to act in harmony with the Prussian Government; but, as we shall soon see, they found numerous obstacles in the way of this good intention. Nevertheless, the Cabinet of Berlin did not interfere with the Association, though the Prince

Regent was of the opinion that the time was as unfavorable as possible for any agitation in the direction of Unity.

The Court of Vienna was, indeed, unwilling to cause Confederate decrees to be passed against the Association, as Herr von Beust desired, but it secretly urged the Ministries of the different states to repressive measures, and with great effect. The Government of Hesse-Cassel forbade its subjects to join the Association under penalty. The King of Hanover ordered the police to keep exact lists of the members; officials of every sort who were found acting in connection with the Association were to be punished according to strict discipline; and artisans, merchants, and professional men were to be deprived of the custom of the Government officials. "The present situation," wrote Herr von Beust, "is unexampled. In opposition to a movement which demands the overthrow of a constitution, it is usual either to alter the constitution or to combat the movement. In this case, neither one nor the other is done. The end must be a sudden collapse." Police measures against the wicked Association were therefore adopted in Saxony, Mecklenburg, and Würtemberg, and in the south also the great majority of the population was hostile to the national party.

Once more, and in striking contrast to Italy, the strength of individualism was shown on German soil. There was a great deal of enthusiasm, both before and afterwards, for the ideal of German Unity, but at the first step towards realization a storm of conflicting

views arose. Men wished to be German, but to be Bavarian, Swabian, Saxon as well, and, above all things, neither Prussian nor Austrian. To be sure, there was between the state of things in Italy and that in Germany one essential difference. In Italy, with the exception of Sardinia, the ruling Houses were foreign, and especially in Tuscany they had grown somewhat out of touch with the country, while the States of the Church were distinguished for at once the most incapable and the most oppressive government in Europe. In such a condition of affairs, the events of every day kept the instinct for national unity and freedom alive and active, in spite of the tendency to individualism, which here, also, was certainly not without force. But in Germany, on the other hand, the Princes were all native, and belonged to the German stock; and if, in Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, and Nassau, the Governments repressed all independent initiative with a rough hand, yet in Saxony and Bavaria, in Würtemberg and Darmstadt, the mass of the citizens felt themselves well off, and the Governments, to keep them in this state of mind, were of their own accord attentive to the wishes that found expression in the Press and in the Chambers. In these countries, therefore, the people loved unity in theory, but individualism in practice.

CHAPTER III.

QUESTIONS OF REFORM IN GERMANY.

THE Prince Regent soon had occasion to give expression to his ideas in regard to the question of reform in the Confederation, which had been once again so energetically revived. He still and always continued to believe in a German Empire of the future, but for the moment the announcement of any such purpose seemed to him in the highest degree dangerous. In view of the difficulties existing with Austria, of the irritated sensitiveness of the Lesser States, and of the noisy aversion manifested by the people of South Germany, he felt that to press any demand for German Unity might be sowing the seed of internal dissension, at the very time when the vagaries of the Napoleonic policy and the ambiguous attitude of Russia made mutual confidence and the firm consolidation of all Germany's forces an absolute necessity.

What was with him the consequence of the momentary situation, in the mouths of the majority of his Ministers took almost the form of a fixed confession of faith. Count Schwerin, a leader of the former Liberal Opposition, who, a few months after the beginning of the Regency, had taken Flottwell's place as Minister of the Interior, proclaimed in loud tones the watch-

word: not unity, but union. Herr von Schleinitz entered heartily into a programme so free from danger, and sent express instructions to the Prussian ambassadors at the German Courts to hold entirely aloof from all demonstrations on the part of the National Association.

When the citizens of Stettin in August sent to the Prince Regent their address in regard to the creation of a Central Government for Germany, the Minister was disposed to make, by an open refusal, the Prussian standpoint clear to them and to all who shared their views; the outline proposed by Schwerin was, however, somewhat modified in a positive direction by the Prince Regent. The conviction that an energetic concentration of Germany's powers, and consequently a remodelling of the Confederate Constitution, was necessary, was recognized as thoroughly justified. Only it was not wise to allow one's self, by aspiring to the very best, to be led out of the path which was prescribed by consideration for the rights of others and by a due regard to what was at the time attainable. He said that Prussia believed that more could be accomplished, for the present, by increasing the military effectiveness of Germany and by a better enforcement of the laws than by premature efforts for a thorough reform in the Confederation.

But even this carefully-guarded criticism of the existing state of things caused great dissatisfaction among the German Courts. It was thought in Dresden, in Hanover, and in Brunswick, that when Prussia

herself proclaimed the insufficiency of the Confederate Constitution, it was an express encouragement of the National Association; although she recognized the rights of the Princes for the present, she threatened the very existence of those rights for the future. The general anxiety was great. Count Rechberg struck a blow at the Duke of Coburg, that he might reach Prussia through him, and in the sharpest terms issued a formal protest against Duke Ernest's approval of the address from Gotha, and sent it in writing to Berlin, leaving it to the Government there to take further measures. The state of things was not improved when the Prince Regent expressed perfect confidence in the loyal disposition of the Duke, who had only declared to his people of Gotha what had been agreed to by all the German Princes ten years ago,—the necessity of a reform in the Confederation; such an expression of opinion, the Prince said, afforded no ground for taking any action upon a protest.

Further than this, it was soon known that the Prussian Government was aiming at a reform of the Confederate military organization, that most sacred palladium of the independent rule of the Lesser States. The irritation of the different Courts increased; the wish was felt everywhere to come to some understanding in regard to means of defence against such wicked innovations, but in accordance with the nature of individualism, the same took place on a small scale among the Lesser States that happened in the Confederate Diet on a great one: they knew what they did not

wish; but as to what they did wish, opinions differed. Baron Beust urged his sluggish colleagues to take decided measures against the National Association, but declared, at the same time, that the police would not answer the purpose; that the nation must be convinced rather by action, and that great reforms were possible even on the basis of the existing Constitution; if it was in any way practicable, he was anxious that the Prussian Cabinet should be forestalled in this matter of reform. In pushing this cause the Baron was indefatigable; he had a conference in Munich with representatives of Bavaria and Würtemberg; the Würtemberg Minister, Hügel, then had a meeting with representatives of Baden and Darmstadt in Heidelberg; while Beust in Vienna tried to come to an understanding with Count Rechberg in regard to harmless reforms.

But the blind King George of Hanover would have nothing whatever to do with these plans of Beust. He thought that a better constitution than that of 1815 could not possibly be invented; it was best therefore to beware of tampering with the existing state of things. His Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Platen, was, indeed, very doubtful about such an extreme attitude; but the Minister of the Interior, Herr von Borries, spoke all the more decidedly in support of his royal master, and roused a great storm in the Liberal Press, by declaring that, before the German Princes would allow any diminution of their hereditary sovereignty, they would not hesitate to accept foreign aid.

Like King George, the Elector of Hesse, after the

pleasant experience of 1850, was filled with unlimited reverence for Confederate traditions, not suspecting what a dark cloud was looming up at that moment against himself on the horizon of the Confederation he was so zealously defending. In Nassau, also, where a strong bureaucratic and clerical Government was at the helm, there was a feeling in favor of rejecting all reform; but if the other states took the lead, this Government would not hold aloof.

In Baden, on the other hand, the Minister, Von Meysenbug, who was well disposed toward Austria, was not unfavorable to the plans of Herr von Beust, but the Grand Duke Frederick was firm in the opinion that a genuine reform was only attainable by the common action of the two Great Powers. He confined himself to his old proposition of a Confederate court of arbitration, the defects of which we have already seen.

So opinions and proposals were bandied about in startling confusion. But finally it appeared that the chief power on which Herr von Beust had reckoned for support, Austria, was not as yet inclined under all circumstances to come into line with the Lesser States. Against Prussia's efforts for unity put forth in harmony with the National Association, she would naturally fight to the death. This was the more certain, since the Court of Vienna, after its Italian losses, valued all the more its position in Germany. But what Count Rechberg, in the midst of all the vexations of the past months, truly wished in the bottom of his heart was, to avoid any such conflict: he desired, not war with

Prussia, but an understanding with her, and, indeed, rather with Prussia than with the Lesser States. For a generation Prince Metternich in the most intimate conjunction with the Court of Berlin had controlled the destinies of Germany: was it impossible to bring about a renewal of this satisfactory relation?

Count Rechberg with this in view would have been ready to listen to a great many proposals, provided they did not actually affect the foundations of the Confederation. During the diplomatic quarrel after Villafranca, he had in August brought forward the suggestion that, just as in the old peaceful times, neither of the two Powers should bring forward a proposal in the Confederate Diet without previously consulting the other; and this had been favorably received by Schleinitz. When Prussia began to talk about a reform of the Confederate Constitution, Rechberg expressed to the Prussian Ambassador his perfect readiness to take steps in the matter, and only asked for a speedy communication of the Prussian proposals. It was, therefore, for the time, uncertain how far the Lesser States could count upon Austria's co-operation in their plans.

Meanwhile, Herr von Beust had succeeded in inducing his friends to unite on a motion to be brought before the Diet. On the 17th of October it was introduced, signed by the four Kingdoms, by Darmstadt and by Nassau. Its contents were as meaningless as possible; and the spirit of opposition to Prussia that lay at the bottom was thereby rendered all the more

unmistakable. Together with laudation of the fruitful capacity of development inherent in the Confederation, it was announced: that any propositions would gladly be entertained by which a repetition of the objections that had unfortunately been made of late against the execution of legitimate decisions of the Confederate Diet and against its decrees could be avoided; that it was the duty of all to seek this object, and to repress agitation for the overthrow of the Confederate Constitution; and that, since of late the Confederate military organization had especially been found fault with, it was proposed that the Confederate military commission should be charged to examine the same carefully and to report upon any necessary changes. The authors of the motion avoided any reference to wishes of their own; indeed, it was no secret, that the sole aim of the whole thing was simply to get rid of Prussia's plans of reform, and to secure the inviolability of their cherished Confederate army.

Prussia, however, readily agreed to the motion, and then laid before the Commission her own plans of reform also, which were very simple: in case the Confederation should be involved in a war in which Austria and Prussia both took part with all their forces, the two South German corps should be under Austria's and the two North German under Prussia's leadership; in this way a Confederate general would not have to be chosen, guided, and watched over by the Diet. It soon appeared that in spite of all the conciliatory language of Rechberg, Austria, who on the 7th of July had pro-

posed at Frankfort the election of such a general, would not accept Prussia's proposition; "for," said Rechberg, "the small North German States could not, in the end, avoid submitting to Prussia's leadership, but in the South, Bavaria would raise insuperable obstacles against any subordination to Austria." By this the fate of the proposition was decided; though according to Frankfort usage it did, indeed, linger along several months, until the Commission in May, 1860, decided almost unanimously to recommend to the Diet its rejection.

In the mean time, another act of Prussia had caused equal annoyance among the majority of the German Courts, and had produced a more irritated state of feeling, if possible, than had prevailed hitherto.

In the unfortunate matter of the Constitution of Hesse-Cassel, the Diet had, as we have seen, desired a declaration of the Assembly of Estates in regard to some improvements of the Constitution of 1852, to which it was hoped the Government would not refuse its assent. In this affair the firmness and persistence of the Hessian people were shown in a brilliant light. The hopelessness of the situation did, indeed, exclude any attack as a matter of principle upon the validity of the Constitution that had been granted. But when it came to a question of the criticism of the same, in accordance with the decree of the Diet, Hassenpflug was able neither by persuasion and threats, nor by the offer of a new constitution, to prevent the Chambers and the electors from demanding more extended rights for

the Estates. The battle lasted five years, and had no other result than the gathering of wider and wider circles of the people about their valiant representatives. Strange as it may seem, the First Chamber was unanimous in the Opposition, and the majority of the Second was also, though less determinedly than the First, persistent in clinging to its proposals, and at last even increased its demands.

As Hassenpflug prevented the two Chambers from framing a joint resolution of the Assembly of Estates, the proposals of the Chambers finally reached the Diet separately, each containing a statement that their propositions of amendment taken together formed an indivisible whole. They were accompanied by a series of propositions of amendment coming from the Government, which were aimed at rendering even such efforts of a moderate opposition for the future impossible. These documents then remained for nearly two years in the hands of the Diet committee on Hessian affairs, until finally, in 1859, the efforts of the Court of Cassel roused the chairman, Baron Marschall of Baden, out of his lethargy.

With perfect coolness the Diet continued its method, which had been in practice since 1851, of remoulding individual constitutions at its own omnipotent pleasure, in utter disregard of the Vienna Final Act. Times had certainly changed somewhat since 1852, and therefore the committee, while doing everything possible to be agreeable to the Elector, for the honor of the monarchical principle, nevertheless thought it best to

show some consideration for the loyal Estates, inasmuch as such lively sympathy for these prevailed among the German people and in almost all the German Chambers. They therefore rejected those propositions of the Government which tended to increased repression, and then refused to grant some of the desires of the Estates, but gave their assent to the remainder, and proposed to hold out to the Elector, if he acted according to these, the hope of the guaranty which he desired. In this way, the committee thought, the dreadful cancer which for years had been eating away the German body politic, would be cut away with a gentle hand.

But this attractive prospect was unexpectedly disturbed.

After the committee had made its report to the Diet on the 28th of August, and after the Diet had determined that the vote on the subject should be taken on the 20th of October, Herr von Usedom sent an urgent request to the Prussian Cabinet, that any decision in this matter might be delayed until the reception of a memorial in which he hoped to throw light on Prussia's position in regard to the Hessian question. Usedom did not always show great insight as a diplomatist; but this time, moved by his feelings as well as by his understanding, he succeeded in hitting the nail on the head. Casting a glance backward at the past history of the affair, he pointed out the series of illegal assumptions on which not only the electoral Government, but also the Diet, unfortunately with Prussia's co-operation, had based its action in the overthrow of the Constitution,

thereby rendering the results obtained utterly void from a legal point of view. He said that the last chance was now at hand for Prussia, with the approval of the whole nation, to separate herself from such illegal action, and to restrict the Diet once more to the limits of its legal authority. He pronounced it to have been a suicidal policy that led the Prussian Ministry, in 1852, to recognize the Diet as competent to interfere, with constitutive power, in matters of internal law and privilege in the individual States, and so perhaps sometime to abrogate the Prussian Constitution also. According to him, the sole legitimate office of the Diet in this matter of Hesse would have been to have carefully pointed out and expunged in the Constitution of 1831 the articles that were contrary to the principles of the Confederation, but beyond this, in accordance with Article LVI. of the Vienna Final Act, it was bound to refrain from any interference in constitutional questions in Hesse-Cassel. The Diet, he continued, had had a consciousness of this duty, and had, therefore, not abolished the Constitution, but had simply ordered it to go "out of effect." This was the vulnerable point; and as an understanding between the Elector and the Estates in regard to the work of 1852 had been shown to be out of the question, Usedom recommended that a motion should be made for putting an end to the suspension of the Constitution of 1831 and for limiting the interference of the Diet to the expunging of certain articles contrary to the principles of the Confederation.

In the whole exposition every word was accurate,

with the single exception of the assertion that the decree of the Diet of 1852 had been aimed at only a temporary suspension. The potentates who settled the matter at that time had had by no means such tender consciences, and Usedom did not think so himself. His distinction had no other object than to facilitate for the wrongdoers their return to a legal method of proceeding.

When Herr Schleinitz read this memorial, which flew in the face of all the traditions of the Diet, he was a little frightened. He sought from Herr von Gruner some light on the question as to how far Prussia was bound by the action of Uhden and Manteuffel in the matter. Schleinitz himself admitted that the report of the committee could not possibly be accepted; but he thought that a restoration of the Constitution of 1831 could never be passed through the Diet. "If we take the part of the people decidedly in this affair," he said, "the whole Diet will brand us as fostering a tendency to Revolution." It will be readily understood that, after these indications of the Minister's feeling, Gruner's opinion was given distinctly against Usedom. And it may here be added, that, in the further course of things, the Prussian Ambassadors, Herr von Sydow in Cassel, Herr von Savigny in Dresden, and Herr von Werther in Vienna, took also this same view, and thereby made the task of their Government by no means an easier one.

For the purpose of further consultation, Schleinitz took a journey to Baden-Baden, where the Prince

Regent with Auerswald was then staying, and Usedom was immediately summoned thither. The latter brought further evidence for a full consideration of the past mistakes, and produced on the 7th of October an outline of the motion as he would put it to vote in the Diet.

The Regent made a careful investigation of everything; Auerswald immediately expressed himself in favor of Usedom's views; even Schleinitz gradually dropped one difficulty after another out of sight; and the Regent finally gave his decision in accordance with his words of November 8th: "The world must know that Prussia is everywhere ready to defend the right." Usedom's motion was approved; a detailed memorial of the whole matter, drawn up entirely from Usedom's point of view, was prepared; and after a full Ministerial Council had, on the 10th of October, at the Regent's command, considered the matter and given a unanimous assent, the memorial was sent on the same day to Vienna with a request for Austria's support. It was added, at the same time, that Prussia was firm in her determination in regard to the question of what was lawful in the matter, and would act on that determination, even if Austria refused to join her.

This turn in the policy of Prussia was soon generally known, and aroused on all sides a violent agitation, highly characteristic in its different forms. In Hesse-Cassel the effect was like the awakening from a troubled and anxious dream. Crushed by superior force, without hope of support, the Estates had contented them-

selves with suggesting at least some concessions, without which, as Usedom said, their existence would remain a mockery; and even against these their oppressor had raised a protest. Then came the news of Prussia's action, bearing, as they hoped, a true message of approaching salvation. In a moment the effort after small concessions vanished; and once more arose among the people the demand for their rights, for the ancient and thrice-confirmed rights of their country. The Second Chamber by an almost unanimous vote abandoned their late propositions of amendment, which had been rejected by the Elector, and adopted an address to be presented to him, as well as a memorial to be sent to the Diet, desiring the restoration of the lawful Constitution of 1831. The enthusiastic appeal went abroad among the people throughout the whole of that small country; officials, citizens, and peasants were indefatigable in the presentation of patriotic resolutions; and with impotent wrath the Elector looked on at the irresistible progress of this agitation, which aimed at nothing but what was just.

The excitement extended far beyond the Hessian boundaries. In all German lands the Liberal party roused itself for the good cause; in assemblies, in the meetings of associations, in the newspapers, the cry was re-echoed for the recognition of those rights which had been so long and so harshly trampled upon; with fierce passion the treatment of Hesse by the Diet was represented as a shame and disgrace to the German nation; and there could be no doubt that after this, the

Chambers of the German States would, almost without exception, raise their voice for the acceptance of Prussia's motion and against the Majority in the Diet.

All this increased the dissatisfaction which was aroused among the German Courts by Prussia's action. Their vexation at seeing her likely to acquire popularity in South Germany was intensified by the consciousness that, in the year 1850, for the sake of opposing the Prussian Union, they had espoused a thoroughly rotten cause, and had been soiling their hands with it more and more every year. None of the Sovereigns or Ministers had any respect for the Elector or for Hassenpflug: they clinched their fists in their pockets at the thought that, for the sake of such friends, they were now obliged to choose between joining Prussia in casting aside their own work as unlawful and worthless, or drawing the wrath of the whole German people upon themselves and the Diet and furnishing the National Association with priceless material on which to base its atrocious demand for a German Parliament. And they were so anxious to remain popular in those bad times, when by the Italian war Austria's power had been shaken, Prussia's influence increased, and the blood of the whole nation set on fire!

Negotiations were, therefore, begun with Prussia. Count Rechberg expressed regret that Prussia, in spite of the agreement of August, had irrevocably adopted an opinion, without previous communication with Vienna; and he further pointed out that the Constitu-

tion of 1852, now so harshly judged by the Prussian Cabinet, had been mainly the creation of Prussians ; in any case, by the decrees of the Diet, passed at that time, a firm legal connection had been established between the Confederation and the Elector, which the Diet ought not to assail. But it was not necessary to abandon entirely the course which had been adopted. It was only by Prussia's sudden turn that the people of Hesse-Cassel had been aroused from the calm into which they had subsided. Nothing further would be necessary than that the Diet should charge the committee to frame its report somewhat more favorably to the Estates, and to introduce into the new Constitution as amendments, such articles of the Constitution of 1831 as were essentially unobjectionable. In the opinion of the Count, it was impossible to pursue the opposite course, and restore as a whole the Constitution of 1831, which had been abolished by the Diet, and then to agree upon and expunge the unsuitable articles one by one.

In this connection, a memorial of October 26th, written by Rechberg's chief adviser in all German matters, Herr von Biegeleben, rose to the unctuous tone of the palmiest days of Metternich. "If it is once recognized," said this document, "that the old Constitution was incompatible with the rights of the Confederation, *no well-disposed person* will find fault, if the occasion is seized for a complete revision, in order that with the authority of the Confederation, with the *free* co-operation of the country, and with the *good-will* of

all concerned, a work may be accomplished, which will be safe from all attack in the future, and will be worthy of the Hessian Government and of *its subjects*: that is the true intention of the Decree passed by the Diet in 1852; for this object we are ready to agree that the subject shall be again given in charge to the committee, in order that the work may there be still further perfected."

It was not difficult for Herr von Schleinitz, in refuting these specious phrases, to justify Prussia's standpoint. At the same time he agreed to a postponement of the final vote and to a further consideration by the committee, to the great annoyance of Usedom, who revenged himself by publishing secretly — in disregard of the strict prohibition of Schleinitz — the memorial of the 10th of October, thus causing a fresh outburst of public opinion. The complicated negotiations between the German Courts, which were now carried on for months, need not be related in detail. The renewed consideration of the matter by the committee of the Diet at length produced its result in the shape of a report of the 19th of January, 1860. It was recommended in this report, that on points concerning which the Hessian Government and the Estates were agreed, their decision should give validity to the corresponding articles of the Constitution of 1852; that, where no agreement had been arrived at, the text of 1852 should be valid, but with the exception that any provision of 1831, not contrary to the principles of the Confederation and recommended by the Estates, should be adopted.

On the other hand, the changes proposed by the Hessian Government were declared inadmissible.

This was meant as a proposal of mediation ; it appeared to its authors to be a great concession, when they granted that, in spite of the Decree of 1852, there were in the Constitution of 1831, which had been condemned at that time, provisions not contrary to the principles of the Confederation. But none the less on this account was the recommendation of the committee an act of constitutive power, such as the Diet was incapable of by the fundamental principles of its existence. Since the last declaration on the part of the Hessian Chambers, there had been no longer any propositions of the Estates at all before the committee ; the verdict of the committee that this declaration had no force was utterly without legal justification ; hence, the committee had altered an article here, and approved one there, solely according to its own subjective opinion, as if the whole world recognized it as a function of the Diet to say what should be lawful and what not in any country's internal affairs.

Naturally, Prussia continued in her opposition. On the other hand, the King of Hanover was very indignant with the committee which had yielded to the Liberal current in sixteen articles. The Elector was also angry at the rejection of his amendments ; he had had great hopes of being strong enough, after they were carried, to secure the succession to one of his sons. But both Sovereigns soon perceived that nothing better than what the committee recommended could be had,

and reconciled themselves to giving their unqualified assent.

On the 24th of March, 1860, the Diet passed a decree in accordance with the recommendation of the committee. With Prussia voted only the Saxon Duchies, Oldenburg, Waldeck, Reuss (younger line), and the free Cities. Prussia brought forward a protest against the decree, on the ground that the Diet was exceeding its proper functions, and proclaimed it legally worthless and not binding. Pfordten, passionate as ever, declared that by such a step Prussia aimed a death-blow at the dignity of the Diet, and he proposed that a special committee should be appointed for the censure of the Prussian vote. But Austria, Hanover, and Baden objected to this; and the matter ended in a simple declaration on the part of the president, which announced it to be the constitutional duty of all the Governments to recognize the decree. In private conversation, the Ministers Schrenck in Munich and Von Hügel in Stuttgart, as well as the King of Saxony, admitted that in 1852 things had been carried too far; but they thought that the decree, having been once passed, ought to be respected.

When, in April, the Prussian Lower House, after an exciting discussion, called upon the Governments to remain firm in the defence of the Hessian national rights, the *Württembergischer Staatsanzeiger* replied with a violent polemic against the whole Prussian policy. In Cassel, however, the Government, in accordance with the decree of the Diet, made a new concoction, taking

the Constitution of 1852 as a basis, accepting a number of the former proposals of the Chambers, and adding a homœopathic dose of privileges for the Estates. The constitutional document so created they made public on the 30th of May, 1860. The next question was, what effect they would thus produce on the country.

While in this way a violent contest had arisen in regard to the fundamental principles of the Confederation, a new turn of general European politics called forth still another demonstration of German unanimity of feeling.

The Emperor Napoleon, placed in a dilemma between the demands of Austria, the Pope, and the Clerical party on one side, and the efforts of the Italian national party which had been half recognized by him at Plombières on the other, had first made an agreement with Austria to call a congress of the five Great Powers for the settlement of the affairs of Italy. But then he found that neither Austria nor the Pope made any arrangements whatever for carrying out the internal reforms agreed upon at Villafranca, and consequently that he also need be no longer bound by that compact. On the other hand, if he again entered into friendly relations with Sardinia, he could once more have the hope of acquiring Savoy and Nice according to the arrangement made at Plombières, to which there had naturally been no reference since Villafranca.

Towards the end of 1850 he had come to a decision. In the beginning of January, 1860, appeared an unofficial treatise, entitled, *The Pope and the Congress*, in which it

was argued, that the temporal sovereignty of the Pope in the Papal States was neither needful nor advantageous to his spiritual authority, but on the contrary injurious. A significant change of Ministers followed: in the place of the Conservative Walewski, Thouvenel, whose Italian sympathies were well known, was appointed.

In Turin, also, Cavour seized again the reins of government, and the popular agitation for the unity of Italy swelled in a stronger tide in all parts of the country. In Florence and Bologna, the Sardinian Constitution and the Sardinian mode of election were introduced; from Rome and from the Marches many petitions were sent to Paris for liberation from the intolerable government of the Pope; in Naples the popular excitement rose to such a pitch that the English Ambassador declared there was no other course possible than a change of the system of government or a change of dynasty.

Napoleon then announced to King Victor Emmanuel, by a despatch of February 24th, that if he would content himself with the annexation of Parma and Modena, and would, at the same time, govern the Romagna as Papal Vicar, France would aid him against any foreign attack; but if he was inclined to go further, he must do it at his own risk, and France would then renew her claim upon Savoy and Nice. Victor Emmanuel chose the latter alternative; and in March took place, on the basis of a formal vote of the people, the annexation of Tuscany and of the Emilia (as the united territory of Modena, Parma, and the Romagna

was now called) to the Sardinian Crown, and at the same time the incorporation of Savoy and Nice into the French Empire.

There was no longer any talk about the great congress. Napoleon had, however, on his part, after separating himself from Vienna and Rome, sought connections elsewhere, and had partially succeeded in finding them. The Whig Ministry in England took a warm interest in the struggles of Italy, and rejoiced heartily at the overthrow of the scheme devised at Villafranca. More than this, Napoleon had for some time had in mind for France a change from the system of the exclusion of imports and of protective tariffs hitherto in vogue to principles of moderate free-trade ; and he found England very ready to make advances in this direction. He therefore, on the 20th of January, 1860, brought about the signing of a commercial treaty, the consequences of which, as we shall soon see, acquired great importance for the development of the affairs of our own Germany. Thus far the understanding between England and France was perfect.

In Russia, also, although the sympathy with France was not so warm as in the spring of 1859, the Emperor Alexander and Prince Gortschakoff were still of the opinion that a triple alliance between Russia, Prussia, and France would be a real league of peace for Europe, then so unsettled, and would at the same time, such was the Russian idea, be also an excellent support for Russia's position in the East, where she was opposed to Austria and England. Napoleon took good care not

to discourage any suggestions of this kind; on the contrary, he made repeated attempts, in the direction of Russia's wishes, to cultivate similar tendencies in the mind of the Prussian Regent. He sent to Berlin friendly hints, that France would greet with joy the elevation of Prussia to a fitting position in the German Confederation, and that, if Prussia would then agree to a little adjustment of frontiers on the Rhine, France would insure her a rich compensation, perhaps the acquisition of Schleswig-Holstein.

The Prince Regent allowed all these advances to fall flat to the ground; and when, at the end of March, the annexation of Savoy and Nice ensued, with an official declaration, that France had in this region recovered her natural boundaries, a sharp rent was made through the whole web of diplomacy. Before the war, Napoleon had proclaimed the lofty unselfishness of France: and now came the acquisition of a noble province, while at the same time a very evident desire was shown for the further restoration of the so-called natural boundaries,—that is to say, for the conquest of the left bank of the Rhine.

Switzerland and Germany saw themselves alike threatened; and the general excitement manifested itself more and more, when even in England the Government and the newspapers expressed their mistrust of the dangerous policy and the vagaries of the French Emperor. Napoleon in vain proclaimed in the most solemn manner his love of peace; all that he could obtain was a statement on Lord Palmerston's part that

England would not indeed declare war on account of the annexation of Savoy, but that she should persist in her disapproval of that action. The Prussian Regent, who at this time made a journey through the region about the Saar, took occasion, at a festival of welcome there given him, to announce, to Napoleon's great vexation, that never, with his consent, should the Fatherland lose a clod of German soil.

After this, when, in the very beginning of May, Garibaldi, with a company of a thousand volunteers, put to sea from the port of Genoa, and it was known in a few days that he had landed in Sicily, in order to bring that island also under the rule of Victor Emmanuel, the whole world was convinced that he would never have ventured on such an undertaking without the co-operation of Cavour, and that Cavour never would have given his co-operation without the approval of Napoleon. The Russian Cabinet, especially, which had always had a fancy for posing as the peculiar protector of Naples, expressed its great dissatisfaction in Turin as well as in Paris. Napoleon protested that he was not in the least responsible for this bad business; but he found little belief for his assertion, although this time he spoke the truth, and had himself been thoroughly taken in by Cavour.¹ The latter had helped on Garibaldi's undertaking in every way, had secretly gained over a number of Neapolitan generals to the

¹ Cavour gave orders by word of mouth to the commander of the squadron to protect the expedition, if it should be necessary. The officer said: "After it has happened, you will imprison me." Cavour answered: "To be sure, my friend. I see you understand me."

Italian cause, and finally had despatched a Sardinian squadron to protect the expedition on its voyage. But at the same time he had constantly given the French Ambassador the most explicit assurances, that he had no suspicion of Garibaldi's plans and actions, so that the landing in Sicily was as much of a surprise to Napoleon as to the rest of the world.

But what difference did it make? He had become the object of universal suspicion: judging by the variations of his policy, which with all its variations was always aggressive, every one credited him, and not without reason, with plans of disturbance in all corners of Europe; at this time no one was inclined to have anything to do with him.

Under these circumstances he once more turned his glance toward Prussia. The calm, open, and firm attitude of the Prince Regent during the preceding years had inspired the Emperor, not with hatred, but with respect: he sent to Berlin a proposal for a personal interview. The Regent had a feeling that Napoleon was anxious to set him at odds with Germany, and to bring the exchange of the Rhine Province for Schleswig-Holstein again under discussion; he therefore twice refused the proposal, and finally accepted it only on the express understanding that the basis of all discussion should be the inviolability of German territory. King Max of Bavaria had already expressed his intention of visiting the Prince at Baden-Baden while the latter was making his summer residence there as usual; the King of Württemberg also wished to come;

and thither the Regent invited the French Emperor, at the same time sending a circular-letter to the German Courts to make them acquainted with the proposed interview.

This caused a nervous anxiety everywhere; but the most disturbed of all was the King of Hanover, who had been already troubled and annoyed by the prospect of King Max's visit to Baden. King George had long been suspicious of the Prince Regent with his Liberal Ministers and his plans of reform in the Confederation; and he regarded the Napoleonic Empire as simply Satan himself made flesh. From a union of these two nothing but mischief, annexation, and the abolition of all sovereignty, could possibly proceed. After long deliberation, he decided to take the bull by the horns, travelled all night to Berlin, and saw the Regent early in the morning of June 13th. "You must not go at all," he cried, "or you must invite all the German Princes, and the Emperor of Austria as well, to the interview." The Regent, somewhat astonished at his zeal, let the mention of the Emperor of Austria rest where it was, but at once invited the royal visitor himself, and then wrote also, with the same object, to King John of Saxony. "I could not invite any one, or exclude any one," he said afterwards, "but I did not wish it to seem as if I were doing something behind the back of Germany."

We must give a somewhat detailed account of this interview, not because the results there obtained were very important, but because the whole course of affairs

was so characteristic of the Prince Regent, who had no thought of using the friendly disposition of France as a means of exerting diplomatic pressure upon the German opponents of his plans for national unity, but with perfect openness took the position of representative of all the German States in his dealings with Napoleon.

On the 14th of June the Regent arrived in Baden, where King Max had already been for some days; the three other Kings, and a number of lesser Princes, the Grand Duke of Baden as host, the Grand Dukes of Darmstadt and Weimar, and the Dukes of Nassau and Coburg, were likewise there. The Regent declared to them his determination to consent to no rearrangement of boundaries at the expense of Germany or of German States. The four Kings agreed among themselves to show the Prince royal honors and to grant him precedence.

On the 15th of June, therefore, at seven o'clock in the evening, he received the imperial guest at the head of a troop of royalties. After eight he made his visit to the Emperor; their conversation, the only one that they had alone, lasted about an hour, but hardly consisted of anything more than Napoleon's complaints of the groundless excitement against him that prevailed in Germany and of the hostile attitude of almost the entire German Press. It was true, he said, that there was a party in France desirous of acquiring German territory. But his own view was quite different. He desired that the two peoples which stood at the head of

civilization might keep up a friendly intercourse and join their interests together. He had come for the purpose of announcing these sentiments.

The Regent thereupon expressed his satisfaction and approval: he said that he had agreed to the meeting the more willingly, as he felt that it would be a pledge of peace. At the same time he observed that the excitement in Germany was the consequence of the incorporation of Savoy, after the solemn proclamation of French disinterestedness. "That was an exceptional case," cried Napoleon, "the fulfilment of a compact made some time before, according to which, if Sardinia obtained certain advantages, France was to receive compensation for assistance rendered. In the case of Germany the state of things is very different." "I did not myself have any knowledge of that compact," answered the Prince; "and the impression produced by the annexation was the greater, since your Majesty proved yourself in the war a successful general." "Now," said Napoleon, "what is to be done to allay all this excitement?" "Tell the German Princes what you have told me," replied the Prince.

The next morning the Emperor took advantage of the visits to and from the Princes to act on this advice. "Have what you say published in all the French newspapers," said the King of Würtemberg to him. The Emperor called on the King of Hanover also; but was informed that the King was not at home; he was, indeed, not in the house, but he was in the garden behind it. To the King of Saxony, the Emperor

expressed a wish for a commercial treaty, on which subject the King referred him to Prussia. After this, there were church-goings, drives, and a banquet, as usual on such occasions; in the evening there was a great assembly; the Austrian Ambassador, Count Trautmannsdorff, who was present, reported that the Emperor's manner during the whole evening was very quiet and self-contained, that he was almost silent; he carried on long conversations with no one, and most of the German Princes showed an embarrassed reserve with regard to him. The people also treated him with great coolness; they cried out to a company of French who were shouting "Vive l'Empereur" to be silent, and then themselves shouted for the Prince Regent.

On the 17th, the Emperor had another conversation with the Prince Regent and King Max in regard to Naples; the King afterwards reported that Napoleon's statements were not calculated to produce confidence; the latter said that in the affairs of Italy he was obliged to keep the possibility of a conflict with England constantly before his eyes; nor would it do for him to oppose the King of Sardinia, who was urged on by the popular party and had not the power to resist.

One extraordinary conquest the Emperor did make before his departure. He entered unannounced the reception-room of the King of Hanover, and waited there very quietly till the appearance of the blind monarch, who was at first disturbed at the intrusion of a stranger; afterwards, however, he received the Order of the Legion of Honor with gracious thanks, and was

so fascinated by the well-calculated speeches of Napoleon, that from that time he sang the Emperor's praises in every key. At nine o'clock Napoleon departed, with his eyes unpleasantly opened by the events of his expedition and by its empty results.

But an after-piece to conclude the great Assembly of Princes was further intended for the Prince Regent. He had, although at the risk of Napoleon's hostility, stood forth so emphatically as the representative of harmony in Germany, that a sharp lesson on the nature of that harmony could not have been unexpected by him.

On the afternoon of June 17th (at the instigation, if I am not mistaken, of the King of Hanover) a conference of the Princes who favored an entire Germany met at the residence of King Max of Bavaria. The Grand Duke of Baden was no longer included among these Princes; the Assembly therefore consisted of the four Kings, of the Grand Duke of Darmstadt, and of the Duke of Nassau; and its object was to consider the questions at issue between these Princes and Prussia. The first subject of discussion was the unpleasant business of Hesse-Cassel: Saxony and Hanover desired that the matter should be settled at once and finally by the Confederation's authorizing the new Constitution of May 30th. But Bavaria and Würtemberg advised prudence; Würtemberg hesitated in regard to the constitutionality of such a course, and Bavaria was opposed to it out of consideration for public opinion. Therefore, no decision was adopted; and the attention

of the Princes was turned to a still more important question, the reform of the Confederate Constitution desired by Prussia.

All were unanimous that, after the opinion of the committee as expressed by Pfordten, the Prussian proposition was to be rejected. But when they came to consider the matter, they found that, even on this subject, their views were very different. King John of Saxony proposed that they should expressly recognize the essential point of the committee's report, which was that special agreements should be reserved for the case of Prussia's or Austria's taking part with their whole army in a war undertaken by the Confederation, and that they should then entreat the Prince Regent either to withdraw his proposition, or at any rate not to enter a fresh protest against the Diet's decree. But King George of Hanover opposed this energetically. He said that that would practically be realizing Prussia's plan; if it was not possible to induce the two Great Powers to provide each three corps to serve under the chosen Confederate general, according to the provisions of the Constitution, then the best plan, in his opinion, would be to form three armies, those of the two Powers, together with another which should include the remaining Confederate forces, and the commander of which should be chosen by the Governments concerned, and guided and controlled according to the principles laid down by the Confederate Constitution. On this subject also a unanimous agreement proved to be out of the question; and the

Assembly was finally obliged to be satisfied with deputing King Max of Bavaria to deal as decidedly as possible with the Prince Regent in the name of the German Princes, both on this subject and in regard to the suppression of the National Association.

But King George could not rest satisfied. Immediately after the discussion, he dictated for his friends a memorial in regard to the military organization, to the effect that, according to the distinct statement of the Prince Regent, in case of a war, the Confederate military organization in its existing form would be exploded; that, however, would be an event fraught with the greatest consequences politically, for the dualism thereby introduced would tear in pieces the unity of Germany, and would, moreover, lay the axe at the root of the sovereignty of the individual Princes. One of the first elements of that sovereignty was military supremacy; and the loss of this would be the beginning of the end, and would render the Princes vassals of the Great Powers. Such an anomalous situation could not endure permanently: the sovereignty of the Princes must either prevail in its integrity and traditional sacredness, or it must in a short time entirely disappear.

The proud Guelph who fought with such zeal for the inviolability of his historical right did not know that his noble forefathers a century before had never possessed more than a limited and derived sovereignty, or, more exactly, that the idea of underived sovereignty in general is a creation of only very recent times.

Meanwhile, after the departure of the other Princes — at which time the King of Württemberg took occasion to address the Prince Regent once more with a great deal of bluster in regard to the Tariff-Union — the good King Max, on the 19th of June, tried his fortune with the Prussian ruler. He first made an effort to recommend the compromise of the triple division of the army: the Prussian plan, he said, could not be accepted by the German Princes, since it deprived them of the control of their own troops; Prussia had better, therefore, withdraw her plan. But the Prince answered very decidedly that this could not be; both plans must come before the Confederation for its decision. Unity was certainly preferable in itself; but considering the size of the army and the extent of the territory to be defended, a twofold arrangement was the natural one to be adopted. A triple division would simply mean the proclamation of anarchy; the interference of the various commissioners who would be present at headquarters would hamper all the movements of the Confederate army. “The twofold arrangement,” said the King, “would mean dividing Germany along the line of the Main.” “It would be only a temporary measure adopted during the continuance of war,” replied the Prince.

An equally meagre result attended the King’s attempt to bring about energetic action against the National Association. The Prince, for what regarded his own position in German affairs, referred to his answer to the address of the citizens of Stettin; but he refused to

take any steps against the Association, so long as its proceedings were not subject to legal prosecution; everything of the sort that had been done in Saxony, Hanover, and elsewhere, had called forth universal disapproval. This the King could not deny.

He then turned with all the more feeling to a personal desire, the one which had in the beginning brought him to Baden, the desire to bring about more intimate relations with Austria. The Prince expressed his entire readiness for this, with the simple condition that Austria should at length cease to regard Prussia as an upstart and recognize her fairly as an equal Great Power. The very way in which modern Prussia had, in 1815, been formed out of two isolated portions of territory, had been the result of an effort made even then to keep her as weak as possible: when Prussia, in spite of this, succeeded in raising herself, the insinuation had been spread abroad from Vienna, that Prussia was seeking to incorporate into her own Kingdom the two states which lay between her provinces, and an experience of forty years had not been able to extinguish the suspicion thus caused. "I must wait and see," said the Prince, "whether my latest utterances have altered this disposition on the part of Austria, but no one can blame me if I feel myself injured: Austria has the settlement of the question in her own hands; so soon as she ceases to wish to injure Prussia, an arrangement can easily be brought about." King Max, on this, expressed the opinion that Prussia's attitude during the last war had injured her much; every one had thought

that she held back purposely, in order that Austria might be overcome. "When was your army ready to march on that occasion?" asked the Prince. "In July," the King answered, "just when your summons came." "Prince Frederick of Würtemberg told me exactly the same thing," continued the Regent: "then what would have happened, if I had wished to march as early as April? No, we delayed in order that we might not draw the French main army upon German soil in the beginning of the contest; but Austria gave up a province at Villafranca rather than let us have the glory of a triumph over France."

In spite of the irritated feeling shown in these words, the King proposed that the Prince should have a personal interview with the Emperor Francis Joseph, for which he himself would gladly make the necessary arrangements. No objection was made to this. The Prince only required that, after the manifesto of the preceding year, which had put such a slight upon Prussia, the first advances should come from Vienna. He added, that, true to his principle, he would have nothing to do with premature guaranties or alliances, but that he would discuss certain possibilities, which, in case of war, might render it necessary for Austria and Prussia to act together and in common with Germany.

King Max, therefore, went to work eagerly to urge the Court of Vienna in the direction of reconciliation, and found all the more favorable a reception, since Austria had a little while before tested the feeling in St. Petersburg with regard to a renewal of the Holy

Alliance, and had been referred to Prussia on the subject by Prince Gortschakoff. The Prince Regent also did what he could by writing a letter to the Emperor Francis Joseph, in which he described the proceedings in Baden-Baden, and deduced from them the advantage of an understanding between Austria and Prussia in matters of general European policy.

On the 10th of July the Emperor replied, and proposed an interview in Dresden. Meanwhile it had become known that the Kings of the Lesser States were very anxious to be present in Dresden, as they had been in Baden, at the meeting of the two great Sovereigns; but the Prince Regent thought that this would not improve matters, and proposed to the Emperor that they two should have a conference alone at Teplitz. This proposition was immediately accepted. Rechberg and Schleinitz were to accompany their sovereigns.

On the 20th of July, at Mayence, the Prince considered the line to be taken in the discussion. It was clearly recognized, that, after what had happened in Baden, a Franco-Prussian alliance would be out of the question for a long time to come; and that the result of this was, that the circle of diplomatic means useful in obtaining concessions from Austria had been considerably narrowed. Yet Prussia, if she supported Austria in Italy, must certainly claim proportionate advantages in return: the removal of what was unsuitable in the Confederation, an alternating presidency of the Diet, and a settlement of the Holstein matter in accordance

with Prussia's wishes. On other conditions the Parliament would never grant money for a war on behalf of Austria. Besides this, the Prince Regent had long had a feeling, that an alliance with Austria could have little value, unless that country were strengthened internally, and that such a strengthening presupposed liberal reforms and religious tolerance.

On this basis he made his propositions to the Emperor on the 26th of July. They were to the effect that Prussia would be ready to take part in the common defence against a common danger; that is, in the defence against a French attack upon the possessions of either state, unless Austria should have provoked the war. Francis Joseph, on this, declared that he had no wish ever to provoke a war, and that in case he were at any time forced to become the aggressor, he would do it only after an understanding with Prussia. The Prince further proposed common resistance to any manifestation of French greed for annexation, whether in Switzerland, Belgium, or Holland. Germany would regard any act of aggression on the part of Sardinia as a *casus belli*, if German territory should be violated by such act.

Thus far everything went harmoniously. But when the Prince introduced the subject of what Austria was to concede in return, the harmony was considerably disturbed. The Emperor rejected the alternating presidency of the Diet; he could not permit an ancient and honorable privilege of his House to be infringed. Progressive movement in parliamentary legislation, as

well as equal recognition of different creeds, he regarded as affairs of domestic concern, concerning which he could enter into no written compact, though he expressed by word of mouth his purpose of advancing in the path suggested. The Prince then brought up the subject of the discussion of the Confederate military organization which was pending at Frankfort, but only obtained the Emperor's consent that a conference of generals from either side should consider the question of the twofold or threefold division of the army. Finally, in regard to Schleswig-Holstein no decision whatever was reached. After all this, there could be no question of the signing of any compact.

None the less did the Emperor return well satisfied from Teplitz. Although he had received no binding promise of Prussian assistance in case of a French attack, yet he had now no doubt that the Prussian Regent, following his own disposition, would not look idly on in such an event. "I am sure," he said to the King of Saxony immediately afterwards, "that I shall not be left in the lurch a second time."

In the mean time, in the field of European politics the clouds had been growing steadily darker and more ominous. Wherever Garibaldi appeared, the Neapolitan forces scattered almost without fighting: they either fled or deserted to the enemy. On the 7th of September he entered Naples, the capital, in triumph, amid the joyful shouts of the people; and he now proclaimed his intention of first freeing Rome and afterwards Venetia, and only then of bringing united Italy to do

homage to Victor Emmanuel. This would have meant an attack on the French garrison in Rome, and if such an attack contrary to all expectation succeeded, a war of revolutionary Italy against Austria.

Cavour could never permit such madness. There was only one way: Sardinia must herself advance in the name of Italy, must occupy the eastern portion of the Papal territory between the Emilia and Naples, must push on from there to Naples, and, gently putting Garibaldi aside, proclaim on the spot Victor Emmanuel as ruler over both Sicilies. That was the only way to secure the unity of Italy and at the same time to close for her the era of revolution. This course was adopted, and in a short time the work was finished. With the exception of Rome and Venetia, the peninsula belonged to the King of Italy; and Cavour announced on every occasion, that the Government kept the fate of Venice carefully in view, but could not for the time, in consideration of the feeling of Europe, think of making war upon Austria.

This assurance was everywhere received with real or pretended suspicion. The English Government, indeed, declared itself wholly pleased with Cavour's successes; but the continental Cabinets joined with one voice in declaiming against triumphs so revolutionary, and acts of aggression so contrary to the law of nations; and a hundred times it was asserted in the leading diplomatic circles, that it would be impossible for Cavour to restrain his followers from an attack on Venetia. In case such an attack should take place, who could fore-

see the consequences? Napoleon, who was a good deal disturbed by the outcry of the Clerical party over the new losses of the Pope, once more recurred to the idea of a congress of the Great Powers, the decisions of which would remove from his shoulders all responsibility for the fate of Italy. Russia was ready to please him on this point, in the hope of receiving in return some assistance in the affairs of the East.

Besides this, the Czar Alexander had been greatly incensed at Garibaldi's action, and was very anxious to confer personally with the Prince Regent in regard to the state of things; it was, therefore, decided that in October the two Sovereigns should pass some days together in Warsaw. The same thought occasioned the Emperor Francis Joseph likewise to ask of his own accord whether a visit from him would be agreeable to the Czar.

The meeting of the three Sovereigns, which took place on the days from the 22d to the 26th of October, had a good result, in that the personal bitterness existing between the two Emperors was for the time lessened, but positive decisions were not arrived at here any more than between the Prince Regent and Francis Joseph. The proposition of Napoleon in regard to a congress for the settlement of Italian affairs, which was brought forward by the Emperor Alexander, was regarded by Prussia as not definite enough for practical action, and was simply rejected by Austria without comment. Besides this, the Emperor Alexander, who, after Cavour's proceedings, had withdrawn his embassy

from a Court so eager for revolution as that of Turin, did not conceal his vexation that Prussia did not follow his example, but contented herself with sending to Turin a severe criticism of the unlawful policy there pursued. Things remained, therefore, in a state of uncertainty, and no common plan of action was adopted.

For the Prince Regent there also began at this time a serious crisis in his own country.

CHAPTER IV.

CONTEST OVER THE MILITARY REFORMS IN PRUSSIA.

THE enthusiastic joy and exaggerated expectations with which the majority of the Prussian people had received the new Government made the sober reality seem all the colder and harder when it was seen that the grossest abuses of the former system, the arbitrary action of the police, the false interpretation of the laws, the harsh management in ecclesiastical matters, did, indeed, disappear, but that in other respects everything went on in the old rut, and a paradisiacal condition of unheard-of freedom and happiness did not by any means begin.

Definite desires for particular objects also arose in a short time, the non-fulfilment of which caused bitter complaints. There was a great deal of vexation because the new Minister of the Interior, Count Schwerin, declared that it was more in accordance with liberal ideas to leave heads-of-departments of "feudal" tendencies in their places, so long as they did nothing illegal, than to fill all influential positions with partisans of his own, as Herr von Westphalen had done.

When the Upper House decidedly rejected two liberal laws, concerning the establishment of civil marriage and the adjustment of taxes upon land, laws which had

been proposed by the Government and accepted with enthusiasm by the Lower House, the public grew very angry because the Government did not proceed immediately to a reform of the Upper House, to a thorough clearing out of that nest of the feudalists. People did not wish to doubt the Liberal disposition of the Ministers, but it had been hoped that the champions of the former Liberal Opposition would now, in an official position, lay the axe at the root of the Reaction with a firmer hand.

Then came the Italian war. The people, as we have seen, had not the slightest desire to take up arms for Austria; at the same time, here also, there was no confidence in the restless son of the Napoleons; and the Parliament, that the country might be prepared for war, agreed without opposition to a loan of forty million thalers, and to an increase of twenty-five per cent in the most important taxes. When, however, the great mobilization followed, only to end in a general disbandment after Villafranca, when Austria and France rivalled each other in throwing all the responsibility of the misfortunes that had happened upon Prussia, the people came decidedly to the conclusion, that things were going not very differently from the way they went in 1850, that Herr von Bonin did not seem to have much more martial ardor than Herr von Stockhausen, nor Herr von Schleinitz much more energy than Herr von Manteuffel. And when the National Association had called the question of German Unity once more into life, the public dissatisfaction was completed by

Schwerin's answer to the address of the citizens of Stettin, an answer which, it was thought, contained nothing but involved and self-contradictory statements. "The Ministers are excellent men," it was everywhere said, "but they are not equal to the management of great questions; they lack strength and determination, if they have not indeed actually abandoned their old opinions. The people must keep their eyes open."

Such was the state of things when the Prince Regent undertook the work, which he had long recognized as the indispensable condition of any progress in German affairs, the remodelling of the Prussian army. It was very clear to him, that any serious attempt to support the demands that had been sacrificed at Olmütz — Confederate reform and the assurance of constitutional rights in Hesse-Cassel and in Holstein — would be attended for Prussia with great danger of war, and that the existing army was insufficient for the accomplishment of the great object.

It is well known that the Prussian military organization was grounded at that time upon the laws of 1814 and 1815, which, on the basis of a universal obligation to serve, assigned all the male population for three years to the regiments of the line, and for two years more to the war-reserve of these regiments, and then for seven years to the first, and for seven years more to the second, levy of the militia. In time of war the regiments of the line and the first levy of the militia would constitute the active army in the field, while the second levy would garrison the fortresses. Now, in

1815, the population was something over ten millions, and the number of those yearly drafted 40,000; the number and the strength of the regiments of the line were therefore established upon the basis of three such yearly drafts. In forty years, however, the population had increased to nearly eighteen millions, and thus the number of those under obligation to serve had increased to 65,000, while the regiments could still, as before, only receive, train, and pass over to the militia the original 40,000, in consequence of which 25,000 young men every year escaped service entirely. Evidently there was no truth in talking about a universal obligation to serve under such conditions; on the contrary, injustice and unfairness abounded in every quarter. As has been mentioned before, the first levy of the militia, consisting of men of from twenty-five to thirty-two years of age, who had already served, belonged to the active army destined for the field; now, in the mobilizations of 1849, 1850, and 1859, it had been shown that half of these men were married and fathers of families, so that their death would ruin whole households, and yet they were exposed to the fire of the enemy, while many thousands of unmarried youths were sitting quietly by their own hearths.

But this was not all. Between the officers of the line and those of the militia called out only for war there was a very great difference. The former were soldiers by profession, who had grown up in the service, and were constantly with their troops; the latter had for the most part had their training in a one-year's

term of service, and under ordinary circumstances followed their calling as citizens, not becoming acquainted with their men before the mobilization. Moreover, they themselves, as well as their men, were unaccustomed, at least at first, to strict discipline and accuracy of tactics; in spite of energy and courage, the harmony and quickness of action in their battalions was not equal to that in those of the line. It was not enough to place 50,000 fathers of families in the first rank of battle; they were placed there and made to face the enemy with an organization inferior to that of the younger men.

In the Baden campaign of 1849 the Prince Regent had himself had ocular evidence of the inferior skill in manœuvres and of the proportionately greater losses among the militia; and even at that time he had determined that a fundamental change must be made in this direction.

After long consideration of many systems, the Prince had at last fixed on a plan which by its very simplicity proved its general applicability. The "universal obligation to serve," which had shrunk into a mere figment, was to be made once more almost a reality, and the yearly draft to be increased from 40,000 to 63,000 men. In order that it might absorb these accessions, the line required an increase of thirty-nine infantry and ten cavalry regiments. On the other hand, the first levy of the militia was divided; the men of from twenty-five to twenty-seven years, the majority of whom were still unmarried, were added to the war-reserve of the line-regiments, while the remainder were removed from

the active army and assigned with the second levy to the garrisoning of the fortresses. By these arrangements all the difficulties were got rid of, the fathers of families were protected, the young men uniformly brought to the front, and the active army everywhere provided with reliable officers.

The Regent seized the occasion of the mobilization of 1859 for applying this system. When the demobilization came, he kept all the divisions of the militia under arms, each being represented only by a part of its men: from these the new regiments of the line were to be formed. The Minister of War, General von Bonin, took hold of the plan with great zeal, and prepared the necessary outlines of laws and schedules of expenses for the next Parliament. The new regiments of the line could naturally not be kept up without money; the additional cost of the proposed active army, though not much larger than the former one, was estimated at nine and a half million thalers yearly.

To-day there is heard but one general sentiment of gratitude for the work of King William, without which the founding of the German Empire would have been a shadowy dream. But at that time it was otherwise. Public opinion was embittered by the humiliation which the Government of Frederick William IV. had suffered in foreign affairs, and by the harsh pressure of the system of the feudal party; the people had likewise become dissatisfied with the new Ministry, from whose weakness they could not expect great actions either at home or abroad. What was the use of creating forty-

nine new regiments for such a Government, when they would be used only for brilliant parades and to provide pay for young nobles as their lieutenants, whose principal business it would be to annoy good citizens by their haughtiness and insolence? And to this end it was proposed to abolish the militia, the grand result of the War of Liberation, the peculiar representative of the people in the army! And for such objects as these, in addition to the already crushing burden of the taxes, nine millions were demanded for the army of the line, the expense of which, as it was, had made it impossible for the Government to support, as it should, the productive branches of industry.

This was the cry from all parts of the country: it was certain that warm debates would arise in the next session of the Parliament. General von Bonin did not feel himself adapted to a parliamentary contest, and exchanged his ministerial chair for the command of the army on the Rhine.

He was succeeded by General Albrecht von Roon, a man of conspicuous talent, of thorough education, of passionate energy, and of soaring ambition. Although he had shortly before proposed a plan of reform of his own, widely different from the official one, he now placed himself unreservedly at the orders of his highest military superior, and declared himself ready to carry out the reform in the army according to the Regent's commands, and to defend it in the Parliament. Among the Liberals, however, this change of ministers awoke mistrust of the Government. Bonin was considered

liberal, while Roon was regarded as an absolutist. It was thought that the time for showing consideration was over, and that it would be doing the liberal elements of the Ministry a service, to prove to them that they had a strong support in the popular will.

Under such conditions the Parliament was opened on the 12th of January. The Regent's speech from the throne mentioned Prussia's efforts for Confederate reform, and in behalf of Hesse-Cassel and Holstein, and then went on to announce the reform of the army. "The experience of the last ten or twenty years," said the Regent, "has shown the readiness of the people to make sacrifices and their capacity for fighting, but it has also shown that a bad condition of things has taken a deep hold in the army; and to get rid of this is my duty and my right. It is not intended to break with the traditions of a great time; the Prussian army will remain for the future also the Prussian people in arms. But I ask that you will give an unprejudiced examination and your approval to a plan which has been most carefully matured, and which consults alike the common interests of the citizen and of the soldier. This will, in all quarters, give proof of the confidence of the country in the honesty of my intentions. No measure of such importance for the defence and protection, for the greatness and power, of the Fatherland has yet been brought before the representative assembly."

These were simple and on that account doubly impressive words. They could leave no doubt that the Regent saw in this the burning question of his policy,

that he made every other consideration dependent on this, and that he would regard every one as friend or foe according as they supported or opposed this measure. "If the Liberals are wise now," said the former Prime Minister, Von Manteuffel, "they are sure of the possession of power for many years." It was, however, destined that this wisdom should belong, not to the Liberals, but to their opponents.

On the 10th of February, 1860, the Government brought up in the Lower House drafts of two laws, — one in regard to the arrangement of the obligation to serve, and the other in regard to the appropriation of nine millions and a half of thalers. The committee to whom these were referred, chose Georg von Vincke as their president, and the retired major-general Stavenhagen to present their report.

Stavenhagen had at that time a great reputation among the Liberals in military matters; he was an upright and honorable man, free from the bitterness of feeling so common among officers who have been retired. But even he did not escape the prevailing current. He did, indeed, entirely approve of the increase of the draft to 63,000 men, and he had no objection to augmenting the number of regiments of the line. But he declared that the removal of the militia from the active army was a slight to the former, and an abandoning of the most sacred traditions of the Prussian people. More than this, he felt that a period of two years' service for the training of the infantry was quite sufficient for purposes of war; if such an arrangement

were introduced, then, as compared with the results of the three-years' system, either one-third of the expense would be saved, or the number of disciplined soldiers would be increased by one-third.

In vain did the Ministers protest against both these proposals. They showed that, with a two-years' term of service, half of every battalion would consist of raw recruits, and the other half would not be strong enough, when the reserves were called out, to form a firm framework for the whole. It was argued, moreover, that only a prolonged continuance in the service could give a body of troops the internal stability which was essential for solid and consistent action in the field.

The experience, which in the wars soon after was to give a striking confirmation of these statements, had not yet been acquired; and in reply to them, it was asked whether the recruits and militia of 1813 had required a three-years' term of service to win their glorious victories. The two proposals of Stavenhagen, that the militia should be retained in the active army, and that a two-years' term should be adopted for the infantry, were agreed to by the committee; there was no doubt that they would be accepted in the House also, and the plan of the Ministry consequently rejected.

These proceedings occasioned the Government to take a serious step, the first step on a path that led from a contest over the army to a contest over the Constitution.

It was decided, that, if some subordinate advantages

were renounced, a new law in regard to the obligation to serve was not necessary. The law of 1814 imposed the universal liability to be called on for defence, and the obligation to serve for three years. It was further specified in that law that the strength of the army (which necessarily meant the yearly number of recruits) should be determined in accordance with the conditions then existing in the country: that in 1814 the power of determining this was the prerogative of the King alone, went without saying; and hitherto no one had ever suggested that the Constitution of 1850 affected this prerogative. A natural deduction from this was a like power on the King's part to arrange the divisions in which the recruits, when levied, should receive their military training; and on this point also there had hitherto been no difference of opinion. To be sure, the Government's plan of assigning the three youngest yearly accessions of the militia to the war-reserve of the line hardly seemed in harmony with the law of 1814. But even in that law the sharp distinction between the line and the militia was of importance only in time of peace: in war, the needs of the time alone were to decide about the arrangement of the troops; now, the war-reserve took up arms only in case of war, and in case of war it was allowable, even by the old law, to assign to that reserve the soldiers of the militia.

On the whole, then, the Government felt itself authorized, on the ground of the old law, to carry out its reforms without regard to the opposition of the Parliament. It therefore withdrew its draft, which

had been so severely assailed. Meantime, however, it needed money to carry out its new arrangements, and for that purpose it required a decree of the Parliament. Herr von Patow therefore brought forward in the House a motion to grant the Government nine millions for the next fourteen months, for the object of "carrying on and completing the measures which are necessary to make the army more prepared for war, and to increase its effectiveness, and which are practicable on the basis of laws already in force."

This led to a discussion attended with unpleasant results. Patow assured the committee that the definite settlement of all questions was not at all prejudiced by his proposition; the only object was a provisional arrangement; if the House should later refuse the necessary funds, everything could be reduced again. Afterwards, during the discussion in the House itself, he limited the meaning of his words, saying he had designated the existing state of things as provisional only in so far as a definite arrangement could not be arrived at until after a further consideration by the Parliament, that is, on the occasion of the settlement of the expenses in the budget.

But the majority in the House and, as was soon seen, in the country, preferred to stand by the first statement to the committee, that the measures intended were only temporary, and, if objected to by the Parliament, would be withdrawn and the old state of things restored. After Vincke, then, had once more with great zeal dwelt upon the two years' term and the maintenance of

the militia as indispensable, the nine millions for the current year were almost unanimously granted. The Upper House followed this example; but, in marked contrast to the other Chamber, it added a unanimous resolution, urging the Government to hold fast to the original plan of reform, and to carry out all the measures appertaining to it.

The Prince Regent, when he closed the session on May 23d, 1860, complained of the opposition to the bill concerning the army; the delay produced by that opposition, he said, might have been very serious, if the Parliament had not granted the supplies for the necessary increase in the means of defending the Fatherland; in this action he saw a pledge that the necessity of the military reforms would in the end be rightly appreciated, and the question that had been postponed, in a short time satisfactorily settled.

These words admit no other interpretation than that the Regent saw in the granting of supplies a virtual assent to the military reforms, and expected from the next session a definitive approval of the expenses. He therefore followed the letter of the proposition, which had been accepted, in which the Government had demanded the money, not only in order to put the army in a temporary state of preparation for war, but in order to increase its effectiveness, that is, to adopt the new organization. The Opposition, however, clung uncompromisingly to Patow's first statement, according to which every part of the new and provisional organization might be made of none effect by their opposition in the

following year. This difference between the two points of view, or, if any one prefers, this ambiguity in the term "provisional arrangement," was the source of all the ensuing trouble. For the more convinced each side was of the justness of its own opinion, the more inclined it was to doubt the good faith of the other and to presuppose in it a systematic plan of deception. Such a feeling was sufficient to destroy all chance of a harmonious agreement.

In July, 1860, after the new formations were completed, the Prince Regent ordered the division of the same into groups of regiments, and the final appointment of the commissioned and non-commissioned officers. In October, their colors and standards were delivered to the regiments, and in January, 1861, the solemn consecration of these military insignia took place. From this time on every one could say to himself that these were no longer provisional, but permanent formations, which the Regent would never decide to disband of his own accord. The newly formed army was then an accomplished fact.

When the country found itself undeceived, the feeling of bitterness was very deep. Patow had said that everything was to be provisional, that everything could be retracted if the Parliament refused its sanction. Now came the question, whether the thousands of officers had provisional commissions, whether the one hundred and seventeen battalions would vanish on the simple rejection of one item in the budget. "The Government," said the moderate Liberals, "should

have declared its purpose plainly before the money was granted." "That is a simple remark!" cried the more violent. "Will you never see that everything was craftily arranged that you might be deceived?"

So the irritation and anger sank deeper and deeper; and although just at that time the Liberal Bernuth became Minister of Justice in place of the more conservative Simons, the general dissatisfaction with the Ministry increased to such a degree that at two bye-elections in the autumn the very electors who in 1858 had rejected every Democrat of 1848, now sent to the Lower House two chiefs of that party, Waldeck and Schultz-Delitzsch.

While the outlook in domestic policy was so dark, a change of sovereigns took place in Prussia. On the 2d of January, 1861, death ended the melancholy existence of Frederick William IV., and King William I. began to govern in his own name, an event which, under other circumstances, would undoubtedly have increased the disposition to gratify the royal wishes, but which, in the midst of the general irritation, produced this effect in only a very slight degree. In his speech from the throne at the opening of the Parliament, on the 14th of January, the King alluded to the reform of the army as something already accomplished; he trusted that the Parliament would not shun the task of supporting and furthering the arrangements which had been made. At the same time the Upper House was urged to give its assent to the reform in the marriage laws and to the adjustment of the land-tax,

without which the military reforms could not be financially assured. This hint, that an unfavorable vote about the land-tax would endanger the reform of the army, had an immediate effect; the two laws which had hitherto been rejected by the Upper House were now passed by a large majority, and a harmonious relation between that body and the Throne was once more established.

Unfortunately no such satisfactory result appeared in the Lower House.

Even in the discussions over the reply to the Address from the Throne, decided differences of opinion between the Ministry and the former Ministerial party had come to light in regard to foreign and to German policy. In spite of the energetic opposition of Herr von Schleinitz, the House accepted a motion of Vincke's, to the effect that Prussia had no interest in opposing the consolidation of Italy, as well as a motion of its committee, expressing thanks to the King for his efforts for a reform in the Confederate military organization, but at the same time submitting its opinion that this was not sufficient for the national needs, which required a total reform of the Confederate Constitution with a recognition of the position which properly belonged to Prussia.

Schleinitz, well knowing that the King would not decide upon any such step as this, until the reform of the army was placed on a solid basis, declared that this motion went far beyond the actual standpoint of the Government; but he gained nothing except an increased opposition in the House to the military reforms.

“For,” said the Liberals, “there is no reason for granting over 100,000 soldiers and an addition to the budget of many millions to a Ministry that has neither courage nor energy to take a decisive step in the great national cause. Let Herr von Schleinitz continue writing despatches; he will never go any further, and there is no need of money or soldiers for that.”

As for what concerned the military reforms themselves, the Government, faithful to its original position, had brought forward no bill in regard to the obligation to serve, but had referred to the remodelling of the army only in connection with the statement of the budget, increased now not by nine and a half, but only by eight millions. Herren von Patow and von Roon did all in their power to justify the carrying out of the reforms on the basis of existing laws. But the suspicion of deliberate deception could not be eradicated. Patow had said that everything was provisional, everything revocable: now it was announced that everything was definitively settled and could not be changed.

A group of some fifty members, led by Waldeck, was disposed to strike out the entire cost of the new establishment, and then to wait and see what the Government would propose. But the majority were not inclined to go so far. They had no objections to make against keeping up the new regiments, but they wished to force the Ministry to propose a law in regard to the obligation to serve, and they wished to see the militia retained in the active army.

In order to secure this, it was necessary to prove that the old law was violated by the new arrangement, for the legalization of which a new law would be necessary ; and it must be confessed, it was no very striking argument that was brought into the field in support of this view. It was alleged that the assignment to the war-reserve of the line of several of the yearly accessions to the militia, which by the new system became a permanent arrangement, was by the old law only allowable for the time after the actual outbreak of a war, but not for the mobilization before the war. To make it apply to this latter, therefore, a new law was required.

In accordance with this theory, the framers of the old law had intended first to bring the battalions before the enemy on a peace footing, and then to send the reserves after them when the war had fairly begun. As such a position was too absurd to be maintained, refuge was taken in the distinction, that, beside the mobilization for actual war, there was a mobilization for diplomatic purposes, such as had taken place in 1850 and in 1859 ; to include the militia in this was declared to be by the old law wholly inadmissible. But this explanation was no better founded than the original argument. In both of the instances adduced, there had actually been a question of serious danger of war ; and in any case, every mobilization, even if there is perhaps hope that the enemy will give way without a battle, is a threat of war, the consequences of which no one can determine beforehand.

However, in such a state of passion as prevailed, this

interpretation of the law seemed to the majority quite sufficient to support the assertion that the definitive recognition of the military reforms was impossible, unless a new law were brought forward in regard to the obligation to serve. The estimates of the new establishment, therefore, after being reduced by seven hundred and fifty thousand thalers, were once more approved for the current year; but the sum was transferred from the ordinary to the extraordinary expenses; that is, into the class of payments occurring once and not regularly fixed; and a resolution of Vincke's was appended to the accepted budget, in which, after the above-mentioned arguments had been adduced, the proposition of an army law, that should alter the provisions of the law of 1814, was mentioned as an indispensable condition of the permanent support of the new military arrangements.

Yet once more had an open breach been, not exactly avoided, but postponed. The parliamentary term was coming to an end; a general election was at hand; it was left to the Prussian people themselves to express their opinion of the work of the King.

CHAPTER V.

CONFLICTS IN ALL DIRECTIONS.

THE Government did not yet abandon the hope of a favorable issue in the ensuing session. Step by step, in the preceding year, had they drawn nearer to the accomplishment of their object; they felt that, after the first surprise had worn off, the country and the parliament would not longer fail to recognize the advantages of the military reforms. They clung all the more strongly to this view, as the firm establishment of the new army was rendered more desirable by the daily increasing confusion in German affairs, where, in many directions, the possibility of an appeal to arms came daily nearer.

Two different and wholly contrary signs of the times were now showing themselves side by side, in a thoroughly German fashion: an eager desire on the part of both Princes and people for Confederate reform in general, and an utter unlikelihood that any understanding would be arrived at in regard to the particular plans of reform under consideration. In opposition to Prussia's proposal concerning the Confederate military organization, the four Kingdoms, with Darmstadt and Nassau, had, in August, 1860, at a conference in Würzburg, brought forward a proposition, that the unity of

the Confederate army should be maintained, but that, in case Austria and Prussia placed their whole force at the orders of the Confederation, the appointment of the general should be left to the two Great Powers. At their conference at Teplitz the two Monarchs decided, as we have seen, to leave the question to a council of generals from both sides, who should meet at Berlin.

The sessions of this council lasted till April, 1861 : whatever concerned technical military details was readily settled ; but when political considerations came under discussion, everything ended without the real object having been attained. It came out clearly, that Austria was far from disposed to recognize the fundamental position of the Prussian proposal, the placing of Prussia on an equal basis with herself ; on the contrary, she had it in mind, after she had once re-established her own internal affairs on a firm basis by means of a strongly centralized government, to allow in Germany only a federation in which she should be the leading Power : with this end in view, she would be well satisfied with a German triad, since, under such an arrangement, the Lesser States would be ready to keep Prussia's ambition within narrow limits.

In regard to another not less important question, the defence of the northern and eastern coasts, opinions were quite as sharply divided. Prussia desired for this purpose a single organization, as well for the protection of the coasts as for a flotilla of gunboats under her command ; Hanover, on the other hand, advocated for the non-Prussian portion of the coast a separate organ-

ization under the command of Hanover. The part of Prussia was taken by those most nearly concerned, to whom the protection of the coast was a serious matter, that is, by Oldenburg and by the Hanse Towns; but Austria and the Lesser States favored Hanover, for they cared much less about the defence of the coasts of the North Sea than they did about preventing any increase in the power of Prussia. The result of endless negotiation was, that no decision was arrived at, and the coast of the North Sea was left as defenceless as the Upper Rhine.

On the other hand, Prussia's protest was entered against every decree of the Diet tending to extend its authority over matters that had been left by the Act of Confederation (such as affairs of general utility) to voluntary agreement among the states; and in regard to which, therefore, the Diet could only take action with the unanimous consent of all its members. The Lesser States had now united, with the purpose of increasing the popularity of the Diet by pursuing just this course; and they brought forward one proposal after another, all directed toward the most laudable objects: a bill to establish a Confederate commission to arrange uniform weights and measures for all Germany, a bill aimed against piratical reprints, another to bring about the development of a German process of law for civil and for criminal prosecutions. All these Prussia opposed for the well-known reasons, and by her opposition rendered it impossible to pass them.

Little trace of these discussions, however, came to

light at the time. But the feelings of the German people were quite enough irritated by the continuance of the trouble caused by the two great burning questions, that of Holstein and that of Hesse-Cassel.

Neither the Confederate decree, nor the Constitution of 1860 that had been founded upon it, had sufficed to settle the difficulties in Hesse-Cassel. The leader of the Hessian Opposition, the barrister Friedrich Ötker, a man of unyielding character and of courage equal to his tenacity, of thorough knowledge in legal matters, and at the same time possessing as a party-leader a prudence never to be led astray, gradually gathered together all sections of the country and all classes of the people about the banner of the one legal Constitution, that of 1831. When the Estates were to be chosen according to the Constitution of 1860, all the electors voted and all the candidates accepted, with reservations in favor of the ancient right. Hassenpflug had done away with the oath taken by the representatives to support the Constitution; this exactly suited the champions of the ancient right: the Second Chamber unanimously constituted itself and then voted that, since it had not been summoned in accordance with the laws of 1831 and 1849, it was incapable of performing the functions of the Estates of the land. It was immediately dissolved.

A new election, some months later, produced the same result, while a motion on the part of the Government of Baden was introduced in the Diet, to the effect that, in view of the evident impossibility of carrying

out the decree of the Diet, the Elector should be empowered to return to the old Constitution. The Elector was irritated to the highest degree, dissolved the Parliament once more after a three days' session, and presented to the Diet a memorial, savage beyond all measure, protesting against the proposition of Baden. At the same time, his enthusiastic and muddled Minister, Abée, kept proclaiming that the Elector was the sole embodiment of legitimacy in those wretched times, and prophesying, a seer in spite of himself, that with the fall of the Elector the whole Confederate Constitution in Germany would go to pieces.

Of Schleswig-Holstein we shall speak later. On the 7th of February the Diet threatened once more to chastise the Duchies, upon which England and Russia both made urgent representations in Vienna, Berlin, and Frankfort, entreating that such a measure might be abandoned, as likely to endanger seriously the peace of Europe.

These were the things that increased the popular excitement in all corners of Germany. Thundering appeals of the National Association, energetic resolutions of the Chambers in Dresden, Carlsruhe, Brunswick, tumultuous assemblies of citizens in Suabia and Franconia — all re-echoed the cry, that their rights should be restored to Hesse and to Holstein; and all came to the decision, that, for the growth and prosperity of German rights and German power, the creation of a German Central Authority and of a German Parliament was required. Zealous patriots, like the Duke of

Coburg, bestirred themselves in all directions to extend the idea of unity from the educated classes to the mass of the people: at a festival of the Gotha Shooting Guild a *German* Shooting Association was founded at the instigation of the Duke; soon there were *German* athletic associations and *German* singers' associations, and at every German shooting-match and singing-festival the greatness of the united Fatherland was glorified. Then followed *German* conventions of deputies, of cities, of merchants, and of lawyers; and through all the gatherings of the different industries there was woven like a red thread the cry for German Unity, which was always responded to by the applause of throngs of spectators.

The same fashion prevailed everywhere, the same enthusiasm, the same unanimity. Only, if this was not to be disturbed, one point must not be touched upon, and that the decisive one— if any thought was entertained of transferring all these dreams from the realm of ideas into that of reality,— the question, who was to be the future holder of the German central authority? On this there was a division, as there had been ten years before, between the wishes of the advocates of an entire and those of a restricted Germany, of the Clericals and of the Liberals, of the South Germans and of the North Germans. For this reason there was a tacit agreement at the great meetings and festivals to avoid so far as possible the delicate question, and, instead of touching upon that, to stir the feelings of the assembled throngs by brilliant portrayals of the splendor of the

German State and of the happiness that would attend the accomplishment of German unity. Those who spoke thus had no suspicion into whose hands they were playing. The aspirations thus aroused could not be satisfied by any programme founded on reality, whether it aimed at an entire or a restricted Germany; the warmer this enthusiasm was, the more difficult did it render any practical effort for reform, and thus, as was soon seen, it was only doing service in the cause of individualism.

The result of all this, so far as the King of Prussia was concerned, was the impression in his mind that the attitude of reserve hitherto adopted by him on the great question could no longer be maintained, and that he should be obliged to take a definite stand in the matter. After the close of the session of the Parliament he went, as usual, to Baden, where the attempt at assassination, made on the 14th of July by a half-crazy student, had no other effect than to increase his calm confidence in God. He had, at that time, a long interview with Herr von Bismarck, who was at Baden resting for a time from his labors, and whose first and last word to the King was the urgent recommendation of a *bold* policy. From Baden King William went to the sea-baths at Ostend, accompanied by Minister von Schleinitz and the Ambassador at London, Count Bernstorff. Thither came also the Grand Duke of Baden, with his new Minister, Baron von Roggenbach, a young man of a fertile mind, of attractive manners, and of vigorous activity, who, following the preponder-

ating opinion in his own country, openly declared his adhesion to the plan of a strong central authority, that should have the King of Prussia at its head and be responsible through its ministers to a parliament chosen by popular election. In other words, he favored a constitution similar, in the main, to the outline of the League of the Three Kingdoms of May 26th, 1849, and similar to that in this point also, that the entrance into the more restricted union that was to be formed independent of Austria was left optional to each individual Government. Roggenbach declared himself ready to bring forward this plan, either in the form of a circular to the Courts or of a motion in the Diet, if he were assured of the approval of Prussia.

Herr von Schleinitz had many misgivings. Above all things, it was clear to him that there must be no mention of Prussia's taking the lead in such a matter. Then it was difficult to see how such a twofold apparatus of Government — Ministers of the Empire responsible to the general Parliament, and Prussian Ministers responsible to the Prussian Parliament — could work without disagreement and friction; and Prussia could not possibly subordinate herself unconditionally without some guaranty of her independence, to the control of a German Parliament. Before any definite opinion was expressed about the plan, all these points must be thoroughly examined.

Count Bernstorff agreed with the above criticism in many particulars, but showed himself more favorably disposed to the main idea than Schleinitz had been.

The King himself spoke even more approvingly, and it was finally agreed that Roggenbach should shortly bring to Berlin a more detailed development of his system for a final decision.

Meanwhile the King, having returned to Berlin, busied himself with the preparations for his solemn coronation, which was to take the place of the usual paying of homage, and was to be performed at Königsberg on the 18th of October. He intended to express the great importance which he attached to Prussia's entrance upon her constitutional existence, by this renewal of a ceremony which had been used at the time when the electoral hat was changed into the Prussian kingly crown, and which had not been repeated since. With this solemnity before him, he became confirmed in his resolution to give his foreign policy a more decided tone than it had had hitherto.

After he had returned Napoleon's visit at Compiègne in the beginning of October, and had once more exchanged assurances of peace and friendship with the Emperor, he appointed Count Bernstorff Minister in place of Schleinitz, and then set out on his journey to Königsberg, in order, with all the pomp of the Church, to place the regal crown upon his head. He went through this solemn act in profound agitation of spirit, regarding it as a promise of the faithful fulfilment of duty made in the sight of God the Lord. Mindful of this, he said at that time to the members of the Parliament and the Estates present at the ceremony: "Since the crown comes from God only, I have

announced, by my coronation in the holy place, that I have received it in humility from his hands." This consecration made the prerogatives of that crown seem to him all the more sacred, though to his serious and upright mind they transformed themselves immediately into stern obligations. To fulfil the obligations and to guard the prerogatives was his determination devoutly and piously formed. In the pursuit of that end he cared not on what side strife and opposition awaited him.

Complications in all directions were not wanting.

With Austria, indeed, at that moment a better relation seemed about to be formed on the basis of common action. The negotiations in regard to the Elbe Duchies had hitherto been carried on only in the Diet, and had consequently been confined to Holstein. In August, 1861, Denmark attempted to make an arrangement directly with the two German Great Powers, upon which both the Powers, in complete accord, on the basis of the Compacts of 1852, brought up also the complaints of Schleswig. Denmark then refused to allow that the two Courts had any right to interfere in such a way in the internal affairs of the Danish State; so that the chance of war and perhaps even of conflicts with foreign Powers came daily nearer. In this connection, evidently the most important thing was to induce Austria to consent to common action as long as possible.

For this reason the satisfaction in Berlin was all the greater, when, in the autumn of 1861, Count Rechberg

began to incline to the Prussian view in the affairs of Hesse-Cassel also. In 1850, as we have seen, he had been for a time Confederate Commissioner in that country, and had there become thoroughly familiar with the Elector and his counsels. He now saw Prussia's position exalted by recent events far and wide throughout Germany; he had the general sympathy for the maltreated Hessian people before his eyes; Austria herself had been, since the 26th of February, 1861, a constitutional state, and Rechberg had had to endure harsh language in the Imperial Council on account of his former behavior in Hesse. In short, he became convinced that in this matter the Diet held an untenable position, and he announced to the Prussian ambassador his readiness to yield. It is unnecessary to say how gladly this news was received in Berlin.

Unfortunately this was but a momentary gleam of sunlight, which was soon obscured by clouds darker than ever and doubly pregnant with storm. In the Saxon Chamber a proposition had been brought forward for a German central authority and popular representation. Herr von Beust, convinced, as we know, of the necessity of the Governments' doing something for reform, resolved not to hesitate longer, and drew up a plan for a German Constitution, which he hoped would be received with approbation by all parties because he had allotted a morsel of reform to each. It was his old idea: the Diet was to be replaced by conferences of Ministers of all the German states, to be convened for

four weeks twice in every year for a speedy settlement of business, once in the south at Ratisbon under Austria's presidency, and once in the north under Prussia's. Besides this, he recommended an assembly of delegates from the Parliaments of the different states, to be summoned, so soon as the Diet should deem it necessary, for the consideration of whatever bills should be presented to it; and finally, a Confederate Court of Appeal to decide disputes that might arise in connection with the Constitution.

In September he made a journey to Vienna to have a confidential interview with Rechberg. The latter, who, since his failures in 1859, had been impressed with the necessity of winning popular sympathy everywhere, received him in a friendly way. It is true he was, for the moment, deprived of the advice of his firm and well-informed counsellor in German matters, Herr von Biegeleben, who was seriously ill; but nevertheless he readily entered upon the consideration of Beust's plan, stifled some doubts about the delegations, and induced Herr von Beust to introduce, for the interim between the two yearly conferences, a Confederate executive body, and even a Directory of three, Austria, Prussia, and another member to be elected. Beust's proposed alternation in the presidency seemed to him, however, very hard. "What will posterity say of me," he sighed, "if, after Villafranca and Zurich, I make this concession also?" But even on this point he overcame his feelings, and induced the Emperor to give a conditional assent, and to agree that he would pay the price, if that would

insure the success of the whole work, and if it was not to be accomplished in any other way.¹

Thus encouraged, Herr von Beust, on the 15th of October, laid his creation before all the German Courts. But he was forced to suffer a failure as complete as can possibly be conceived. The rejection of the plan by the party that favored a restricted Germany as well as by the Liberals was perfectly natural. "This," cried Herr von Roggenbach, "is offering the German people a stone instead of bread." But the friends and sympathizers, who favored an entire Germany, also refused to accept this offering.

"The thing," said the King of Würtemberg, "is as unpractical as it is dangerous." In Munich there was much annoyance that the third place in the Directory was not assigned once for all to Bavaria. Herr von Dalwigk, who was always thoroughly loyal to the cause, would have amended the outline by leaving out the main idea as incapable of being carried out. Hanover and Hesse-Cassel remained firm in their principle, that the Act of Confederation of 1815 was unalterable, unimprovable, and not to be questioned. And now let us look at the answers of the two Great Powers, the one as surprising to the author of the plan as the other was almost disastrous.

While Beust had been visiting the other Courts, at Vienna Herr von Biegeleben had recovered, and by taking a very decided stand he had led both Rechberg,

¹ Report of the Prussian Ambassador, Savigny, of the 2d of January, 1862; founded on a detailed account given by Beust.

who was hesitating, and the Emperor, who had all along been doubtful, to reject the project. In the case of Biegeleben, this was caused by a strong confidence in himself in common with Catholic zeal and the traditional pride of the Chancellorship at the Vienna Court. The official answer of Austria, given on the 5th of November, came unmistakably from his pen, which we shall often see in action after this.

In this answer the Austrian Government, using almost condescending language, declined to go into the undoubted merits and the great weaknesses of Beust's creation. But it dwelt mainly upon the proposed alternation in the presidency of the Diet. It went far beyond Schwarzenberg's counter-arguments in 1851, in the assertion that the national unity of Germany had its sole personification in Austria's fixed presidency; if this were to yield to the shifting accidents of the alternate arrangement, the result would be the dismemberment of Germany. This could only be thought of, if, in compensation for the overthrow of the acknowledged headship, a correspondingly broader and firmer basis were given to national unity by embracing the non-German possessions of Austria under the protection of the Confederation. Such talk as this meant favoring an entire Germany in the very loftiest style.

The deliberations at Berlin resulted in a decision of an opposite tendency. Even while returning from Königsberg Herr von Patow had communicated to his colleagues the outline of a national constitution on the basis of "a restricted union," but, in accordance with

the disposition of those colleagues, he had received no answer in regard to the troublesome document. Immediately after, there came from Roggenbach the outline of a circular to the German Courts, which had been promised at Ostend; the King and the Ministry consulted upon it, and although Count Schwerin warmly declared that such a subordination of Prussia to a German Parliament would be the ruin of the country, the King decided to approve the circular in general, and only to make a reservation for the securing of Prussia's position as a European Power. Then the text of Austria's answer to Beust of the 5th of November was received, and not a little annoyance was felt at the significance therein attached to the presidency of the Diet: that which in 1816 had been treated without contradiction as a merely formal guidance in matters of business, was now to be elevated to a sort of supreme headship in all Germany.

Meanwhile Roggenbach, on the appearance of Beust's plan, had for the time laid his own aside, but had, nevertheless, on the strength of their old Frankfort acquaintance, communicated it to Herr von Biegeleben in Vienna. He received an answer, dated November 27th. It began in a tone of ill-concealed excitement; but to the question whether Austria was now more ready than under Prince Schwarzenberg to admit the system of a restricted union and of a more comprehensive alliance, a passionate answer was given in the negative. "Austria," wrote Biegeleben, "can never resign her position as the first Power in Germany; by

the side of a great national state she would have no future before her; such a state would speedily draw the Austrian Germans into its circle. Austria now stands at the head of Germany, and yet her monarchy rests on its own basis, and is not forced to depend upon a German Confederation for keeping her territories together: this alone is the fitting position for the Government which is centred at Vienna. Unfortunately we see that very soon again attempts at a Prusso-German union may be made: in that case a decided opposition will not be lacking."

It was a variation on the old theme: Austria independent of Germany and yet the first Power in Germany. It was the same theory that had been uttered in almost the same words in the Congress in regard to the Confederate army. There was no choice left: either blind submission, or an open proclamation of the standpoint that was repudiated in Vienna.

With this in view, the King ordered an answer to Beust's plan to be prepared. In this it was declared that the German Confederation was an international league of states independent and very different from one another; Prussia keenly desired the continuance of this league, and for that very reason was anxious that its powers should be kept within the narrowest limits possible; whoever wished for anything better than this on German soil, could obtain it only by the voluntary association of similar states in a restricted union within the more comprehensive alliance; that is, by the establishment of a federation within the confederacy.

On the 20th of December, 1861, this communication was sent to Dresden, and it was made public immediately after. It was no proposition, no appeal, no outline of a constitution: it was nothing more than an expression of opinion about the way to a really valuable Confederate reform. But coming from the source it did, it was sufficient to produce a general explosion of passion on the opposite side.

Like an ant-hill disturbed by the gardener's stick was the rushing and hurrying of despatches and messages among the Courts of the Lesser States. "How?" cried they. "Prussia desires a more restricted union? She returns to the abominable ideas of the Union and of the Assembly in the Cathedral of St. Paul? It is true the communication says nothing of Prussia's being at the head of the Empire, of the mediatization of the Lesser States, of the exclusion of Austria, of a Democratic parliament; but in the word *Union*, as in the box of Pandora, all evil is contained. In a case like this, the thing to do is, to make a stand at the very beginning, to hold the position firmly, and to act together."

Some relief was felt, however, when, in January, 1862, it was learned that Austria thought the occasion serious enough to require that she herself should undertake the leadership in the contest. About the middle of the month, Count Rechberg came back from a journey to Venice. He told the Prussian ambassador that he would enter into no discussion of the communication of December 20th, because by so doing he might endanger the good understanding in regard to Hesse-

Cassel ; but at the same time he took measures to bring about a demonstration, as imposing as possible, against the Prussian heresy. For his easily-excited feelings were this time thoroughly aroused.

“That communication,” he declared to the ambassador from Baden, “is an unexampled challenge on the part of Prussia, an undissembled summons to revolution. After such a proceeding, the next thing for Austria to do, would be to take up the gauntlet, and by an open and decided programme of opposition to gather the majority of the German Nation about herself. We still hesitate about doing this, because in that case the breach with Prussia would be unavoidable, and a civil war would be proclaimed. But Austria can no longer look on, while Prussia seeks to oust, by perfidious intrigues, the Imperial State from Germany.

The angry speeches of Rechberg were echoed by Herr von Schmerling, the Minister of the Interior, whose newspaper (*Der Botschafter*) had already opened with savage articles the campaign against Prussia. “I will not justify all this violence,” he said ; “but it is the natural consequence of the Prussian challenge.”

The Austrian ambassadors at the Lesser Courts were summoned to Vienna ; a rising Austrian diplomatist, Count Blome, then visited those Courts ; the result of his consultations there, was a note, dated the 2d of February, which was addressed on the same day and in the same terms by seven Governments — Austria, the four Kingdoms, Darmstadt, and Nassau — to the Cabinet at Berlin. In this note the wickedness of his

ideas was held up before the Prussian sinner; he was emphatically reminded of the failure that had formerly attended such attempts; an energetic protest was entered against any limitation of the sovereignty of German Princes; and conferences were demanded in regard to the establishment of a Confederate directory and of an assembly of delegates. Count Bernstorff answered this on the 14th of February very coolly, denying in a few words the accusations that had been brought, and declining to take any part in conferences carried on on a hopeless basis.

In connection with this correspondence, the Hanoverian Minister, Count Platen, observed to the Prussian ambassador that King George, who had been hitherto opposed to any change in the Confederate Constitution, had been forced only by Prussia's action to adopt the standpoint of the note of the 2d of February. Platen said that he himself had hitherto always defended Prussia's interests, but was now obliged to declare that Hanover was firmly allied with the Confederates of Würzburg, and must be counted among the opponents of Prussia.

Thus the conflict between the party favoring an entire and that favoring a restricted Germany now showed itself among the Governments as it had hitherto done among the people; and on the side of those who favored an entire Germany, at least, warnings had not been lacking, that any farther step of Prussia along the path she had entered would occasion a declaration of war. In order to make the situation as difficult as

possible for the Prussian ruler, at the same with this defection of the German Princes, the internal conflict in regard to the military reforms increased in violence, in a way excluding every prospect of an amicable settlement.

Immediately after the close of the session of the Parliament, the extreme Left of the Lower House had constituted itself a "German Progressist" party, and had circulated its programme in all parts of the country. This consisted of complaints of the half-heartedness and weakness of the Ministry, and of an appeal for the election of men that would stand forth with energy and determination for the just demands of the people. This was explained to mean open war against the Upper House, without a remodelling of which no law of a liberal tendency could be passed; a refusal of any consent to the new arrangement of the army, till a law had settled the continued existence of the militia, a two years' term of service, and by this means a diminution of the taxes; and finally, a desire that the Government should without delay take vigorous steps for the calling of a German Parliament and the creation of a Prusso-German central authority.

This last stipulation at once calls forth the question, how it was possible to urge the Government to a policy in German affairs that implied a great war at the very outset, and at the same time to deny them the most necessary means for such a war, an effective army? The answer to this is, that the party had no belief in any war on account of the German question. Consid-

ering the results obtained by the National Association, the sentiments of many of the German Chambers, and the agitation everywhere carried on for German Unity, they thought that if Prussia could only gain the favor of the German people, the masses and the Chambers would soon compel the reluctant Governments to yield and follow her plans ; but the first condition of this was, that Prussia should show herself thoroughly liberal in internal affairs, should establish a constitution in a liberal spirit, and, above all, should turn her back upon a measure so highly unpopular and reactionary as the strengthening of the standing army. Certainly, any one who remembered the attitude of Austria in 1850, the hatred of Prussia manifested by the people of Suabia and Bavaria in 1859, the hostility universally displayed by the Clerical party to all efforts in the direction of a restricted Germany, could not listen to these speeches of a vague enthusiasm without anxiety.

Nevertheless, the majority of what had formerly been the Ministerial party kept drawing nearer and nearer to the party of Progress. The appeal, which the former issued to the electors, differed from that issued by the latter, not in the matter of its demands, but in hardly anything more than the indication of somewhat more prudence in the methods to be pursued, of a reluctance to proceed at once to violent measures. The mass of the people throughout the country showed no great enthusiasm for the retention of the militia in the regular army, nor for the inspiring thought of German Unity ; but the alluring watchwords of a two years'

term of service and diminished taxes found an echo everywhere. The result of the elections on the 6th of December was a complete overthrow of the Conservatives, whose strength was reduced to twenty-four votes, and a great triumph of the Progressist party and their friends, the moderate Liberals, who had every prospect of controlling a majority in the new House.

The Government, filled with a desire to arrive at an amicable arrangement, immediately after the opening of the session, which took place on the 14th of January, 1862, brought in the draft of a law in regard to the obligation to serve, as had been requested by the former House, and announced further economies in the expenses of the army. Drafts of laws were also produced in regard to the abolition of the proprietary police and the introduction of a liberal arrangement of districts; another draft, in regard to the Chamber of Accounts, was intended to establish as a permanent law the method which had been generally adopted there in dealing with the budget; and finally, a fourth draft was brought forward, which, by a change in the provision of the Constitution that gave the right of impeaching a Minister to either House of Parliament, made that right dependent upon a common resolution of both Houses.

The general impression of these propositions upon the deputies was not very favorable. It was said that the two liberal laws would certainly be thrown out by the Upper House; so far from there being any mention of a remodelling of that House, its consent was now to

be made necessary before a Minister could be impeached. The balance of the proposed drafts of laws, they said, inclined, therefore, to the side of the reactionary party; and for such a return as this the country was asked to take upon itself the three years' term of service and the expense of the new regiments!

Nor was the Majority better satisfied with the management of foreign affairs and its results, in spite of the assurances held out in the speech from the throne that the path hitherto chosen in German matters would be persisted in. In the very first sessions motions were brought forward for explicit statements concerning Hesse-Cassel, as well as concerning Confederate reform, which were referred to special committees. In regard to Hesse-Cassel two forms of a motion were considered by the committee, both decidedly hostile to the Elector, but one couched in comparatively moderate terms, the other much more violent.

Count Bernstorff, who had with joy found Austria ready for common action in this matter, in spite of all previous disputes, for that reason besought the committee to adopt the milder form, but only succeeded with difficulty in bringing about a combination of the two propositions to the following effect: "It is urgently requested that the Government will use all possible means for the complete restoration of constitutional rights in Hesse-Cassel." This was accepted in the House by an overwhelming majority. As for Count Bernstorff, the deputies did not speak of him with great respect. He had, they said, about as much

courage and energy as his predecessor, Schleinitz; he employed no means but diplomatic trickery, and was frightened at every open and energetic expression of the popular will.

Meanwhile, on the 14th of February, the notes of the seven Governments, mentioned above, had been received by Prussia and answered in the negative. The Majority in the House did not indeed find fault because the Government had not answered the notes with cannon, but they were now all the more urgent that that course should be pursued, which, according to their opinions, could alone lead to safety,—the peaceful gaining over of the German people by an open declaration of the entire plan of a restricted Germany.

The committee to which this matter had been referred adopted a resolution on the 25th of February, which emphasized in sufficiently plain terms the claim of the German nation to the Imperial Constitution of 1849, briefly and roundly denied the legal existence of the Diet, which had been abolished in 1848, and could not be restored without the consent of the popular representatives in the different countries, and thus arrived at the following motion: "That the House considers it necessary to form a more comprehensive alliance with Austria and a restricted union with the other States, which latter shall have Prussia at its head and shall have a German parliament; the Government should make this openly the object of their policy, and should at once seek to realize it by mutual understandings with the other German states."

The Ministry saw in these declarations a serious danger to its German policy. The majority even of its Liberal members had only with reluctance agreed to the communication of December 20th, which, by its suggestions of German Unity, had so sorely disturbed German unanimity. And now were they to be called on to protest against the legality of the Diet, which Prussia, like all the other German Governments, had recognized in 1851, and the contributions to which had since that time been granted yearly by the Prussian Parliament and by all the German Chambers? The committee was therefore informed that the whole motion was calculated to defeat its own object; it would call forth and strengthen opposition everywhere, and would render useless the efforts of the Government for a Confederate reform that was really attainable. The answer of the committee was an unconditional persistence in their determination and the bringing of their proposals before the whole House.

This action caused intense irritation on both sides. The Government felt that it would be impossible to get along for any length of time with an assembly so violent in its demands, and at the same time so inconsiderate; what term could be applied to their action in bitterly opposing the strengthening of the army and at the same time making requirements which, if yielded to, would at once be the signal for an attack by the Confederation and a war with Austria and South Germany?

On the other hand, the conviction had become estab-

lished in the minds of the deputies, that the existing Ministry, whether of Bernstorff or Schleinitz, was hovering without vigor or energy around the great problems of Prussian power and honor, and drew back in fear before every lofty aim and every bold decision. If, at the time of the election agitation in the autumn, there had still remained a hope of a decided policy that should aim at acquiring for Prussia an honorable position in Europe, there was now an end of that illusion; but equally surely was there an end of any thought of consenting to the new regiments of the line, which would be employed only in an idle service of parade.

At this time every hope of an understanding in the committee on military matters also vanished. Whatever else may have been satisfactory about the Government's proposition, the committee remained firm in the position that everything was unessential, so long as a concession was not made in regard to the two years' term. At length, on the 5th of March, Herr von Roon made a final statement, that the Government could not accede to this innovation, but must adhere to the legal condition of things, a three years' term. Upon this the Majority persisted in their resolution to strike out from the budget the cost of the new formations in the army. "You talk about the Law of 1814," they said. "Very well, we will use our rights in regard to the budget. You call out soldiers and form battalions, that is your privilege. We refuse you the money necessary for their support, that is ours."

Just at this time an occasion offered itself for insur-

ing the effect in detail of such a determination. On the 6th of March came the report of the committee that had been appointed to consider the draft of the law concerning the Chamber of Accounts. The most important point of this report was the legal confirmation of the habitual practice, according to which, the statement of the budget contained only the sums total under the different main headings and the Government was not bound by any designated allotment of the appropriations carried into details. In opposition to this the deputy Hagen moved to specialize the statement even for the current year; that is, to make detailed allotments by which the Government should be bound. The motion was directed, as was shortly after openly declared, against the military plans of the administration. It was desired to prevent the Government from saving enough out of the large appropriations under the various main headings to keep the new formations in the army on foot. Although the Minister of Finance declared it impossible to apply such an arrangement to the statement of 1862 then under consideration, promised to carry out the specialization himself for 1863, and at the conclusion of his speech clearly implied that the continuance in office of the Cabinet depended upon the vote, the House adopted Hagen's motion, one hundred and seventy-seven against one hundred and forty-three.

This was an open declaration of war, on the part of the House, against the entire plan of the military reforms, and it was received with approval and delight

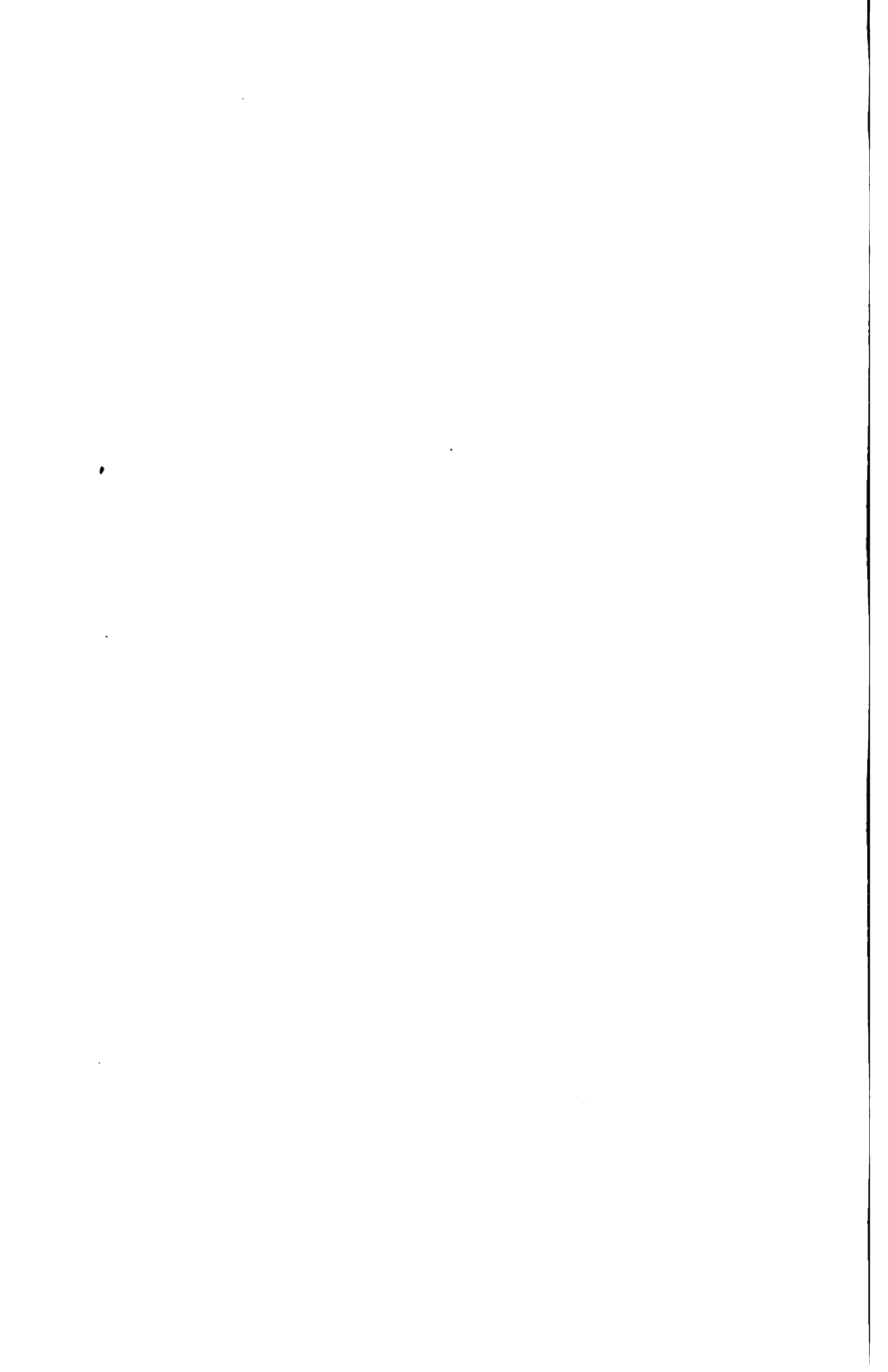
in all parts of the country. It was the signal for the close of the new era.

The Liberal Ministers had now in the Lower House only a small minority on their side, and in the Upper House they were detested as much as ever. Prince von Hohenzollern had already practically withdrawn, and Herr von Auerswald had been long an invalid. On the 8th of March the whole Cabinet offered its resignation to the King. The King, however, did not accept it, but expressed his confidence in his Ministers, and asked them to advise him as to the measures that should be taken under the circumstances. They were all agreed as to the first: the Lower House must be dissolved; and this appeared all the more desirable, since on the 11th of March the debate on the German question was to come on, which the Government desired above all things to avoid. On that very day, the 11th, the dissolution took place.

But as to what was to be done next, the different elements of the Cabinet disagreed. In order to proclaim to public opinion, now so excited, the favorable disposition of the Government, Count Schwerin proposed that the draft of the law concerning the arrangement of districts should be further adapted to the wishes of the Liberal Majority. Herren von der Heydt and von Roon, however, pointed out that this would carry with it the risk of a loss of the friendship of the Upper House, so important for the military reforms. And on general principles they held that, after recent occurrences, no good results could be

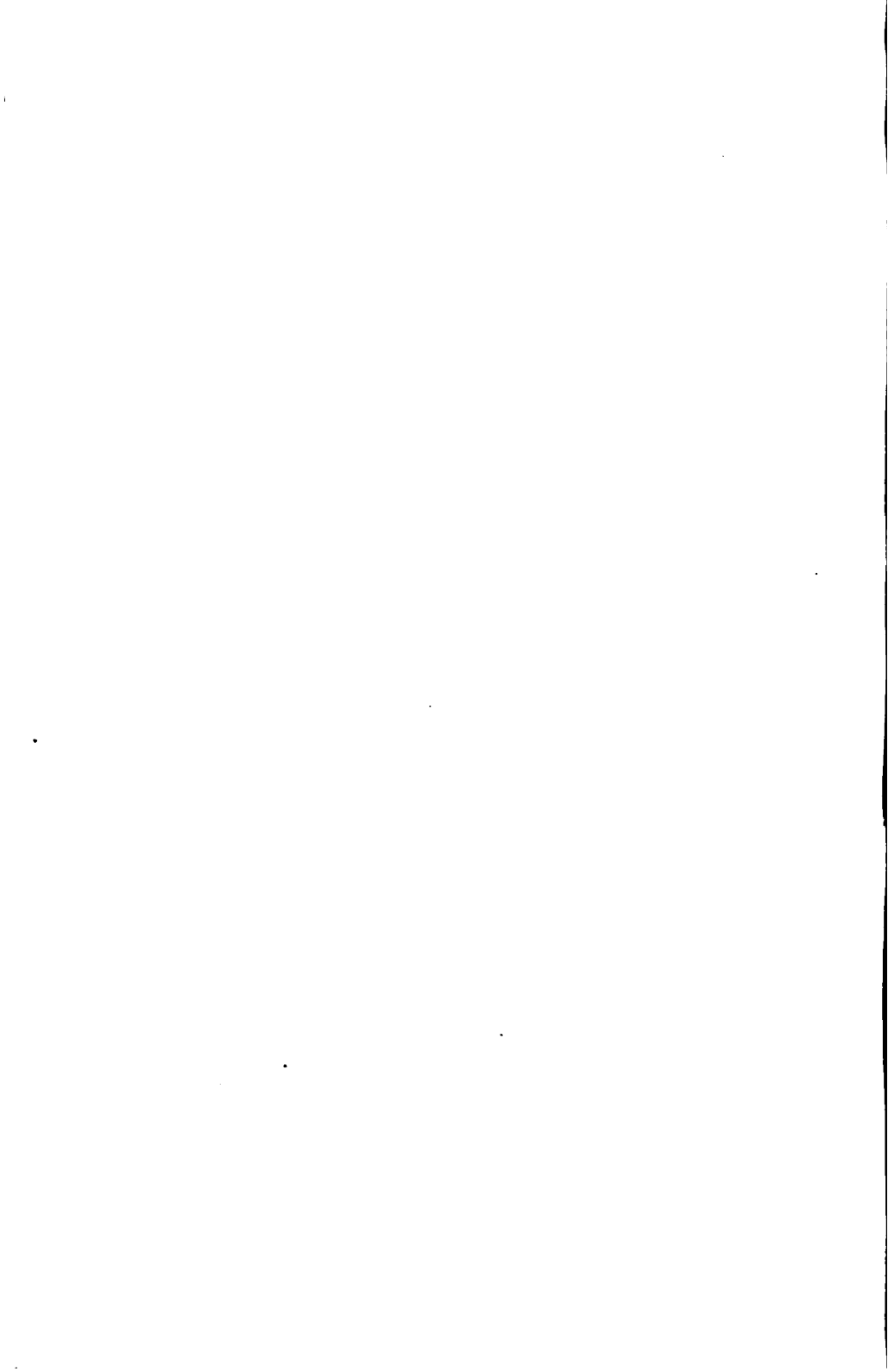
obtained from the Lower House by yielding, but only by firmness. The King thought that, step by step, too much advance had been made toward the Left; he was afraid of finally abandoning a conservative basis entirely, and therefore rejected Schwerin's proposal. The immediate result was the definitive resignation of the Liberal Ministers, Auerswald, Schwerin, Patow, Bernuth, and Count Pückler.

Roon, Von der Heydt, who now became Minister of Finance, and Count Bernstorff, remained. The presidency of the Ministry was assumed by the President of the Upper House, Prince Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen; and in the place of those who had resigned, Herren von Jagow, von Mühler, von Holzbrink, and the Counts zur Lippe and von Itzenplitz were appointed. A thoroughly conservative Cabinet was thus opposed to the radical tendencies of the future Lower House.



BOOK VIII.

*BEGINNING OF THE MINISTRY OF
BISMARCK.*



CHAPTER I.

STRUGGLE OVER THE CONSTITUTION.

THE Prussian Ministry of March 18th, 1862, of which the virtual leader was the Minister of Finance, Von der Heydt, in the beginning of its existence had some weighty events to record in German politics.

In spite of the tension of relation which existed between the two German Great Powers, and which had been made manifest in the notes of the seven Governments communicated on the 2d of February, Count Rechberg had been unwilling to leave to the Prussian Government alone anything so popular as the defence of Schleswig-Holstein and of the constitutional rights of Hesse-Cassel. He therefore continued without interruption to take part energetically in common with the Cabinet of Berlin in the war of despatches against Denmark.

As regards Hesse-Cassel, the Elector made a third attempt in 1862 to get together on the basis of a new constitution a parliament that would be amenable; but this failed as completely as the two former. Rechberg then finally listened to Prussia's proposition, that without any criticism of former decrees of the Diet, and solely on the ground of the impossibility of any other course, the Elector should be forced to yield to the

wishes of his people. Both Powers, therefore, moved, on the 8th of March, in the Diet, that that body should call upon the Elector to bring into effect once more the Constitution of 1831, such provisions of that Constitution as were contrary to the principles of the Confederation having been first expunged.

As a number of the smaller Courts found it hard to reconcile themselves to such a repeal of the steps that had formerly been taken in that wretched business, the decision in regard to the motion, according to the usual Frankfort practice, was long delayed. It occurred to King William, therefore, that it might be a good thing if he himself should appeal directly and personally to the Elector. He could send him, by one of his adjutants, an autograph letter, calling his attention to the certainty that the Diet would agree to the motion before it, and representing to him how admirable it would be, if, before that happened, he should grant of his own accord what was desired, and should at the same time call into his Ministry men who had the public confidence. The letter was to make it clear that Prussia could no longer tolerate a hotbed of increasing agitation between her provinces, and would therefore be driven, in her own interest, in case of further obstinacy on the Elector's part, to take decided steps.

The King first of all invited the Cabinet of Vienna to take part in this measure, and at the same time laid before it a list of those who might become Ministers in Hesse. But Count Rechberg at once replied that this

would be interfering too far in the Elector's sovereign rights, and that Austria could the less take part in such an act, since at the head of the list of Ministers presented stood the name of a former "March" Minister, of acknowledged leanings towards a restricted Germany, Herr von Wintzingerode: Austria might yield to such an appointment so far as it affected Hesse, but never as it affected Germany.

The Elector, encouraged by so much hesitation, broke in upon these deliberations, on the 26th of April, with a brutal order, by which the participation of every citizen in the elections for the Parliament was made dependent upon a previous express recognition of the Constitution of 1860: without such recognition no elector was to be permitted to cast his vote, and it was expected that by this means the small company of the Elector's faithful followers would be chosen by a minority of the voters and would form a popular representation that would be well affected. The indignation of the country flamed high; all the electors of Cassel sent a complaint to the Confederate Diet, a committee of which had now for two months been deliberating without result upon the proposition of the Great Powers. The Elector laughed; and counting on his secret supporters at Frankfort, he sent out, on the 3d of May, the writs for the parliamentary elections, in accordance with the order mentioned above.

But patience was now exhausted at Berlin. On the 6th of May, Count Bernstorff sent word to Vienna that the Elector had pushed things to extremities.

Prussia, he said, could no longer make her action dependent upon the delays at Frankfort, and she believed that Austria's feeling was the same. He therefore repeated, with a request for strict secrecy, the proposition that the two Cabinets, acting in common, should send two generals to Cassel, to demand first a postponement of the elections, and, in case of a refusal, to declare diplomatic relations broken off.

At that time in Vienna, in consequence of the affair of the Tariff-Union, which we shall mention later, the feeling toward Prussia had grown decidedly less friendly, while there was a strong desire to keep the leading *rôle* in the work of popular salvation, and hence to retain that work in the hands of the Diet. The sending of the generals was, therefore, declined; but it was proposed to move that the Diet should prohibit the carrying on of the elections, which motion, if passed, would render any independent action on the part of the Governments superfluous. "Very well, then," telegraphed Bernstorff in reply. "The King will make this last attempt; but if the prohibition is not agreed to in the next sitting of the Diet, General von Willisen will march to Cassel, and Prussia will look to her own interests on her own account."

The telegraph was busy in all directions; and almost all the German Courts, with the exception of Hanover and Mecklenburg-Schwerin, had instructed their representatives to vote for the prohibition at the sitting on the 10th of May. On the other side, the Hessian representative demanded a postponement till the fol-

lowing sitting, a demand which, according to the regular order of business, had to be granted. As Herr von Usedom reported that there was every possibility of a similar demand at the next session, and as Herr von Sydow sent word from Cassel that the Elector was intoxicated with his victory in obtaining the postponement, and was determined to refuse obedience even to the prohibition, King William, on the 11th of May, ordered General Willisen to set out for Cassel, and made it known in Vienna that a refusal on the Elector's part would involve serious consequences.

The first thing Willisen learned, when he saw Adjutant von Lossberg at Wilhelmshöhe, was that the secret of his coming had been badly kept. Lossberg informed him that orders had been given that no one should present him to the Elector but the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Göddäus. Soon after came a letter from Lossberg announcing that the Elector was ill in bed. Willisen returned to Cassel, and was not received by Göddäus, who, however, had a short conversation with him afterwards at Sydow's, but would say nothing definite about the further treatment of the General. During this time, however, news had been brought to the Elector of movements of Prussian troops toward the Hessian boundaries, and this put him into such a state of wrath that he determined to have done with his troublesome visitor at once.

At eight in the evening Willisen was informed that the Elector, though ill, had come to town and would receive him then. In the ante-chamber the General

found the two Ministers, Abée and Göddäus, who followed him when he entered, so that he could have no further doubt as to the result. The Elector held the King's letter, which had been given to him, in his hand. Willisen asked whether His Electoral Highness would not open it (as is generally the custom). The Elector said: "That is not etiquette," and tossed the letter upon a table standing before the mirror. Willisen was then obliged to speak, and said that it was his duty only to repeat, as well-meant and strongly-urged advice, what had been frequently said. The Elector interrupted him: "Every new Minister in Prussia wants to play a new game in Hesse; all misfortune in Hesse comes from Prussia; everything would be peaceable here, if some one from there were not always meddling." "Only one point is at issue just now," observed Willisen, "in regard to which there is but one opinion in all Germany: that is, the stopping of the proceedings in regard to the elections." The Elector cried: "A constitution involves elections; no one can release ministers from a constitutional duty." To this Willisen agreed, but emphasized the fact that the main thing that was proposed was the withdrawal of the order of the 26th of April, which was by no means prescribed by the Constitution. The Elector, extremely angry, burst out: "Very extraordinary, that the King of Prussia criticises such steps in another country, yet will soon be obliged to do much worse things in his own!" At these words Abée hastily interposed, and made a long argument in justifi-

cation of the order. This Willisen briefly disposed of, and then turned again to the Elector: he besought him not to give a final answer in the negative; in the morning all his fellow-members of the Diet would address the same recommendation to him that was now made by Prussia. The Elector shook his head. Willisen continued: "Then I must announce the intention of His Majesty to break off diplomatic relations." The Elector closed the interview: "I cannot prevent the King from doing so," he said; "but it is a singular proceeding to withdraw ambassadors, because in the internal affairs of a neighboring country everything does not go on exactly as one prescribes."

After this, there was naturally no mention of a change of Ministry.

On the 13th of May the Diet agreed to the prohibition; but as this made no change in the attitude of the Elector, King William ordered the Westphalian and Magdeburg army-corps to be ready to march on the 23d; and on the 18th, Sydow, with the threat of a declaration of war, demanded, as satisfaction for the insulting treatment of General von Willisen and the formal disregard of the King's letter, the immediate dismissal of the Hessian Ministry. It is not to be denied that this action might have brought Prussia into a difficult position, if the Elector had persisted in an obstinate and passive resistance; since Austria, as well as the Diet, would very soon have objected energetically to any continued occupation of Hesse-Cassel. The very threat of such a thing caused great excitement in Vienna.

Clearly, the steps taken by Prussia could have no real meaning nor significance, unless a determination had been formed at Berlin to make the Hessian question, as Prince Schwarzenberg had made it in 1850, the critical point of a question that affected all Germany, this being done at the risk of a great war with Austria and the Lesser States. Whether King William personally had this idea, I do not know; but it is certain that it was not entertained by his Cabinet.

At that time Herr von Bismarck, who had just been recalled from St. Petersburg and ordered to go to Paris, was in Berlin. Count Bernstorff asked him his opinion. Bismarck answered: "The circumstance of the Elector's throwing a royal letter upon a table is not a very sound *casus belli*; but if you want war, make me your under-secretary of state, and I will furnish you within four weeks a German civil war of the finest quality." But Count Bernstorff drew back in dismay.

Nevertheless, it was seen what an emphatic word from Prussia was worth in Germany. The fine co-operation of Bernstorff and Rechberg in Hessian affairs had not been able in two months to bring about a decision of the committee of the Diet; now, when Prussia announced an ultimatum with her hand on her sword, the Austro-Prussian motion of March 8th for the re-establishment of the Constitution of 1831 became in a few days a Confederate decree, upon which the Hessian Ministry, glad of a good excuse, offered their resignation without delay.

A few weeks passed, after this, before the formation

of a new Cabinet. The wish of Prussia, to see a professed supporter of the old Constitution at its head, was not, indeed, fulfilled; but one of the former Ministers, a certain Herr von Dehn-Rotfelser, who was raised to that position, to the agreeable surprise of the rest of the world, and to the great vexation of the Elector, took his stand conscientiously and honestly on the basis of the ancient rights, proclaimed the re-establishment of the Constitution of 1831, and immediately sent out writs for the elections, in accordance with the electoral law of 1849.

But whatever happened, Prussia's victory over the Elector, the Diet, and the system consecrated at Olmütz, could no longer be questioned. What the last House of Deputies had so eagerly demanded of the Prussian Government had been accomplished to its fullest extent.

Still more in harmony were the Government and the representatives of the people in regard to a commercial and political question, which quickly acquired such an importance that it threatened to kindle a conflagration that would destroy the whole German Confederate Constitution.

For some time past the conviction had been present in the minds of those who had studied the Tariff-Union, that the existing system of tariff, arranged thirty years before, and in the course of time altered in particular points to adapt it to temporary needs or to inadequate compromises, no longer formed in itself a systematic whole, and did not any longer correspond to

the growth of German industries, that had taken place since its introduction. Now, in 1860, the great Anglo-French commercial treaty had been agreed upon, on the English side with an almost complete adoption of free-trade, and on the French with a very important lightening of the burdens on international commerce, and immediately afterwards the Emperor Napoleon approached the Prussian Government on the subject of a treaty of like tendency between France and the Tariff-Union. Prussia was very ready to enter into this, and in June, 1860, called upon the other members to give her full powers for such a negotiation in the name of the Union, reserving to them, of course, a free criticism of the result.

In January, 1861, a French commissioner appeared in Berlin, who at once brought forward some general principles for the projected treaty: reciprocal freedom from duty for goods passing through the country; reciprocal freedom from duty on exports; finally, for imports, a mutual agreement on the basis of considering which nation was to gain the most, and a suitable adjustment of the tariff on both sides. The first two of these three propositions could be acceded to at once. As to the third, Prussia gladly seized the occasion thus offered for a general revision of the tariff, such as had long been desired, and in April she laid her plans on the subject before the other members of the Tariff-Union.

Answers were received in May and June, 1861, which suggested a number of amendments in regard to

the duties upon particular articles, but which announced satisfaction in the main with the course the negotiation had hitherto taken. It was clearly shown that the strongly-protectionist party had everywhere lost ground, and that on the German side there was the prospect of an approval of an essential lightening of the burdens upon commerce.

But when the discussion began in Berlin with the French commissioner about the tariff in detail, the latter began to bargain, offered little and demanded much, so that in September Prussia announced to her fellow-members a complete standstill in the negotiations, and at the same time proposed to give up the treaty, unless France changed her tone, to establish the new tariff by internal legislation with the reduction of a long series of import duties, and with or without a commercial treaty, to allow those nations, which treated German products as favorably as those of any other country, to share the benefits of such an arrangement. Almost all the Governments in the Tariff-Union agreed to these suggestions of Prussia.

Up to this time the question had been treated solely from the point of view of national economy, with regard for the material prosperity of the German people. But now politics of a more general character suddenly interfered in the discussion, at first with a gentle touch, and then with a rough hand.

As we remember, the crisis in the affairs of the Tariff-Union in 1853 had ended in a commercial treaty

with Austria, in the preamble of which there was held up as the great aim of the future an Austro-German tariff-union, the practicability of which was to be discussed six years later; further than this, the two contracting parties had arranged a number of reductions of duties, very advantageous for their mutual commerce, but in which importations from other countries were to have no share; finally, they had mutually agreed, that, if one of them should concede to a third Power a reduction of duty on any of the articles the traffic in which was so favored, the other contracting party should receive notice of such concession three months before it was made. If the proposed tariff-union should amount to nothing at the end of six years, further facilitation of commerce at least could be arranged.

In the year 1853, therefore, both sides had expressed the wish for a great Austro-German tariff-union, although this was unfortunately not practicable at that time. But they had bound themselves to nothing except to consider the matter further after six years had elapsed, a *pactum de contrahendo* which left both parties entirely free so far as the outcome of the negotiations was concerned. In the year 1860, Austria made proposals in Berlin for the beginning of such negotiations; but Prussia declared that there was no need of taking that trouble, for any general tariff-union was as impracticable as before. This was the case even more certainly than in 1853, since, independent of the difficulty of uniting in one system of tariff such various consumers as Rhinelanders and Croats, Han-

overians and Hannaks, an ardent protectionist party was at that time dominant in Austria, while in the Tariff-Union a majority of the Governments and of the people were urgent for a reduction of import duties and free competition in the general market of the world.

In spite of all this, Count Rechberg felt himself obliged, on the news of the Franco-Prussian negotiations, to send a communication to Prussia in September, 1861, in which he pointed out the incompatibility of such a general tariff-union as had been contemplated in 1853 with a treaty which would give the French a claim to every consideration in tariff matters that had hitherto been shown to Austria. He even went so far as to ask whether Prussia meditated a complete tariff-union with France as well as with Austria.

There was as yet no talk of any right, or of any protest on Austria's part; but an approaching battle against the French treaty and the liberal revision of the tariff was clearly indicated. What would follow, it was easy to predict: an agitation in South Germany among the protectionists still numerous there, and an exertion of influence upon the Lesser States, who were in other questions Austria's constant allies. It was the old opposition of interests, showing itself now in a commercial field, as it had hitherto done in a political one: the point of struggle was the demand that Germany should refrain from a salutary improvement of its material conditions just so long as Austria thought she was not in a condition to take part in it.

Prussia determined to take a stand quickly and

decidedly. Bernstorff resumed the interrupted negotiations with France; it immediately became evident in this conjuncture that the Cabinet of Paris had not meant anything very bad by its haggling, after all; both sides strove for an understanding by mutual concessions, and on the 29th of March, 1862, the treaty was prepared and drawn up at Berlin. It was then, four days after, communicated to the other members of the Union and to the Court of Vienna.

The excitement aroused in all Germany by this sudden event was immense. Austria did not delay opening the diplomatic attack in full force. In a memorial of May 7th, Count Rechberg declared that the object of the agreement of 1853 had been to prepare the way for a great Austro-German tariff-union through the favoring of mutual commerce by lower import duties than were imposed on the merchandise of other nations; the new treaty with France destroyed the effect of all advantages accorded to Austria, by the concession to France of all the rights of a most favored nation, and by setting the German rates of duties in general so low that Austria could not adopt them for herself without exposing her own industries to destruction by the influx of a tide of foreign products. Austria, therefore, could not but see in the treaty an infringement and a setting aside of the compact of 1853.

The answer was not long delayed. It came, to the fresh surprise of the German public, from two quarters, not only from Prussia, but also from Prussia's bitterest political opponent, the Kingdom of Saxony, where, as

in 1852, regard for the welfare of the country and for the encouragement of its highly developed industries outweighed every other consideration. A note of the 27th from the Saxon Government, and one of the 28th from the Prussian, maintained, that, in the compact of 1853, neither of the contracting parties had renounced the liberty of making changes in its tariff; on the contrary, that compact contained provisions for what was to be done in such a contingency; the inutility for the future of the existing system of tariff was now manifest; a remodelling of the same in a liberal spirit had become a vital question for German industries, and if Austria complained that such a measure would injure her industries, the fact itself was a proof that the general tariff-union alluded to in 1853 would be out of the question for an indefinite time to come; at any rate, Germany could not possibly be expected to fetter her industries till Austria should overtake her.

After this, in June, both the Saxon Chambers unani- mously approved the treaty with France, and Herr von Beust immediately communicated Saxony's assent to the Prussian Cabinet. Baden, Oldenburg, and the Thuringian States, one after another, quickly followed this example.

Meanwhile, Austria had continued her campaign, and, indeed, on a twofold scene of operations. In the notes of the seven Governments, of the 2d of February, the states taking part therein had, as we have seen, announced further conferences in regard to Confederate reform, and had invited Prussia to join in them, but the

latter had refused to participate in so hopeless a work. The Court of Vienna now sent out invitations once more, and in this matter Saxony did not hold aloof.

The four Kingdoms, both Hesses, and Nassau, sent their representatives; and on the 7th of July, Count Rechberg opened the first conference in Vienna with the proposal to make an attempt, with the co-operation of an assembly of delegates from the German Chambers, to consider the introduction of a system of *German* civil and criminal law. This meant the carrying out of a part, though, to be sure, only a small part, of the great plan of reform of Herr von Beust, which had been hitherto so generally rejected; and it can be easily understood that to him this bait was irresistible, in spite of all commercial treaties. Saxony's cry, after this, was: "Prussia in matters of the Tariff-Union, Austria in all that concerns the Confederation!"

There was then sent, on the 10th of July, to all the Governments in the Tariff-Union, a proposal of Count Rechberg, that, on the basis of a continuation of the tariff now prevailing, entire Austria should be received into the Union, and that, when this had taken place, Austria and Prussia should in common be empowered to treat with France and England.

Prussia's attitude in regard to these proceedings of the Austrian Government was understood beforehand. In all that had to do with Confederate reform she simply persisted in her refusal to take any part in the conference and in her protest against every extension of the authority of the Confederate Diet that did not rest

upon a unanimous determination of all the German Governments. She refused her consent to Austria's admission into the Tariff-Union, in the first place because she considered herself already bound to France, but above all because the preliminary of such admission proposed by Austria herself, namely, the continuation of the existing system of tariff, was wholly incompatible with the vital interests of German industries.

Under these circumstances the Government at Berlin considered itself free from any considerations of friendship for Austria; and as in the beginning of July the Russian Government, then engaged in a bitter quarrel with the Pope, had declared its recognition of the young kingdom of Italy, Prussia did not hesitate to publish a similar acknowledgment. It was done the more readily, since in the preceding year the representatives of the people had expressed themselves very decidedly to the same effect. Austria did not restrain her anger at this. The Prussian Government, in announcing their action, had observed that that action was taken only in consideration of a solemn assurance that Italy would not attack Venetia. Rechberg retorted that such a promise was not worth the paper it was written on.

After the Prussian Parliament, with a minority of twelve in the Lower House and in the Upper House unanimously, had given its approval to the treaty with France, the Government, on the 2d of August, gave its final signature thereto. It then notified the members of the Tariff-Union; and to smooth the way for the South German States, it expressed its willingness to do what

had been often asked for by them, to give up the duty on the transport of wines. Austria's interference had, however, already had such an effect, that this concession on Prussia's part received little attention. The Lesser States, with the exception of Saxony, and also the two Hesses and Nassau, categorically refused to agree to the treaty with France, partly on the ground of protective views, partly from consideration for the tariff-union with Austria and the compact of 1853.

At the same time, Prussia received word, on the 7th of August, that the Vienna conference had accepted the Austrian proposition for the convening of an assembly of delegates, and on the 14th, that this had been brought forward as a motion in the Diet by the eight states taking part in the conference. Count Bernstorff thereupon renewed his protest against any majority-decision in that matter, and declared that the popular assemblies of Germany would also object to this project of delegates; the nation desired, he said, an executive authority with greater powers and a true national representation; neither of these was to be obtained by the course suggested.

On the 26th of August, Prussia's answer was sent to Bavaria and Würtemberg, to the effect that a definitive rejection of the commercial treaty must be taken as the expression of an intention not to continue the Tariff-Union with Prussia. The Prussian Lower House expressed its approval of this declaration on the 5th of September by a vote of 233 to 26.

Thus the two parties were confronting each other in

distinct positions, in spite of the active efforts of Baden on one side and Saxony on the other for a reconciliation. The commercial question was not absolutely dangerous, although it touched very many irritable feelings; for the existing compacts of the Tariff-Union did not expire till the end of 1865, and before that time the passions excited might be allayed by numerous discussions and communications, as did in fact in a great measure take place. Very different was it with the question of Confederate reform, which by reason of the latest proposition of the party favoring an entire Germany had brought an armed collision dangerously near. If this proposition should be accepted by a majority in Frankfort, there would only remain to Prussia the choice between humble submission and a declaration of withdrawal from the Confederation, the nature of which had been falsified by the majority. The latter course would certainly and speedily bring on war.

King William earnestly desired to be spared such an unfortunate alternative, and would gladly, like Count Rechberg, have put aside any thought of unity, if an honorable co-operation of the two Powers in the leadership of Germany could have been brought about. Yet if this could not be, he was determined not to yield a hair's-breadth to any decree contrary to the Constitution, but to put forth Prussia's whole might for Prussia's good right — and then *vogue la galère*.

In European affairs in general no symptom appeared, of a nature to induce Prussia to give way before

anything unfitting. Her relations with Russia were excellent: the Emperor Alexander continually assured the King of his warm friendship, and while Prince Gortschakoff held firmly to his wish for a Franco-Russian alliance, nothing would have pleased him better than the entrance of Prussia into so mighty a league. He repeatedly declared to the Prussian ambassador that the strengthening of Prussia's position in the German Confederation would be of general advantage, and that Austria's opposition to this lacked all reasonable ground. Moreover, Gortschakoff was not by any means certain of bringing about a French alliance, as the Emperor Alexander displayed a constantly-increasing mistrust of Napoleon's revolutionary tendencies. On the other hand, Russia's harmonious relations with Austria had been much shaken by the Russian recognition of Italy, and the complications existing in Servia were not adapted to increase the friendly feeling on either side. All this was as advantageous as possible for Prussia.

More than this, the Emperor Napoleon spoke very decidedly to Herr von Bismarck about affairs in Germany. He alluded with great respect to the admirable personal character of King William; he expressed sympathy in regard to the difficulties which the King had to encounter on internal questions in the Prussian Parliament; in his view everything depended upon the general aim of the policy of the Government: if the people agreed with this, disputes about particular points would be attended with little danger; it appeared to him that Prussia was led by the nature of things in

the direction of a reformation of the German Confederation, and if she made this the object of her efforts, all other difficulties would quickly disappear. France, he said, could welcome any transformation of Germany, with the exception of the so-called "empire of seventy millions," that is, the admission of entire Austria into the Confederation. That she would object to, because it would completely disturb the European balance of power. All this sounded sufficiently favorable to Prussia; how far such a view would be persisted in, in the event of things actually taking such a course, was indeed worth considering. But it was evident that, for the time, Prussia need not fear Napoleon's taking part with Austria.

Finally, all former misunderstandings with Italy were disposed of by the accomplishment of Prussia's recognition of that kingdom. There was, as yet, no talk of any closer relation between the two Courts; but the whole world was convinced that the instant there was a breach between Austria and Prussia, the Italian army would fall upon Venetia.

The Prussian Cabinet, therefore, saw itself surrounded all over the continent with the good-will and the sympathy of the non-German Powers. Its sole opponents were to be found on German, and unhappily, as we shall now see, on Prussian, soil.

It has already been explained from how many sources the gradually increasing dislike to King William's military reforms had grown up among the great majority of the Prussian people. First, there were

the desire for relief from the burden of the army and the taxes, romantic memories of the glory of the militia of 1813, and resentment against the preference shown to the nobility in many corps of officers. There was the general conviction, founded on the attitude of the Department of Foreign Affairs, that the existing Government, like that of Frederick William IV., would never venture on a bold war-policy, and would, therefore, never have use for so oppressive an armament. And lastly, there was an uncertainty in the parliamentary management of the reforms, a dragging along of ambiguous provisional arrangements from one session to another, which at length spread far and wide among the people the unfortunate delusion that a systematic deception of the Parliament was being attempted by the Ministers.

In such a state of things the Democratic party of 1848, which had gained renewed strength, found no difficulty in securing everywhere a ready hearing in their appeal for taking the offensive energetically against so unconstitutional a system; and when the Liberal Ministers had finally resigned and a Conservative Cabinet undertook the government, no doubt seemed possible any longer, and the one duty of the people appeared to be determined opposition to the threatened return to feudal absolutism.

The new Cabinet did its best, by a rough attempt at influencing the election agitation, to increase this tide of feeling and to drive a number of otherwise moderate men into the arms of the Radical Opposition. The

election of May 6th resulted in a total defeat of the Ministry. Not one of its adherents obtained a seat; the feudal and the Catholic interests, as well as the party of the former Ministry, now called the old-Liberal party, were reduced to small groups; the Progressists and the almost equally strong Left Centre, who differed from each other decidedly in their plans for the future, but were for the most part agreed in regard to the main question then pending, formed together an overwhelming majority in the House.

Disagreements did, indeed, arise at once concerning the manner and method of treating the matter in hand, as well as in regard to what concessions were to be made to the Government. In each of the two great parties, voices were raised in behalf of the former policy of the House; that is, in favor of granting the means of support for the new regiments, if the Government, by the proposal of a new law concerning the obligation to serve, would agree to the two years' term of service for the infantry of the line.

Many weeks passed before an understanding in this matter could be brought about among the members of the parties, and meanwhile the question was not touched upon either in the House or in the committee on the budget. But the decision finally reached was wholly in the spirit of the Radicals. And it then appeared, that, in both parties, only one member persisted in the conciliatory view, all the others being resolved upon a complete refusal of the costs of the army-reforms. The announcement by the Ministry, that they had

saved two millions more in the military budget and could now give up the additional taxes of 1859, made no longer any impression.

In the beginning of August, the budget-committee began the consideration of the cost of the army; in their very first sitting they ordered the transference of the cost of the military reforms into the category of extraordinary expenses, again repeated the more than doubtful assertion, that the reforms were contrary to the law of September 3d, 1814 (and consequently could not be recognized as legal), and finally, on August 22d, decided upon a proposition to strike out all additional expenses for the reforms, and to leave it to the Government to take what course they pleased for placing the condition of the army once more on a legitimate foundation.

Quite as thorough-going was the proposition made on the 29th of August by the committee on marine matters, that the plan brought forward by the Government for the creation of a fleet should be totally rejected, because the necessary means for such a purpose were lacking. Finally, the budget-committee, a few days later, came to a decision in regard to the military expenses for 1863, exactly the same as that they had adopted for the current year.

Upon this, on the 11th of September, the House entered into a seven days' discussion, such as the Parliament had not seen since its creation. All the oratorical powers of the Government and of the different parties were called into play; on either side every

man's pulse throbbed with the feeling that a crisis of far-reaching importance to Prussia's future was at hand. On one side was the belief that constitutional life in Prussia was being destroyed, and that the times of feudal degradation would return, if in this matter the will of the people's representatives did not have its free course. On the other was the conviction, that, with the victory of the Majority, constitutional monarchy would be changed into a parliamentary government, and the independence of the Crown would be lost. One side constantly urged energetic action in the affairs of Hesse and of Holstein as well as in the questions of the commercial treaty and of Confederate reform, and with the adoption of a liberal policy a reliance on the enthusiastic approval of the German nation as an effective weapon for controlling the self-importance of individual Princes. The other side could not restrain its anger at such a childish blindness, which believed that Denmark, Austria, and South Germany would not offer armed resistance to these plans, and which consequently sought to make Prussia defenceless by land and by sea.

We need not go into a further consideration of the great parliamentary battle, since no new arguments were brought forward in regard to the subject which had been for three years under discussion. A motion of Reichensperger, of the Catholic party, that the Government should be required to bring in a petition for indemnity for their action hitherto, did not receive a single vote. A mediatory proposal made by the depu-

ties Stavenhagen, Twesten, and Von Sybel (the author of this book), that the new regiments should be maintained and the two years' term of service introduced, was for an instant regarded by Herr von Roon as possibly practicable, but was rejected on the following day, after more careful technical examination, as being too dangerous to the organic consistency of the bodies of troops. The proposal had no better success in the House; it was rejected by a majority of three to one. The result of the whole thing was the refusal of supplies for the reforms, to the amount of nearly six million thalers. That is to say, it was an imperious summons to the Government to disband the one hundred and seventeen new battalions, and in one form or another to ask pardon for having supported those battalions for nine months of the current year, before their budget for that year had been sanctioned.

Thus the struggle was proclaimed in all its bitterness, a struggle not only about certain special demands, but about rights.

For hitherto the right of the Crown to determine the figures of the yearly draft, and, accordingly, to arrange the number and strength of the regiments supported by that draft, had been undisputed; but equally undisputed had been the right of the Lower House to refuse such new supplies as were not prescribed by law. The King said, with good reason, that an exaggerated application of this right of controlling the budget would make his position as commander-in-chief of the army an empty name. But the answer was quite as clear, that the

expenditure of a sum not granted by the House involved an infringement of the Constitution.

There were few men in Prussia at that time, who were not thoroughly convinced of the truth of this latter assertion; old-Liberals and Left Centre, Catholics and Progressists, whether they praised or blamed the recent vote, all agreed in recognizing the principle *no supplies without the approval of the Lower House*, as the foundation and corner-stone of a constitutional state. This had been the lesson learned from the example of England, ever since efforts had been made in Germany for constitutional rights. Often enough had there been complaints of its being a serious fault in the Prussian Constitution that it had not placed the consent to methods of raising revenue as completely in the hands of the Deputies; but the answer had always been, that the control over the spending of that revenue was quite sufficient to insure a deciding influence in the affairs of the State. And this influence was secured to the Lower House alone, to the representatives of the people chosen by the tax-payers. As in England, so in Prussia, the co-operation of the Upper House had been limited by the prohibition of alterations in details to the power of accepting or refusing the estimates as a whole in the form approved by the Deputies; that is to say, as in England, its part in the matter was merely honorary. For rejection would mean throwing the State wholly out of joint, and the conservative Upper House would certainly not place itself on a line with the revolutionaries that wished to refuse supplies.

Public opinion was unanimous in this matter. Even the Minister of Finance, Von der Heydt, had no other view: he had cried out to the deputies that an improper application of their right might bring about things which were by no means written in the Constitution, — which, in other words, might lead to a *coup d'état*; but he had for weeks kept declaring to the King, that, if the House came to the decision that seemed probable, he should no longer be able to co-operate in the support of the new organization of the army.

The King himself was, if I am rightly informed, in a state of great uncertainty, between his oath to the Constitution and his convictions in regard to military matters. After Von der Heydt's declarations, he turned to the man whom he had long known as the most skilful and the boldest of his statesmen, to whom in 1858, and again in the preceding May, he had wished to intrust a ministerial portfolio: he desired Bismarck, who was then at Biarritz enjoying a short season of repose, to come to Berlin. Bismarck yielded unwillingly; for never certainly did a born master of statecraft have so little ambition to attain to the highest place.

But his sense of duty forbade him to refuse the King. On the 19th of September, 1862, he came to Berlin; four days later followed the momentous decision of the House. On the 24th, Prince Hohenlohe and Herr von der Heydt resigned, and Bismarck, for the time without any portfolio, was made president of the Ministry.

No one suspected then that with that day a new era did in truth begin for Prussia and Germany, and so for Europe. For how many men knew anything of Bismarck's inward development since 1851? Every one saw in him the boldest champion of the feudal party, the most insolent opponent of every liberal effort, the orator who had wished to blot out all great cities from the face of the earth, who had met the Liberals with the threatening cry: "The proud steed of Borussia shall lay the parliamentary carpet-knights low in the dust."

The very name of the new Minister pushed the general excitement beyond all bounds. Now, it was felt, the last veil was torn away; this haughty young noble, who had formerly opposed the first steps towards the Constitution, who had raised his voice in Erfurt against German Unity, who had defended the shameful policy of Olmütz, and had then found in the Confederate Diet a retreat wholly suited to encourage his natural tendencies, — this absolutist and aristocrat had now taken lessons in the art of *coup d'états* from Napoleon, and hoped with volleys of grape to scatter the shreds of the Constitution to the winds. The only thing to be done, therefore, was to take a firm stand on the ground of the law, to cast away every unworthy weakness, and at no point to sacrifice with cowardly submission the smallest atom of constitutional right.

In spite of this declaration of war made by a thousand voices, Bismarck's first steps were an attempt at some arrangement. He invited the leaders of the old-Liberals to come to him, explained to them his inten-

tions, and offered them some of the places in his Cabinet. They were astonished to find him so entirely different from what the Liberal world loved to represent him. But the unfortunate demand of a two years' term of service, on which they laid so much stress, came between him and them. "Should we become Ministers without this concession," said Simson, "we should be officers without any soldiers."

Bismarck, thereupon, withdrew the estimates for 1863, which had already been curtailed by the budget-committee, in order that he might not increase the number of burning questions in dispute, and at the same time he promised a statement as soon as possible after the beginning of the new session in January, 1863, together with the new law so often asked for in regard to the obligation to serve. The answer was a resolution of the House, that the Government was bound to produce the budget for 1863 before the beginning of the year, and that all expenditure before the approval of the same was unconstitutional. Bismarck did not hesitate an instant; he was perfectly clear in his mind as to the course to be pursued in the contest that was now unavoidable.

On the 10th of October the Upper House considered the estimates as sent to them by the Lower. The committee of the former had proposed conferences with the other House, for the purpose of arriving at an understanding in regard to the military estimates; on the other hand, Count Arnim-Boytzenburg desired a rejection of the budget as determined in the Lower

House, and an acceptance of the original proposition of the Government. The latter part of this suggestion was unfortunate, because it was formally contrary to the established order of things; according to that order such an acceptance could merely be made in the form of a resolution of the House. In any case, the only part of the proposal of any importance was the negative one, the rejection of the estimates as agreed to in the other House. Bismarck interposed in the discussion with the statement that nothing was to be expected from conferences with the Lower House, and that therefore he could recommend only the proposition of Arnim. After a long debate the rejection of the budget as settled by the other House followed on the 11th of October, with a vote of 150 against 17, and the proposal of the Government was approved by 114 against 44.

Thus it stood. In Prussia, a Government without a budget had become for the time unavoidable. On the 12th of October, the Lower House declared the action of the Upper House, so far as it concerned the acceptance of the proposition of the Government, as unconstitutional and null. Immediately afterwards the President of the Ministry announced the close of the session, and in the afternoon he read the Address from the Throne, in which the Government declared it to be its duty to maintain the new arrangements in the army, which had been created on the basis of former grants of the Parliament; after the action of the Upper House, it felt itself obliged to carry on the

administration without the grant prescribed by the Constitution; it was conscious of the responsibility it assumed by so doing, but it was also mindful of its duty to the country, which forced it to make the outlay necessary for the general good, until the estimates were legally settled, with the expectation that this outlay would afterwards receive the approval of the Parliament.

Did Bismarck at that time suspect that he was with these words opening a four years' bitter struggle in Prussia between the highest powers of the State? It is certain, at any rate, that he was determined to carry it through to the end at every risk. At the same time, he had succeeded in convincing the King of the constitutionality of his action. The views which, during the years of contest, he was forced to defend in various applications, can be summed up in the following positions:

— In England, indeed, as a result of a long historical development, the Lower House alone has the power of deciding whether a certain revenue shall be collected, or a certain expenditure allowed. From this, a widespread doctrine has been formed, that this right in regard to the budget is a necessary element of all constitutional Government.

We, however, do not live in England, but in Prussia; and we have to arrange our methods in State affairs, not according to general theories, but according to positive Prussian laws.

Now, since the proclamation of the Prussian Consti-

tution, all receipts and expenses have been brought together in the estimates, and these estimates have been made the subject of an Act passed every year. The Act for this purpose, like every other Act, becomes valid by the common consent of the Crown and the two Houses. Before the consent of all three has been obtained, the decision of one House has only the value of an expression of opinion, not any binding force. Although the Upper House has less influence in the settlement of the estimates than the two other factors, yet its final vote upon the estimates as a whole is of equal importance with that of the Lower House. For, according to an express provision of the Constitution, the members of either House have alike the character of representatives of the entire people.

If this Act concerning the estimates is not passed, then, strictly speaking, the continuance of the Act of the preceding year cannot be assumed, for this ceases to be valid with the last day of the year to which it applies. And strictly speaking, neither the raising nor the spending of money in the new year is in this case allowable, whether special items in the estimates have been accepted in the Lower House or refused.

But as the State cannot exist a day without expenditures, while on the other hand it must exist, an imperative necessity requires that some one must provide for the necessary expenses; and it again results from the necessity of the circumstances, that this some one can be no one else than the royal Government, even leaving out of account that article of the Constitution

which gives the Government, in case of urgent necessity, a provisional right of taking its own measures.

Doubtless, all the different parts of the organization, and hence the Government also, are bound to do their utmost to end this state of things, and to bring about as soon as possible an agreement of the three different authorities with regard to the estimates. With this object in view, the Government will, therefore, during the interim unprovided for, respect as much as possible the former decisions of one House as well as of the other, without, however, allowing them a binding force which they do not have, nor in any particular case giving more consideration to them than to the needs of the country. —

If these arguments are examined and compared with the corresponding provisions of the Constitution, it will be impossible to assert that false interpretation of those provisions was intended, after the fashion of Herr von Westphalen under Frederick William IV. On the contrary, the actual letter of the law is followed, though in contradiction to what we all, at that time, considered the spirit. Evident it certainly is, that under such a system the power of the Lower House in financial matters, and hence in the Government as a whole, is much more limited than in England. A mischievous Government can make the right of the Lower House in regard to the budget an empty name. This is quite as true as the converse proposition, that the English Lower House, by means of its right, can make the Crown and the Upper House yield

to any of its demands. The guaranty against such extremes lies in a clear consciousness on either side, that reasonable co-operation is more profitable for every one than an obstinate effort for mastery.

It was the good fortune of Prussia and of Germany, that neither in the fiercest moments of the conflict, nor in the triumph of the most brilliant victories, was the consciousness of this principle wanting in the minds of the King and his great Ministers. Both were immovable in their determination to uphold at once the military reforms and the Constitution.

After the close of the session, Bismarck next gave his attention to the arrangement of the Cabinet. He himself undertook the direction of Foreign Affairs, while Count Bernstorff once more returned to London. For want of a better, he appointed to the Department of Finance the former Minister in the Manteuffel Cabinet, Carl von Bodenschwingh. The place of Herr von Jagow in the Department of the Interior was taken by Count Frederick Eulenburg, a man of solid ability, very fond of enjoying life, and perhaps less so of work, a statesman of keen insight, a fearless and ready debater, firmly grounded in monarchical principles, and as free from party fanaticism as Bismarck himself.

The German questions were the ones that first of all required the attention of the Cabinet. Bismarck took them in hand without hesitation. He announced his intention to persist in the renewal of the Tariff-Union only with those states that entered into the commercial treaty with France. In this, in spite of the abhorrence

felt by the Liberals for the Minister personally, the public opinion of Germany, determined by the importance of material interests, was entirely on the Prussian side. On the 18th of October, the German commercial convention in Munich, by a majority of 104 non-Austrian votes against 96 Austrian and 4 South German, expressed a desire that the French treaty should continue in force.

In Hesse-Cassel the Parliament was summoned for the 30th of October. It expressed its thanks to the Elector for the re-establishment of the Constitution, but learned that its sole work was to be the acceptance of a new electoral law, as the Elector did not consider the Act of 1849 to be valid. The legal competence of the Parliament was thus brought in question, this time by the Elector. The Parliament protested, and asked that the budget should be presented to them as was proper at that time. When a negative answer was returned, they requested that at least the Government would move the granting of an extraordinary credit.

Ötker, who on the 15th of October had consulted Bismarck with the profoundest secrecy, and who, contrary to Liberal prejudices, had recognized in him the eminent statesman, turned in these new difficulties once more to Berlin; and when in November the Elector suddenly dismissed his Ministers and prorogued the assembly of Estates for an indefinite time, Bismarck's decisive counter-move followed at once. Diplomatic relations between the two Courts had not been renewed since they had been broken off after Willisen's inter-

view with the Elector. Bismarck, therefore, sent a despatch by a sharp-shooter directly to Herr von Dehn, expressing regret for the Elector's action, declaring it impossible for Prussia again to allow political difficulties of such a dangerous nature to arise in a country placed between her provinces, and announcing the intention, if the Elector continued in his perverse courses, of beginning to take the necessary steps in conjunction with the agnates.

This hit the mark more sharply than Bernstorff's military equipments, six months before. The Elector hated nothing more than his agnates, and the feeling was cordially returned by them. It was also certain that Austria would make no objection, if a family-council should declare a Prince whose character was incapable of improvement, incapable of ruling. The Elector, therefore, yielded in impotent anger, summoned the Ministers and the Estates to new activity, and for a time Hesse-Cassel was restored to the number of normally-administered and constitutionally-governed states.

In a far more comprehensive fashion did the proposal from Vienna for the summoning of an assembly of delegates in connection with the Confederate Diet afford the Prussian Minister an occasion for indicating his position on the German question.

It is hardly likely that Bismarck had at that time formed any definite conclusion in regard to the nature and form of the German Constitution that was to be aimed at in the future. He was quite clear as to the fact that Prussia's actual position in the Confederation

was unendurable, and that it must be changed, if necessary, as he had once written to Schleinitz, *ferro et igni*. And not less certain was he that the decision of the question depended wholly upon the two important powers in Germany, upon the relation between Austria and Prussia.

A peaceful transformation of these relations Bismarck regarded as wholly improbable: "Any other war," he well said, "that Prussia might undertake before this Austrian one, would be a mere throwing away of powder." He was ready to enter into the conflict, but did not ignore its dangers, and would gladly have welcomed the chance of an understanding, if such a work of peace had appeared possible.

The various systems available in war or in peace lay all in perfect clearness before his incomparably keen and far-seeing eye: a control over Germany exercised by the two Great Powers in common; or a division of Germany between the two Powers along the line of the Main; or a complete exclusion of Austria from Germany, and in this case either a more federative or a more unified constitution of the new Confederation, a more limited or a more extended competence of the central authority under Prussia's headship, and of the national popular representation. With none of the prejudices of a *doctrinaire* in favor of any one of these systems, he weighed all their aspects and advantages, as well as their costs and dangers, and above all their practicability in view of the mutual jealousy of the two Powers, always ready to change his means or his end as

circumstances might dictate: only keeping this one rule fixed, that Prussia should always advance, should never yield, never lose the ground that had been gained, nor her own courage. Without doubt, the point of departure of all his action was not a Germany existing only in the fancy, but Prussia growing in tangible reality; yet it is not less certain that this man, who dealt only with facts, for that very reason found the true way to realize Germany's ideal.

As early as the 30th of September Bismarck had announced, at a sitting of the budget-committee, that the German problem could hardly be solved by parliamentary decrees, but only by blood and iron, and he had thus caused a great boiling over of public opinion and moral indignation on the part of peace-loving citizens. As has been said, he was very ready, so far as in him lay, to save them from the need of these violent means; and when, on the 4th of December, the report of the committee on the proposal from Vienna came up for consideration in the Diet, and Prussia was preparing to cast a protecting vote in the negative, Bismarck invited the Austrian Deputy, Count Karolyi, to a consultation in regard to the state of things on both sides and the probable outcome. This was the first of those interviews in which Bismarck henceforth so often astonished the diplomatic world by his unreserved frankness in the exposition of his views and purposes.

With the tone of indifference of an historian narrating events of the past, Bismarck gave the Count a sketch

of the future of Germany. "Our relations with Austria," he said, "must become better or worse; we sincerely desire the former of these alternatives, but Austria's behavior cannot but prepare us for the latter." He mentioned Austria's hostile efforts among the states neighboring to Prussia, which could not but destroy all sympathy for Austria in Berlin.¹

Karolyi thought that in the case of a French attack upon Austria, the two German Powers would remain in firm alliance. But Bismarck entreated him to oppose in Vienna with all his power such a dangerous mistake; the renewal of the intimate relations of the past, he said, would depend solely upon Austria's German policy; and if such a renewal were not brought about, an alliance of Prussia with one of Austria's opponents was as little out of the question, as in the contrary event a firm and loyal union of both Powers against their common enemies. It lay in Austria's choice, either to continue her present anti-Prussian policy with the support of a coalition of the Lesser States, or to seek an honorable alliance with Prussia. Prussia's most earnest wish was to bring about the latter; but this could only be accomplished by Austria's abandoning her unfriendly machinations at the German Courts.

Karolyi said that Austria could not possibly resign her traditional influence at the German Courts; that

¹ It is well known that Bismarck, after a report of this interview had been published, by an indiscretion on the Austrian side, in the *Nürnberg Correspondent*, produced on his side an account of the matter by a circular to the German embassies. The differences between the two statements on important points are without consequence.

would mean her being thrust out from Germany. "Well, then," cried Bismarck, "move your centre of gravity towards Buda-Pesth."¹

Bismarck then laid stress on the want of consideration shown by the friends of Austria in the Diet in adopting a hostile attitude towards Prussia, and in treating the Prussian protest against Austria's proposal as an incident not worth noticing. In a second interview on the 13th, he further declared to the Count, that Prussia would be forced to regard any exceeding of the proper powers of the Confederation by the vote of a mere majority as a breach of the Act of Confederation, and to withdraw her representative from the Diet without appointing any one in his place. The practical results of this would soon make themselves felt.

On the 19th of December, after Pfordten, as spokesman of the committee, had recommended to the Diet the acceptance of the proposal, it was agreed without further discussion to take the vote on the subject on the 22d of January, 1863.

Meanwhile the report of Bismarck's conversation with Karolyi was causing great excitement in Vienna. Count Rechberg assured the Prussian ambassador, Baron Werther, that he desired, as ardently as Bismarck, a close understanding between the two Powers, and that he wished for an active alliance between them against revolutionary tendencies. Werther reminded him of his efforts in opposition to the proposals of Prussia in the matters of the Confederate military

¹ Austrian Circular, 28th of January, 1863.

organization and the defence of the coast, also of the ever-increasing disturbance that had been aroused in the Tariff-Union, and of the stirring-up of trouble in Hanover and Cassel. But Rechberg explained that the military organization of the Confederation had great practical difficulties; that Austria's isolation in affairs of trade had long ago been seen by Metternich to be insupportable, nay, it might even be looked upon as one great cause of the March Revolution in Vienna. The dislike of Hanover and Hesse-Cassel for Prussia, he said, had its foundation, not in Austria's influence, but in the fear that both States had of a Prussian hegemony. If Austria should refuse to protect them any longer, they would not look to Prussia, but would make advances to France.

In accordance with these views, Count Rechberg on another occasion declared that the withdrawal of the project in regard to the delegates, in the actual advanced stage of the proceedings, was quite out of the question. At the same time he disputed the right of the Prussian Government to secede from the Confederation, and hoped that between then and the 22d of January that Government would yet become convinced that by such a step it would draw down upon itself the greatest evils.

With no small anxiety, therefore, did the whole of Germany look forward to the 22d. But for this time, at any rate, the crisis was avoided. The proposal was unsatisfactory, not only to those States that had in mind a genuine parliament in a more restricted union,

but also to the extreme opponents of such a union, the Governments that were disgusted at the idea of any popular representation at all in the Confederation. It was therefore rejected by nine votes against seven, while one member refrained from voting. Prussia, in giving her vote, had dwelt not only upon the question of the powers of the Confederation, but also upon the practical impossibility of carrying out the plan of an assembly of delegates, and had at the same time referred to the national demand for a parliament based upon the suffrages of the people.

By the German public this attitude was everywhere treated with scorn. What was to be said of the brazen forehead of a man that tyrannized over the parliament in his own country and then wished to assemble representatives from all Germany to make them undergo similar treatment? No one would put any faith in the threat of Prussia's withdrawal from the Confederation: such a bold and dangerous course seemed out of the question in a state so distracted by internal dissensions as was Prussia at that time.

But meanwhile other events had occurred that turned the attention of all Europe in feverish anxiety toward the East. The cry spread through every country: The Revolution is in Poland.

CHAPTER II.

COMPLICATIONS IN POLAND.

AMONG the world-embracing schemes of improvement of the Emperor Napoleon III., the liberation of Poland, as we have seen, occupied a conspicuous place beside the reconstruction of Italy. When the Crimean War began, all parties among the Polish fugitives bestirred themselves energetically in both Paris and London. General Mieroslawski, in mournful remembrance of 1849, hoped for a democratic republic with the exclusion of all Occidental conventions of civilization. More moderate spirits gathered about Prince Adam Czartoryski, the patriarch of the emigration, and candidate for the throne of the future Polish national kingdom. The country of Poland itself, however, remained in silent lethargy, completely fettered by the military dictatorship that had administered the government since 1831 and repressed the least movement of any kind.

Attention was at once aroused by a statement of Napoleon's that had made its way into the newspapers, to the effect that it would perhaps be for the interest of Germany to revive the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. But when the Prussian ambassador made inquiries as to the meaning of these words, Drouyn de Lhuys drew back: it was evident, he said, that much might be adduced in

favor of such a view; but, nevertheless, it was the affair of the German Powers, and the Emperor would not bring it forward. He added further, that if Prussia and Austria feared that the creation of such a Polish state would imply the loss of their Polish provinces, the possibility of a rich compensation on German soil lay near at hand. Prussia, on this, said no more; but Count Buol, the Austrian Minister, sent word to Paris that the Cabinet of Vienna held firmly to the principle proclaimed at the commencement of the war, that the protection of Turkey was aimed at, but no change in the possessions of any European Power. Thus the Poles gained nothing.

Immediately after the beginning of the negotiations for peace in 1856, Napoleon said to Prince Czartoryski: "For the first time I press your hand with a painful feeling; but there was nothing else to be done." Napoleon's wish, to demand political rights for Poland at the Peace-Congress in Paris, was decidedly rejected by Austria; and even England, though approving of the object, thought the proposal "inopportune" in the highest degree: the Congress, therefore, contented itself with a declaration on the part of Prince Orloff, that the Emperor Alexander II. would do what was possible to better the condition of Poland. Afterwards, when the Poles pressed Napoleon for support, he well said to them: "What would you have? You missed the favorable opportunity of the Crimean War; now have patience; trust in my sympathy, and look with hope to the future."

In fact, the existing state of things was not favorable to the Poles. As Napoleon, immediately after the Paris Congress, turned his thoughts to the expulsion of Austria from Italy, and for this object sought to establish closer relations with Russia, any talk of Poland's being assisted by French arms, that is, of the re-establishment of an independent Poland, was for him out of the question. At the same time he never entirely gave up his concern for that unfortunate people, and strove, if not with the sword for their freedom, yet with diplomatic means for an improvement of their condition.

When in 1857 he met Alexander II. in Stuttgardt, he said to the Russian Emperor that there was no other matter that involved any danger to the accord between them; the sole question that could occasion any disturbance of the good-feeling of the French people was the Polish one; if the Emperor Alexander desired to confirm harmonious relations, he must go as far in his concessions to Poland as was compatible with the interests of Russia. Alexander, who was the mildest and most humane ruler that ever occupied the Russian throne, replied, that it had long been his most heartfelt wish to take such measures; and thus the two Sovereigns parted with an excellent understanding between them.

Still more than the Czar, was the guiding spirit in foreign affairs, the Vice-Chancellor, Prince Gortschakoff, filled with a desire for close friendship with France. Even when a young man, as Russian *chargé d'affaires* in Stuttgardt, the quick, ambitious, and easily-excited

mind of the diplomat had seized the idea that Russia, if supported by a French alliance, would acquire the first place in Europe. And now, after the Crimean War, his soul lived and moved in the desire of making good as soon as possible the losses then suffered, of restoring Russia's influence in the Orient, and above all of blotting out the shameful clause in the Peace of Paris that forbade the presence of Russian ships in the Black Sea. If France should be well disposed to these ideas of his, as then appeared probable, and if the relaxation of the oppressive sabre-domination in Poland was to be the price of a French alliance, Gortschakoff was ready and eager to pay the same in its full extent.

The new Governor of Poland, Prince Michael Gortschakoff, readily came into accord with the wishes of the Minister. No restoration of the Constitution was as yet ventured upon; but in the administration, a wholly new tone of liberal confidence replaced the jealous severity of Paskiewitsch. Especially did the Government turn its attention to what was at that time the worst side of affairs in Poland, to the condition of the peasant population; and on this point the evil was very serious, and any improvement exceedingly difficult to carry out.

It is well known that in the old days of Poland, the peasant serf was bound to the soil, and unlimited sway was given to the arbitrary will of the lord. When, in the year 1807, Napoleon founded the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, serfage was at once abolished, personal freedom was proclaimed for the peasants, and the power of

changing their abode at will, and with the introduction of the *code Napoléon* the relation between proprietor and peasant was characterized as a free compact subject to withdrawal on either side at any time. For a more detailed settlement of the matter neither Napoleon nor the Saxon-Polish Government found time.

Under the constitutional rule of Alexander I., the influence of the nobles controlled the Chambers, and the nobles did not find themselves at leisure to call into existence organic laws in regard to peasant-rights, at the expense of their own purses. Meanwhile, as a matter of fact, the freedom of the peasants had taken the following shape. So long as the peasant had remained bound to the estate to which he belonged, the lord had, indeed, been able to maltreat him, but not to rob him of his wretched possessions: now, when mutual withdrawal from the compact was the right of either side, the proprietor, in innumerable cases, found it to his advantage to get rid of the peasant, and either to incorporate the latter's farm into his own estate proper, or to rent it to some foreign and prosperous peasant, very often a German, for a profitable return.

This treatment of the peasantry went so far, that by the middle of the century half the rural population had lost all their property, and were floating aimlessly with their wives and children about the country, seeking their daily bread in every sort of service. In the case of the other half, the power of dismissal which belonged to the proprietors was used for the purpose of imposing upon their vassals, in addition to the rent, the continu-

ance of a great number of feudal services: ordinary and extraordinary labor upon the lord's fields, contributions to the kitchen of the manor-house, service as watchman, house-service, socage-service, etc. An official account of the various kinds of service rendered by the peasantry throughout the kingdom numbered them at one hundred and twenty-one.

But this was not enough. Beside these pecuniary privileges, there was a widely-extended power of superintending control. A proprietor that possessed ten or more peasant farms was by hereditary right the superintendent of such a group, or could himself appoint a bailiff with the power of dismissing him at his pleasure. The bailiff represented the police of his district; he could impose petty punishments, either pecuniary or corporal, at his discretion; he administered justice, and was the sole organ of the central government within that district. These districts, which occupied the greater part of the arable land in the kingdom, were reckoned at something over five thousand, with about sixteen thousand officials connected with them. These latter were all taken from the petty nobles, the *schlachta*; they were, for the most part, penniless and ignorant, harsh and prejudiced against the peasantry, and blindly subservient to the proprietors, at the same time ardent patriots and filled with hatred for Russians, Germans, and Jews. These feelings were shared with them to their full extent by the only other influential class in the country, the Catholic clergy, who, indeed, under the Russian Government still retained their great reve-

nues, but on whose peculiar privileges and thirst for power strict limits had been imposed.

This wretched state of things had long attracted attention in St. Petersburg, and even in the time of the Emperor Nicholas various steps had been taken towards improving the condition of things ; but that ruler had not ventured upon thorough measures, because he had scruples about freeing the Russian peasants, and yet could not refuse to them what he conceded to the peasants in Poland. But when his successor decided on the abolition of serfage in Russia, he thought at once of his unhappy Polish subjects also. One of his first measures was the granting of permission to form a great agricultural association for the sake of materially advancing the cultivation of the soil. This association was to have a chosen central committee in Warsaw, and branch associations in all the provinces of the kingdom, — an organization that would have been simply impossible and inconceivable under Paskiewitsch. After this, in the year 1856, a ukase declared it to be the Emperor's will, that the feudal labors and services should be converted into a fixed money-payment to be settled in the beginning by the free agreement of the parties concerned, but afterwards by standards soon to be legally fixed for such agreements, for the consideration and preparation of which special authorities were appointed.

All this was well and good, and held out to the country the prospect of material improvement. Nevertheless, it was quite comprehensible, that all hearts did not at once warm to the new system with submissive

gratitude. The burden had pressed too heavily, the hatred had eaten in too far. Among the cultivated classes national ideas on the one side and the stream of democratic tendencies on the other had sufficed to keep alive hatred of Russia and of the Czar's omnipotence. It was an old saying, that under a mild ruler Poland *could* rise, and under a harsh one she *must*. In every benefit emanating from St. Petersburg there seemed to be nothing but a small instalment toward the payment of past debts, in every privilege of freedom granted by the Czar but a weapon for continuing the struggle against the accursed foreign yoke.

In regard to the means to be employed for this purpose, opinions did, indeed, differ; and from the first day a moderate and a radical party, afterwards called the Whites and the Reds, appeared in opposition to one another. The nucleus of the former party consisted of the great landed proprietors, who now possessed, in the Agricultural Association, which was under their guidance, an organization embracing the whole kingdom. Their view of the matter was, that the Emperor's goodwill should be used for obtaining once more for the kingdom an autonomous administration independent of Russia, that then the restoration of the Liberal Constitution of 1815 and of a Polish army should be brought about, and so the means of arriving at complete independence prepared. They looked upon the questions concerning the peasants, which had been raised by the Emperor, with very divided feelings. They saw in them, first of all, the desire of the Government to

secure the dependence of the peasants upon itself, and hence the probability of serious losses of property for the nobles; they therefore determined to take the thing into their own hands, to make a bargain as cheaply as possible, and to gain for themselves the gratitude of the peasants for the benefits they were to receive.

The Red party bestowed on this slow and complicated method of procedure nothing but silent contempt. In their view, the holy cause of democratic Revolution disowned all half-measures; the sole object to be pursued was to strike down every enemy as quickly as possible, and the Polish nobility themselves would have to choose whether they would be enemies or friends. To these enthusiasts, therefore, it was not a question of constitutional experiments, but of war and arms. This concise programme was accepted by the great body of the petty nobles, so far as they had not entered the service of the great lords, by the majority of the merchants and artisans in the towns, by a great part of the parish clergy and of those in monastic institutions, and by almost all the younger men of the educated classes. For a time, however, both these parties took pains to avoid an open breach; for the Whites were anxious to remain popular in the towns, and the Reds needed for their preparations the influence and the wealth of the landed proprietors.

A consideration of great importance in the pursuit of all these different interests was the internal condition of the Russian Empire itself at that time. Even there

the democratic tendencies of the age had found entrance and adherents, by reason of the failure of the absolutist system in the Crimean War. Many of the nobles thought that they ought to receive compensation for what they had lost by the abolition of serfage and by the concession of constitutional and parliamentary privileges; and the Vice-Chancellor, who credited himself with brilliant oratorical powers, was not indisposed to give his support to such demands. Still more adherents, however, both in the country and in the army, joined the social-democratic party, which received its impetus from the well-known exiles, Herzen and Bakunin, and which was in intimate connection with those of like disposition in Warsaw. Bakunin at this time declared publicly that three hundred Russian officers in the standing army of the Empire had been gained over to the cause of revolt.

Now in 1859, as we know, it happened that the Emperor Alexander, on account of the revolutionary tempest in Italy, became decidedly cooler in his feelings toward France; and also in October, 1860, at the interview in Warsaw, a moderately amicable relation with the Emperor of Austria was once more established. Napoleon, irritated by this and by the failure of his plans for a congress, then decided to show the grim side of his disposition to his faithless friend; and he announced, in violent newspaper articles written by his cousin Jerome, that France would come to an understanding with Russia, just so far as the latter agreed to look favorably upon Poland's efforts towards progress.

In Poland this action of the French Government had all the more effect, since at the same time rumors were abroad of Italian preparations against Venetia. If this be the case, thought the Poles, then Hungary and Galicia will rise in full revolt, and the hour of liberation for the Polish people, and for the Russian people also, is near at hand. The first nucleus of a revolutionary organization was therefore formed at Warsaw: twelve young men, hitherto wholly insignificant and unknown in the country, organized themselves as a secret committee, which, according to revolutionary custom, gave itself, in the name of the Polish people, full powers for guiding the national movement. Its orders appeared without signature, accredited only by the seal of the Committee; but in the excited state of public feeling its action awoke a ready echo, and it found numerous adherents in all parts of the country.

One of the chiefs of the insurrection of 1831, Mochnacki, had once closed an historical account of that rebellion with the words: "Poland will become free when her patriotism can rise into discipline and obedience." The leaders in 1860 had profited by this saying, and unconditional obedience to the orders of the Committee became the first and last command for every member of the league. Quite as definite was the declaration of the aim of the conspiracy: the restoration of Poland, at least to the boundaries of 1815, and, if it might in any way be possible, to those of the glorious times of the Jagiellos, that is, from the Oder to the Carpathians and the Dnieper. For an actual contest in arms, those who

espoused these plans were not yet prepared ; but they determined to begin at once, by a series of unarmed demonstrations, to arouse the minds of the people, to provoke the oppressor to more hateful deeds of violence, and to show the world that Poland was still alive.

In February, 1861, the general assembly of the Agricultural Association held its meeting in Warsaw and discussed the great question of the condition of the peasants. It was generally agreed that something must be done to assert the Association's leadership in the matter ; but as to what that something should be, opinions dispersed to all points of the compass. A turbulent minority, which wished to force the nobility at once into the path of revolution, demanded the transference of the ownership of the small farms to the peasants in consideration of a moderate payment ; in general these more violent spirits urged an active interference of the Association in the political agitation, and although the Managing Committee decidedly rejected this course, it met with more and more sympathy in the assembly.

At this juncture, there appeared in Warsaw, for the purpose of giving weight to an exactly opposite tendency, the only member of the great land-holding class that had hitherto held aloof from the Association, the Marquis Wielopolski. He was a dignified personage, of strong features and concise speech, with the manner of one accustomed to command, an admirable manager of his vast estates, a proud aristocrat of strong

passions and of an iron will. Up to this time, he had lived for fifty years in the cultivation of these characteristics. In 1846, at the time of the Galician butcheries, he had attracted great attention by an energetic despatch to Metternich; then he had sunk back once more into his solitary existence in the country and into his scholarly pursuits of every sort.

His was an imperious nature, imperious towards others and towards itself, thirsting insatiably after thorough knowledge, inflexible in its logical reasoning, pitiless against every illusion however fair; in all these respects it contrasted with the excitable temperament of the greater part of his countrymen, sensitive as it was to every emotion, and hence he was a stranger among his fellows, misunderstood and not beloved. In politics, he was a man of order, of system, of reform based upon experience; the noisy harangues of enthusiastic half-knowledge disgusted him; and he was the born opponent of all lawless insurrection. He had as high a conception of the rights of the government as of its duties; it should rule with a strong hand, but at the same time surrender itself with complete devotion to labor for the common good.

With such sentiments, he had studied the condition of his country, and step by step had turned his back upon the patriotic dreams of his countrymen. "Our past," he said, "lies in ashes; we must build with the materials of the present." With him, this meant a renunciation of national independence, which with good reason he regarded as for the time unattainable, a frank

acknowledgment of the supremacy of the Russian Imperial House, and on this basis the hope for a return to the liberal state of things of 1815, and so, for a reconciliation between the two nations hitherto enemies to the death.

The ultimate object of this Slavonic brotherly league was, however, suggested to him by his bitter and extinguishable hatred of the Germans. Even in the preceding year of 1860 he had put himself in communication with the Vice-Chancellor, and in a long memorial had demonstrated to him the necessity of the liberation of Poland as a bulwark for Russia, since only in this way could the mortal enemy of the Slavic name, the German, be hindered in his constant encroachment upon Slavic territory and be once more deprived of his unlawful possessions on Slavic soil. Gortschakoff had made no objections to this line of argument.

The Marquis now laid before the Managing Committee an address to the Emperor drawn up in accordance with his own principles, containing, that is, an open declaration of firm loyalty, and on the strength of this, first of all a request for the restoration of the Constitution, and secondly, a proposal for the settlement of the questions concerning the peasants, for the reform of the higher education, especially in the reopening of the University of Warsaw, and for the bestowal of equal rights as citizens upon the Jews, a step which the Marquis regarded as being the most important one, in the existing state of things, towards

the strengthening of the citizen class in Poland, which had been hitherto lamentably insignificant.

The members of the Committee hesitated. The substance of what Wielopolski proposed agreed exactly with their own wishes. But it went against the grain to swear fealty and obedience to the alien Czar, to beg from his favor what they held to be their own right, to disown the revolution of 1831, in one word, to sign a petition that involved the recognition of the existing state of things. The Committee took counsel with their friends; and the state of feeling became more and more unfavorable to the position held by the Marquis.

But the Radicals had little confidence in this mere feeling; they decided to stifle the attempt to conciliate in blood. On the 25th of February, 1831, the Poles had once fought the Russians, near Grochow; they had been defeated, but they had struggled bravely. The Secret Committee now ordered a great religious celebration of the anniversary of that day. It began with a solemn service in all the churches, to which was added a colossal procession with all priestly pomp, with Polish colors, with standards and with torches. An immense concourse of people followed. Soon there was a block in the streets, interruption of traffic, collision with the police. Finally, armed authority was able to disband the people by the slow advance of horsemen.

On the 27th the gathering was renewed; and when the Cossacks behaved with brutality, and maltreated even the priests who were present, the crowd turned threat-

eningly toward the castle of the Governor. The old general, hesitating and uncertain, assailed by many different counsels, finally gave the order to use arms. Five men were shot dead on the spot; the people then dispersed with a fierce clamor.

Thus blood had been shed, and a state of war was once more proclaimed between Poles and Russians. The Secret National Committee had stood the first trial of its power. "Only a few bold men took an active part," said one of the Committee's newspapers, "but the people of Warsaw rallied about them and screened them from the sight of the police." The Committee now issued orders almost daily, printed handbills, which were sometimes pasted on the walls and sometimes carried by boys to the different houses. A general mourning throughout the country was ordered, black garments for the women and a new national dress for the men. On certain days, at the command of the unknown chiefs, all the promenades, theatres, and *cafés* were left empty. Above all, by the enthusiastic participation of the clergy, the church was drawn into the patriotic agitation. Not a week passed without a solemn high-mass in one of the Warsaw churches celebrated in memory of some anniversary honorable to Poland, and these were always concluded by the singing of a patriotic hymn. This fashion was set first in Warsaw, and soon spread through all parts of the country.

The Agricultural Association was swept more and more into the stream. Since the shots of the 27th of

February, nothing more had been heard of Wielopolski's petition. In its stead, an address was sent to the Emperor demanding in pathetic language the recognition of the national and historical rights of Poland. The general assembly of the Association closed its deliberations with a series of resolutions, in which it was declared the duty of the landed proprietors to convert the domestic service and the socage service of the peasants into a money-equivalent, and then to give them the title to their property after sixteen such payments.

After this the Managing Committee of the Association remained passive; but the majority of the branch associations, and therefore of the landed proprietors, obeyed the directions of the Secret National Committee. Since, as we have seen, the officials appointed by the proprietors were the sole organs of the Government throughout the country, the civil administration in the provinces was, by these proceedings, practically broken up or put in the hands of the revolutionary leaders. In Warsaw, upon receiving a notice from the National Committee, a large number of the Polish officials resigned their offices in a body. The remainder were affected by the contagion that was spreading through both upper and lower classes. Before long, the Government could not escape the conviction that in all its different offices, in the postal service and in that of the railroads, above all in the ranks of the police, the patriotic conspiracy had its sympathizers and its agents.

While, therefore, the effectiveness of the Government service was diminished in all directions, the secret administration soon found itself in a position to constrain the lukewarm or the disaffected among their countrymen to obey their commands. Every Polish woman that showed herself in a bright-colored garment was publicly insulted in the streets, the shops of recalcitrant merchants were plundered, and Poles of distinctly Russian sympathies were most brutally maltreated in broad daylight. In these cases, the police regularly appeared on the scene only after the act had been completed and the actors had escaped.

So within a few weeks the entire authority of the legal administration of the State passed into the hands of twelve unknown young men, whose efforts were supported by the enthusiasm of the youth, the women, and the clergy, and the neglect of whose commands was more dangerous than refusal to obey the orders of the Emperor of Russia. In the beginning, every appearance of an armed insurrection was avoided. On the contrary, it was proclaimed to all Europe: "We beg and implore; and the Russians murder us." But the object in view was very clearly expressed by General Mieroslawski on the 3d of March, 1861, in a message to the Secret Committee.

First of all, he said, the resolution of the Agricultural Association in regard to the establishment of the peasantry upon an independent footing must be promulgated and carried into effect, both in the kingdom itself and among the Lithuanians and Ruthenians;

while, in the mean time, the whole population is to be prepared for the struggle and to receive a military organization. Then the peasants, gained over by the gift of their independence, will place themselves under the leadership of the nobility, and at a given moment fall upon whatever Russian garrison is the nearest. Above all things, the people must not allow the Russian Government to make any conscription for the army. At the same time the Committee at Warsaw must arouse the attention and the interest of Europe by newspaper articles in all languages, and must by vigorous, and, if necessary, fictitious reports, portray the strength of the revolt and the internal disintegration of Russia. The Governments of France and England are to be overwhelmed and wearied with complaints which must ostensibly have been presented at St. Petersburg and invariably put aside with contemptuous neglect. Some time will be required for all this to take effect; but it will finally bring about a quarrel between the Western Powers and Russia. An insurrection in Poland would be a signal to the Italians and the Hungarians to rise: on this point, it was said, there was a complete understanding between Mieroslawski, Garibaldi, and Klapka.

We shall see with what exactness and completeness this programme was carried out by the Warsaw National Committee.

While these mines were being laid in Poland, what was the state of things on the Russian side?

The scenes of the 27th of February had put the

aged Governor, General Gortschakoff, quite beside himself. In the first moment of excitement, he proposed to the Government the proclamation of a state of siege; but on such insufficient grounds the Vice-Chancellor would not hear of such a thing. Upon this, the old man went quite to the other extreme, and favored the proposition of a volunteer committee of citizens who should become responsible for order, if the police and the military were withdrawn. The Secretary of the State Council, Enoch, then represented strongly to the Governor, that if he wished to manage the uprising by a policy of conciliation, he must enter as soon as possible upon organic reforms; and when the Governor eagerly declared his readiness to do this, Enoch proposed, as the best representative of such a policy, the Marquis Wielopolski. The Governor agreed; he rejected, indeed, the Marquis's first proposition, the restoration of the Constitution of 1815, but forwarded to St. Petersburg, with an urgent recommendation for their acceptance, the further proposals of Wielopolski: that is to say, those for the establishment of elective district-councils and local authorities, as well as of a council of state re-enforced by notables to pronounce an opinion upon legislative propositions, for the extension of equal rights to the Jews, for the abolition of socage service, the reform of the system of education, and the re-establishment of the University of Warsaw.

In St. Petersburg also, these proposals were well received. The Emperor, in the consciousness of his own humane inclinations, would not yet believe the

Poles irreconcilable. The Vice-Chancellor saw in the approval of the proposals a great step towards the realization of his own pet idea, the renewal of an intimate connection with France. When the Prussian Ambassador, Herr von Bismarck, expressed to him some doubts — not as to the extent of the concessions, but as to the opportuneness of the time, since it might seem as if they had been produced by fright at the outbreak of the 27th of February — Gortschakoff declared with some vexation that Russia could not take advice in these internal questions even from her best friends ; it was the duty of every Government to get rid of such abuses as had hitherto existed in the administration of Poland ; Russia was tired of being always looked upon in Europe as the wild man, the barbaric despot, whenever her government was compared with that exercised by Prussia and Austria in their Polish territories.

In short, Wielopolski's proposals went through some further sifting ; but in a ukase of the 26th of March, the Governor received by telegraph the imperial approval of the establishment of a council of state, of the formation of elective councils in the various local divisions of the country, and of the creation of a commission¹ to preside over the concerns of the church and of education. On the 27th the Marquis entered upon his new office. He was determined to restore order and obedience, and by that very course to lay the firm foundation for a systematic and liberal self-govern-

¹ At that time the various departments of government in the kingdom bore the modest title of "commissions."

ment in Poland under the supremacy of the Emperor, but independent of Russian officials.

He was destined to a bitter experience in the difficulties of the task he had set before himself.

The Marquis found the Agricultural Association and the country priests engaged so actively in a national agitation that, though himself a Roman Catholic, he at once, on the 2d of April, forbade the clergy to interfere in political matters, and on the 5th dissolved the Association on the ground of its having gone beyond its powers. While this was sufficient to exasperate the bishops and the great nobles, the Reds had, from the very beginning, regarded Wielopolski as the most dangerous enemy of their cause. To prepare the way for their revolution they required an increasing feeling of indignation among the people, and for this purpose in the ruling circles, not intelligent reform, but a harsher misgovernment. They therefore resolved to meet the ukase of March 26th with an emphatic repetition of the tumult of the 27th of February, in order that the new authorities at their very entrance into office might receive in the sight of the people the character of bloodthirsty oppressors. The course that things took on the 8th of April was exactly the same as in February: a religious solemnity, patriotic songs, a threatening crowd gathered before the palace of the Governor. A repeated command to disperse was followed by the throwing of stones at the troops, till finally a sharp volley was fired and ten men were killed on the spot.

By this the ukase of March 26th and Wielopolski's system received their interpretation in the public opinion of Poland. Once more the old state of things — "we entreat, they murder" — was renewed, and Wielopolski was regarded as the betrayer of his country, who wished to tame her with caressing words to the yoke of the Russian tyrant. Yet in spite of all this, the Minister worked unceasingly at his reforms, and was supported, so far as possible, by the Governor, whose entire confidence he had gained. But it was the ill-fortune of the Marquis that, at the end of May, Prince Michael suddenly fell sick, and died on the 30th after a few days of suffering. Wielopolski's whole position was thus endangered.

There was great difficulty in St. Petersburg about finding a suitable successor to the Prince, and it cannot be denied that the various choices that were made one after another resulted very unfortunately. The first of them, the former Minister of War, General Suchosanett, was a soldier of seventy years, who had no other conception of government than with his fifty thousand Russian soldiers to keep those incorrigible Polacks at any rate in order, to lock up or transport every suspicious character, and to regard the civil authorities as simply non-existent.

In August he was succeeded by Count Lambert, a half-disabled general of French descent and education, wholly uninformed as to Polish affairs. He had been charged to proclaim a state of siege, if necessary for the preservation of peace and order; but, for his own

part, he was filled with the idea of becoming popular not only in Poland, but also in France, and strove, as a good Catholic, to win the approval of the clergy ; so that very soon a weak and purposeless anarchy took the place of the rule of the sword.

The seed sown by the National Committee was now growing more and more vigorously with the increasing irritation of the people and the miserable inefficiency of the Government. In the postal service and on the railroads nearly half of the officials were agents of the Committee, and the case was not very different in the ranks of the police and of the gendarmes. The contributions levied by the Committee were exactly paid, implicit obedience was yielded to its orders, and the recalcitrant or negligent were reached by the daggers of the mighty secret tribunal. The Committee extended its activity to Lithuania and Volhynia ; in Kovno and Wilna there were tumults as bloody as those in Warsaw.

On the 10th of October, the Committee arranged a great popular assembly at Horodlo on the Bug, in commemoration of the union of the Poles and Ruthenians there effected in the year 1413, and also as a protest in the sight of Europe against the division of Poland. In the appeal, therefore, an invitation was extended to deputations from all the countries formerly belonging to Poland — from Posen, West-Prussia, and Pomerania, from Cracow, from Galicia, and from Kiev — to be present at Horodlo. The Russian General in command at Horodlo looked on with his troops in indiffer-

ence, while the religious service forbidden by Lambert was celebrated with all ecclesiastical pomp in the open fields, by the Bishop of Lublin with a hundred priests, and before four thousand spectators.

When this was reported in St. Petersburg, it filled the cup of imperial wrath to overflowing, and on the 14th of October there appeared in Warsaw an order from the supreme authority containing the proclamation of a state of siege. The Committee, in response to this, ordered a national celebration in honor of Kosciusko to be held in all the churches on the evening of the 15th. The celebration took place before an immense throng of people. At the conclusion of the service revolutionary songs were sung in two of the churches; whereupon the doors were occupied by the military, and when the crowd refused to leave the building, a detachment of soldiers was sent in about midnight, who with a violent tumult drove out the women and children, but carried off the men, seventeen hundred in number, to prison.

On the 16th, at a hint from the Committee, a majority of the chapter of the Cathedral obliged the Archbishop, Bialobrzski, to order the closing, not only of the two churches desecrated by the brawl, but of all the churches of Warsaw, in order to save them, as he said, from possible desecration in the future. This was an act that went beyond all canonical rules, in its open hostility to the Government; and the latter answered it by the deposition and arrest of the holder of the see, a proceeding that gave the patriots clear proof that the

Government was involved in a like damnation with Nero and Diocletian. The hand of God vindicated its own power: Count Lambert was made incapable of managing affairs by a hemorrhage, and once more the rough and harsh Suchosanett was called provisionally to undertake the government of Poland.

In these hours of violence, Wielopolski had seen his most cherished schemes fade away without effect. He was openly on bad terms with both Suchosanett and Lambert; and when the former was reinstated, the Marquis besought the Emperor to allow him to resign. Alexander, who prized the ability and information of the Marquis, had been by various circumstances somewhat shaken in his confidence in the trustworthiness of the man; he therefore sent for him to St. Petersburg, in order to judge for himself.

There the Marquis succeeded in winning greater consideration and stronger influence every day; and especially Prince Gortschakoff continued to show himself the zealous supporter of a conciliatory policy, such as was recommended by Wielopolski. The Marquis was soon able to unfold to the Emperor his great plan in all its details: it consisted of a separation of the military and civil powers, the former to remain in the hands of a Russian General with Russian troops, the latter to be confided to a Minister, who should be independent of Russian authorities, should have at his side a council of state for the promulgation of laws, and should have under him Polish officials, as well as local authorities chosen by the people; with the organization

of this system the state of siege would come to an end, and also the Catholic Church would receive important concessions ; finally, at the head of the whole should be placed a member of the imperial family, as representative of the Crown.

In connection with this Gortschakoff said : “ The present state of things cannot continue ; you can lean on bayonets, but you cannot sit on them ; something must be done.” The oldest of the Emperor’s brothers, the Grand Duke Constantine, expressed his emphatic approval of Wielopolski’s scheme. The Emperor hesitated for a long time, in doubt whether the step, taken at that late hour, would have the desired conciliatory effect upon the Poles ; but finally he decided not to deny himself the satisfaction of making one more attempt. In the last days of May, 1862, therefore, the world, which had hitherto heard of nothing but Russian acts of violence in Poland, was astonished by the proclamation of the new system. The Grand Duke Constantine was appointed Governor, and Wielopolski chief of the civil administration ; the command of the army was retained by General Lüders, who had already held it for some months.

Wielopolski had reckoned this time upon receiving for once some thanks from his countrymen. Instead of the Russian military dictatorship, he brought them a civil administration carried on by their own people and independent of Russia, together with reforms in every sphere of social life. But the Emperor had judged the Polish parties only too correctly. The nobility of the

White faction refused every office under Wielopolski, because his power did not extend to the entire Poland of 1771. The Reds, on the other hand, to whom nothing seemed more dreadful and more full of danger than a reconciliation between the Czar and the Poles, and who, as we have seen, had, on the 8th of April, responded to the first step of the Marquis in that direction with bloodshed, decided that very different blood should smoke before him now, when he was returning as the guiding spirit of the government. On the 27th of June a pistol-shot was fired at short range at General Lüders in the Saxon Garden, by which his jaws were broken. Those who had done the deed could not be discovered.

Soon after this, the news spread through the country that a negotiation between Russia and the Vatican, set on foot to induce the Pope to address peaceful admonitions to the Polish clergy, had grown to an open breach. The Pope called upon the Polish bishops to take under their protection the priests who had been arrested for unlawful behavior. Upon this, Gortschakoff said: "If the Pope fosters revolution in Poland, he cannot expect Russia to support him against revolution in Italy," and he acknowledged openly the Italian sovereignty of Victor Emmanuel.

By these proceedings, the fanaticism of the Poles was increased to the highest point, and it showed itself in an unexampled series of deeds of violence. A pistol was fired at the Grand Duke two days after his arrival; the ball reached its mark, but was arrested in the thick

epaulets of the general's uniform. In the month of August four attempts at assassination were made one after another against Wielopolski, with firearms, with steel, with poisoned letters, and with poisoned food. It is a wonder that they all failed. At the same time thirty Russian officers of the garrison of Warsaw were convicted of participation in the conspiracy; all the pulpits once more resounded with an appeal for the sacrifice of property and life for the good of the Fatherland; and the arms necessary to supplement this appeal were hidden in the cellars of the monasteries. On the 1st of September the National Committee issued a proclamation, in which it constituted itself the National Government, announced, as the aim of the revolt, the liberation of all Poland as far as the boundaries of 1771, promised to the peasants the ownership of their farms, and summoned all the Slavonic peoples to take part in the struggle for freedom.

The feelings aroused in the Grand Duke and the Minister by such proceedings can easily be imagined. They had come, in their own view, to overwhelm the Polish nation with benefits, and they found themselves confronted with a storm of popular hatred that was guided by fanatics who recognized no restraint, who hesitated at no crime, who declared themselves and their followers as free as air, and who hurled the threat of armed revolution in the faces of their would-be benefactors. Wielopolski, keeping his ideal unswervingly before him, was not even in this state of affairs unfaithful to his convictions. In spite of all the machinations

and the audacity of the rebels, he was determined that the autonomous administration, and the benefits of the reforms in education, and of the laws releasing the peasants from their obligations, should not be spoiled for his countrymen. He therefore dismissed all Russian officials, and gave their places for the remainder of the year to natives of the country: he would not believe that by doing this he brought many thousand agents of the approaching revolution into influential positions. The instigation to disturbance which was kept up more and more by the clergy in all the provinces he at first left unnoticed; but he was resolved to seize the Hydra of Revolution in its deepest lurking-place with what he thought would be a crushing grasp. Against the assassins who with poison and dagger disgraced the Polish name, any means seemed to him permissible, if they were only effective.

Since the end of the Crimean war no recruiting had been undertaken for the Russian army, so that the different divisions hardly contained half the normal number of troops for a peace-footing. Beside the guard (30,000 men) and the Orenburg and Caucasian troops (150,000), the European garrisons had somewhat more than 180,000 men under the flag, of whom 60,000 were kept in Poland, in view of the threatening condition of that country, and as many in the western provinces of Russia, which had formerly been Polish. Nothing was more natural than that the Government should think of once more filling up the vacancies with young men; and already in June, the new Minister of

War, Miliretin, had announced to the Marquis Wielopolski the necessity of such a measure.

Now in the year 1859 a ukase had been issued which instituted the conscription by lot among all classes of the population liable to military service, but this had never as yet gone into effect. Wielopolski, brought to the highest degree of irritation by the succession of attempts at assassination and by the proclamation of the 1st of September, now adopted the idea of carrying on the recruiting in Poland according to the old principle, which left the authorities free choice among those liable to serve, and of removing from the country by this means at one stroke, if not the whole band of rebels, at least the greater part of them. He laid before the Grand Duke the arguments on which such action could be based: as regarded the substance of the matter, there could be no doubt of the Government's right to use every means against the bandits, who of their own accord had put themselves beyond any consideration of law; nor was the Emperor's formal right less clear, as the sole and unrestricted source of all law, to suspend any existing law for a particular place and time.

The Grand Duke objected; he had been sent, he said, to further peace and reconciliation, and this mission could not be brought into accord with a measure that in spite of the arguments of the Marquis would be regarded as a *coup d'état*. But the strong will and keen logic of the Marquis overcame these scruples, and Wielopolski's proposal received the royal approval on the 18th of September.

Accordingly, on the 6th of October, the official journal of the Government published an announcement to the following effect: at the same time with the general recruiting throughout the Empire, a partial draft was to take place in Poland, which, as an exception to the usual custom, would not affect the rural population — in order not to interfere with the action of the laws affecting the obligations of the peasants — but only that of the towns, and this, too, with the exclusion of choice by lot, although all legal grounds of exemption would still continue fully in force. In all districts conscription-commissions were then instituted, and the officials were charged with an examination of the physical fitness of those liable to serve. A secret instruction was addressed to the commissions, charging them to select above all those of bad reputation, those who had no definite place of abode and no vocation, and those who were under the suspicion of exciting revolutionary agitation, since it was desired to use the conscription as a means of getting rid of these dangerous elements. A few days after its communication this order became known to the National Committee and also to the foreign newspapers. As the Grand Duke had foreseen, a shout of indignation went through Poland and through Europe.

We remember that so long before as March, 1861, Mieroslawski had admonished his friends in Warsaw to submit under no circumstances to a conscription, but if such a thing should be announced, to oppose it at every risk. This entirely suited the wishes of the National

Committee; the question was only, how far the necessary preparations could be carried before the as yet unknown day of the outbreak, in order that the insurgents might fall with effect in one night upon the Russian garrisons scattered through the country.

At any rate the Committee went on with the work with redoubled zeal. Already they had repeatedly collected sums of money among the patriots, and made here and there purchases of arms; now they issued an order, on the 8th of October, imposing upon all real-estate and mortgages a capital-tax of one-half of one per cent, and upon all revenues of any other sort an income tax of five per cent.

The enthusiasm for this patriotic sacrifice was not shared by all the patriots, but the committee had more effective means of executing its wishes than is usually the case with other governments: if any landholder refused to pay, his house and farm-buildings were burned within a week after the expiration of the term set for payment; and in the towns, recalcitrant citizens were murdered in the streets in open day. Great sums were, therefore, quickly collected, without the Government officers being able to lay hands on a single one of the receivers of the money, of the assassins, or of the incendiaries. And soon large orders had been despatched to England, France, and Belgium, for a speedy delivery of muskets and sabres, of munitions and uniforms, and also of daggers, strychnine, and curare.

The refugees in Paris and the European Revolutionary Committee in London helped on these prepa-

rations according to their ability, though with the difference that Ladislas Czartoryski gave warnings against premature action, in view of the unfavorable conjuncture in European affairs; while the Committee in London, on the other hand, in the hope that the fire blazing up in Poland would quickly spread to the countries round about, urged that the rising should take place as soon as possible.¹

Meanwhile the Warsaw Committee made its arrangements for establishing the revolutionary organization in Lithuania, Posen, and Galicia. In harmony with the tone of the manifesto of September 1st, its newspapers, at the close of the year, raised the cry for the liberation of the whole great Fatherland from the yoke of the Germans and the Russians. To be sure, it was not intended to allow the revolt immediately to break out also on Prussian and Austrian territory, and so to draw forth at once the military force of all three of the Powers that took part in the partition; on the contrary, the struggle was first to be begun against Russia, where it was hoped that the demoralization of the army, and perhaps revolutionary agitations in sympathy with those in Poland, would be of assistance, while the Courts of Berlin and Vienna would be restrained by the public opinion of Europe from interfering in a quarrel that apparently did not concern them. But none the less on this account were Posen and Galicia to be drawn in as a support in the attack upon Russia, since they

¹ Communication of Nov. 23d, 1862, in Knorr: *Polish Insurrections since 1830.*

would furnish aid by transmitting across the frontier the supply of arms arriving from Liége, by sharing in the payment of the national contributions, and by levying and sending over companies of volunteers. In Posen the association of the Polish deputies of the Provincial Parliament had been for two years doing preparatory work, and had also extended its connections among the Slavonic population of Upper Silesia: in the beginning of the year 1863, the Warsaw Committee appointed the deputy, Alexander Guttry, chief of the entire national government which was to be established in the duchy, on the model of that in Warsaw.

While all this was going on, the National Committee received the news that the recruiting was to take place about the middle of January. After long and stormy debates, the majority of the Committee came to the conclusion that at that moment insurrection was out of the question; all that could be done was to withdraw individuals who were threatened from the grasp of the Russian military authorities. There was no great difficulty about this, considering the disposition of the greater part of the civil officials; it was only necessary to send the young men away from their actual place of abode into another district, so that the officers who had charge of the conscription had no means whatever of tracing them.

Immediately many hundreds of young men began to disappear every night, especially from Warsaw. When, on the night of the 14th of January, 1863, the conscription was begun in the capital, the officials found

only 1,400 men out of 4,500, and those under suspicion in political matters were the very ones who were missing. Wielopolski was bitterly undeceived, and had the failure of his plan before his eyes.

But the National Committee also found it impossible to adhere to its decision. First among the youth who had escaped from the conscription, and soon also among the greater number of the revolutionary agents in the provinces, the cup of passions that had been inflamed for years was filled to overflowing. The young men did not wish to hide, but to fight. Those from Warsaw gathered together in a wood a few miles from the town. Similar bands were assembled at Plock, Lublin, and Petrikau.

The Committee saw that they would entirely lose the control of things, if they attempted to resist the current any longer. With heavy heart and bold words they gave the signal to all the agents in the provinces for the armed rising: exactly in accordance with what Mieroslawski had proposed in March, 1861, the Russian garrisons, on the night of the 23d of January, were to be attacked and overwhelmed.

On the 22d appeared three proclamations of the Committee, or rather, according to the title now adopted by it, the National Government: in these, the Polish nation, up to that day a martyr and a suppliant, was called upon to become on the morrow a hero and a giant; all men capable of bearing arms were to hasten to the banner of the Fatherland; all peasant-farmers were once more promised the ownership of their farms

— with the reservation of compensation to be made later to the former proprietors;— all farm-servants, cottagers, and day-laborers were promised a share of three acres apiece in the public land. For the Committee did not fail to appreciate the fact that everything depended upon gaining over the peasant population to the standard of the revolt. Bold as was the youth of the cities, eager as the petty nobles were for battle, it was not possible to form from them such masses as were necessary to encounter the columns of the Russians.

On the night of the 23d of January, then, a number of Russian garrisons in the smaller towns were attacked. The secret had been remarkably well kept; everywhere the Russian soldiers lay quietly asleep in their quarters; some hundreds were struck down at the first attack, or destroyed in the houses that were set on fire, and over three hundred were wounded. But no decisive result was obtained by the insurgents. Everywhere the first surprise was followed by an alarm quickly given, an assembling of the troops, and a repulse of the Polish bands. The latter threw themselves once more into the woods, made a new gathering, and received accessions from all sides, mainly petty nobles, artisans, and students, a very few peasants, and soon also volunteers from Posen and Galicia. At one stroke the country was filled with the tumult of war, the civil administration of the Government was scattered like chaff before the wind; and the hopes of the patriots soared high over all difficulties and all bounds.

But quite as patriotic feelings were aroused in Russia by the news of the outbreak. There the entire people looked upon the attack made upon sleeping soldiers as a treacherous assassination on a large scale, and thousands of voices called upon the Government to take bloody revenge. Gortschakoff, however, said: "It is a good thing that the ulcer has at last broken; now we will cut it out, and then continue to carry on a mild and conciliatory government."

He and every one else in St. Petersburg believed that the rebellion would be quickly put down. "In that case," wrote the Prussian consul-general in Warsaw, "Wielopolski would be omnipotent, and would manage Poland as he liked." Another Prussian observer describes the far-reaching, ambitious plans that were entertained by those who surrounded the Grand Duke Constantine: if the Reds were once controlled, it was thought that Poland might, as the inheritance of the second son of the Russian Imperial House, become an independent kingdom under Russian protection, strong enough to draw to itself Posen and Galicia, Croatia and Servia, and perhaps all the Austrian Slavs, so opening to the White Czar the broadest path to Constantinople.

However this might turn out, great anxiety was felt in Vienna, in Berlin, and in London, with regard to the course things might take. In the most recent negotiations in regard to the complications in the Turkish countries on the Danube, Russia had assumed a position in close understanding with France, and in sharp oppo-

sition to Austria and England. It was now learned with surprise that Napoleon, in spite of all the sympathy that was everywhere manifested throughout France, strongly condemned the Polish outbreak, which, he said, had been made in conjunction with Mazzini, at a time when the Emperor Alexander was overwhelming Poland with benefits. The conclusion was easily reached, that Gortschakoff and Wielopolski were carrying out their plans on a perfect understanding with Napoleon, and that a kingdom of Poland closely allied with Russia was to form a basis of attack against Vienna and Constantinople, while Napoleon at the same time would bring the affairs of Italy to the desired settlement and then become master in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In this connection the Polish revolt, which for the moment interfered with Gortschakoff's combinations, seemed in London extremely opportune, and even in Vienna to have its good side, in spite of all fears for Galicia. In England, appeals were made to the public opinion of Europe in favor of the insurgents; in Austria the further course of events was awaited, no objection was entertained to seeing Russia fall into a position of embarrassment, and Polish arms and volunteers were allowed to pass the Galician frontier unregarded.

The Prussian Government also had in mind to use the Polish revolt for the overthrow of the dangerous system devised by France and Russia. But it had not an instant's doubt that the proper means to this end was

the reverse of the tendencies ruling in Vienna and London. In order to nip the proposed Polish-Russian Union and the French alliance connected with it in the bud, it was necessary, not to look favoringly upon the Poles, but to keep Russia firm in her ancient friendship with Prussia.

CHAPTER III.

PRUSSIA AND RUSSIA.

DURING the last half-year Prussia's position in Europe had in more than one connection been giving cause for serious consideration. On the 22d of January, 1863, immediately after the rejection of the proposition concerning the delegations, Austria had expressly asserted for herself in the Confederate Diet the right of introducing such plans of reform and of carrying them out, if not in the whole of Germany, at least in such States as agreed to them; and Count Rechberg now declared his approval of Beust's view, that the Governments must take the reform into their own hands, if they did not wish to be surprised by revolution. With such principles as these, the crisis that had just been avoided might at any time reappear, and the breach of the compact of confederation might bring with it an appeal to arms. If this were to happen, what would be the relation of the contending parties to the foreign Great Powers?

With England Austria had long gone hand in hand in the numerous questions that had arisen in the East; and far as the English Cabinet was from thinking of interfering in the German trouble, its sympathies, nevertheless, were with the Court of Vienna, and its

appeals to the Court of Berlin to be reconciled with Austria were unceasing. The only answer that could be made to these was that Austria's attitude made such a reconciliation impossible, and that England must direct her admonitions to Vienna: this was, indeed, not calculated to increase in London the friendly feeling towards Prussia.

More important and more serious, however, was a change in the policy of France, which took place in the autumn of 1862. Faithful to the principle formerly established by Cavour, that Rome must be the capital of Italy, but that this object was only to be attained by peaceful means, the Cabinet of Turin had crushed at Aspromonte an audacious troop of Garibaldi's volunteers on their march against Rome, but had at the same time declared that no Italian Government could renounce the thought of solving the difficulty in accordance with the Italian national idea. The Emperor Napoleon, who would neither withdraw the French garrison from Rome, nor give up the hope of forcing the Pope and Italy to recognize the existing state of things, decided, upon this, to make his imperial disapproval distinctly manifest to the Turin Cabinet; he appointed for Rome and for Turin ambassadors of a clerical tendency, and replaced Thouvenel in the management of foreign affairs by the old supporter of the Pope and Austria, M. Drouyn de Lhuys. From this time on, there could be no more talk in Berlin of reliance upon the friendship of France.

So much the more important was it for Prussia to

keep up a thorough good understanding with Russia, and so much the more perilous would it be to allow the same to be disturbed by the troubles in Poland.

It might have been difficult to decide which danger would be the more serious for Prussia, the certainly not very probable victory of the Red insurrection, as it was carried on by Mieroslawski, Mazzini, and Garibaldi, or the creation of an autonomous Poland under Russian and French protection, according to the plans of Wielopolski, Gortschakoff, and Constantine. The Red party had already at Horodlo, and again at the moment of the outbreak, announced their claims to West Prussia, Posen, and Pomerania as far as the Oder; they were already levying contributions and recruits among their fellow Slavs in those countries, and were establishing in Posen a well-organized administration of the country.

Such extreme steps as these would hardly be taken by Wielopolski's autonomous Poland, but the Minister would be unceasingly urged in the same direction, as well by the Polish patriots, as by the efforts of the Panslavists and by his own hatred for the Germans; and Prince Gortschakoff would be the last to check him in such a course. Neither for Posen and West Prussia, nor for the entire monarchy, would there be a quiet hour under such conditions.

At the first news, then, of the Polish insurrection, the determination was formed in Berlin of appealing directly to the personal feelings of the Emperor Alexander.¹ General Gustav von Alvensleben received

¹ The King had at first thought only of sending a military envoy to Warsaw, but three days after he extended his plan.

instructions to go to St. Petersburg and from there to Warsaw. In St. Petersburg he was to deliver an autograph letter from the King to the Emperor, and then to obtain as complete information as possible in regard to what had happened hitherto, but above all to seek to arrange an understanding with the Emperor with reference to common measures for the suppression of the revolt. "The King," so the instructions ran, "is firmly convinced that the interests of both Governments are alike imperilled by the Polish rising, and that any emancipation of the Polish element from the authority of the Emperor will not be limited in its effects to the boundaries of the kingdom of Poland, but will disturb the peace as well of the neighboring portions of Prussia as of the western provinces of the Russian Empire. In our view, the position of the two Courts with regard to the Polish revolution is substantially that of two allies threatened by a common enemy." It was therefore to be arranged that the generals of the two nations on both frontiers should be instructed to render one another every assistance necessary for the restoration of order and the putting down of the revolt.

Any one who at that time had cast a glance about him in Europe, would have been justified in thinking such a step an audacious venture. For the Press of all the most civilized countries was rejoicing at the insurrection in Poland; a judgment of condemnation was unanimously passed upon the Russian tyranny, which had now by an unlawful system of recruiting forced a long-suffering people into the struggle of despair. The

liberal, clerical, and national tendencies, which generally neutralized each other, now worked together, and had on their side the sympathy of public opinion and energetic champions in the most powerful governments. It required a consummate firmness of purpose to oppose this tide of feeling and to take a stand by the side of Russia, shunned and isolated as she was.

This very state of things, however, insured the Prussian general a doubly favorable reception at the hands of the Emperor Alexander. The more keenly the sensitive mind of that Sovereign was affected by the tempest let loose against him, the more refreshing to him was this message of loyal friendliness. From the bottom of his heart he met the advances of his ally: and during his lifetime the Panslavic league of brotherhood between Poles and Russians was no longer to be feared.

Alvensleben found that Wielopolski was still in favor with the Emperor: Alexander spoke with sympathy and indignation of two fresh attempts which had been made to poison the courageous Minister. "Independent of the Emperor," wrote Alvensleben, "the Marquis has also a strong party here; among the Russian people the sentiment is divided, on one side there is a violent hatred of the Polish assassins, on the other, a feeling that Russia has not the slightest interest in the supremacy of the House of Gottorp in Poland." The Emperor, however, remained firm in his determination to suppress the rebellion as speedily as he might, and then to govern the country as mildly as possible. At his order, Gort-

schakoff proposed to the Prussian general to settle what measures it was necessary to adopt by a written convention or agreement.

Alvensleben had certainly neither commission nor powers to do this, but, considering the simplicity of the matter, he saw no reason for not listening to the wish of the Vice-Chancellor; and he sent to Berlin, on the 6th of February, the outline of such an agreement. The substance of the matter was, that at the request of the Russian or of the Prussian commander-in-chief, or of the frontier authorities on both sides, the generals of both nations should have full power to render one another mutual assistance, and, in case of need, even to cross the frontier for the pursuit of the rebels who should pass from one country to the other. Officers from both sides, appointed for the purpose, would be present at the headquarters of the generals in command and of the leaders of the different corps, and would be informed of all movements. There was another article which Gortschakoff begged should be kept secret: the Prussian commander was to be kept informed of all news received of political machinations affecting Posen.

King William was satisfied with the outline as a whole, and only desired that reciprocity should be observed in regard to the secret article. Gortschakoff then added at the end of the outline the words (which substantially invalidated the whole thing): "This arrangement shall have force so long as the state of things requires it, and both Courts regard it as desirable." A compact from which either party can with-

draw, is, strictly speaking, hardly to be called a compact at all.

On the 8th of February the compact was signed by Alvensleben and Gortschakoff. No ratification by the two Sovereigns took place. Afterwards, Gortschakoff, to whom the sending of Alvensleben to St. Petersburg had been in every way disagreeable, determined to find compensation in another quarter for the annoyance Prussia had caused him: on the very day after the signing of the compact he hastened to show the text of the agreement to the French ambassador, the Duke of Montebello.¹

Bismarck, however, on his side, had not intended to hide from the world the substance of the convention. Almost half the Prussian army, four of the nine army-corps, was put in readiness for war and posted in divisions on the long Polish frontier from Insterburg to Oppeln: with such a display of force, whatever might happen on the other side of the frontier, order was assured for Prussia, and the Government was prepared for any further steps that might be decided upon.

Alvensleben had stopped at Warsaw on his return, and had found the Government there confident of victory, and hence much annoyed at the agreement with Prussia, in which they appeared as if in need of assistance. In their instructions to the Russian generals they urged them to take pains to confine the number and extent of their incursions across the frontiers within

¹ So Montebello himself told the Prussian Ambassador, Von Redern.

the narrowest possible limits ; and this naturally led to corresponding orders to the Prussian commanders. In regard to the actual state of things in Poland, however, Alvensleben and the officers who accompanied him had no very encouraging news to give. There was no firm control and no distinct plan in the management of the army ; every leader of a corps acted on his own account ; they were at one only in their dislike to Wielopolski, whom they regarded simply as guilty of high treason. The country now swarmed in all the provinces with armed bands, for the most part small in number, since the peasants obstinately refused their adhesion to the revolution ; only in the south-west were larger bodies of troops to be found, in consequence of the accessions which arrived there from Silesia and Galicia. Everywhere the leaders proclaimed that foreign aid was at hand, and so kept up the courage of their people.

In this general uncertainty concerning the state of things in Poland, Bismarck thought it desirable not to leave the Great Powers at all in doubt in regard to Prussia's attitude. On the 11th of February he had a conversation with the English ambassador, Sir Andrew Buchanan. He informed him in confidence of the conclusion of a compact with Russia for common action in the suppression of the revolt. Sir Andrew asked whether by this compact the troops of both sides were permitted to pass the frontier. Bismarck answered in the affirmative, with a distinct declaration that Prussia could never tolerate an independent Poland on her

borders. "But how will it be," said Sir Andrew, "if, as is certainly possible, the Russians are driven out of Poland? What will you do then?" "Then," answered Bismarck, "we must try to occupy the kingdom ourselves, in order to prevent this growth of a power hostile to us." "Europe will never suffer that," said Sir Andrew, and repeated it several times. Bismarck asked shortly: "Who is Europe?" "The various great nations," said the ambassador. "Are they already agreed about the matter?" asked Bismarck. Sir Andrew avoided giving a positive answer, but declared France found herself unable to allow another suppression of Poland. "For us," said Bismarck, "the suppression of the revolt is a matter of life and death;" but he closed the conversation with the remark that it was useless to discuss possibilities.

He afterwards adopted a similar tone in talking with the French ambassador, M. de Talleyrand, who confined himself to the statement that he did not know the views of his Government with regard to Poland. Bismarck spoke the more freely, since he himself, when ambassador at Paris, upon the Emperor's saying that something must be done for Poland, had explained his own view with emphasis without receiving any contradiction from Napoleon, and since as lately as the 4th of February the French Government, in the legislative assembly, had opposed a motion of Jules Favre friendly to the Poles, and had advised Poland to rely upon the magnanimity and humanity of the Emperor Alexander.

But on this point the Minister was destined to be soon undeceived.

Napoleon was certainly an opponent of the Red party, as well in Poland as in the rest of Europe. But he would gladly have agreed to the plans of Gortschakoff and Wielopolski, and this fact alone would have made the Prussian compact disagreeable to him. But in addition to this there was the violent storm of public opinion in France, where the entire body of the clergy went hand in hand with the Liberals in favoring Poland, and where just at this time a general election was close at hand, in which the support of the clergy was very important to the Government. Thus placed in a dilemma between the sympathy of the country for Poland on the one hand, and its own sympathy for Russia on the other, the Government began to consider whether "something could not be done for Poland," if the agitation were directed, not against Russia, the *origo mali*, but against her companion in guilt, Prussia. No one could be more eager and ready for such a course than Drouyn de Lhuys.

On the 15th of February he said to the Prussian ambassador, Count Goltz: "We understand that each of the three Powers that took part in the partition is anxious to keep its Polish provinces. But we supposed that you were strong enough to defend Posen on your own account, and would have left Russia to manage her affairs alone. Then only a third of the Polish difficulty would have been touched upon, and we could have looked on calmly. The state of things

is altered when it becomes a question of the whole of Poland. This question, I fear, you yourselves have brought up prematurely. Are you not anxious lest, with the existing state of mind among the English and the French people, your making common cause with Russia should provoke others to form alliances also?"

His tone was indeed most friendly: he said that he only expressed fears, none of which would, he hoped, be realized. But on the next day but one, the 17th, he sent a despatch to Talleyrand, to the same effect as the above speech: up to the present time the Polish difficulty had been local; now, by Prussia's compact, it had grown into a question of importance for all Europe. On the 18th he sent a despatch to Montebello at St. Petersburg, in which, referring to the Act of the Vienna Congress of 1815, the provisions of which, he said, were not being fulfilled by Russia, he expressed anxiety lest the relations between the two Courts might become strained. That Drouyn de Lhuys was the moving spirit in the matter is shown in this case by the appeal to the compacts of 1815, which the Emperor, like every Napoleon, detested from the bottom of his heart. The Minister assumed every day a higher tone with Goltz, until he finally declared openly that only the dismissal of Bismarck could restore amicable relations. In a much less hostile tone, though substantially to the same effect, the Emperor spoke with Goltz on the 20th: "You know how I have always desired intimate relations with Prussia: had Austria committed such an error as Prussia has done in

agreeing to this convention, it would have been a matter of indifference to me; but now that Prussia has done it, the event causes me genuine sorrow."

However, sorrow or no sorrow, the course had been entered upon; and on the 21st there was sent to London and Vienna, the outline of a common note, in which the three Powers, although in the most courteous language, were to express to the Prussian Cabinet their regret at the conclusion of the convention, and at the same time the hope, that Prussia would soon find it for her interest to withdraw from the same.

Drouyn de Lhuys had no doubt of obtaining the consent of the two Courts. He knew that in Vienna indignation against Prussia on account of Confederate reform and of the commercial treaty was blazing high, that the most influential advisers of Rechberg, Herren von Biegeleben and von Meysenbug, were, if from nothing more than Catholic sympathies, zealous friends of Poland, and that in Galicia the Poles were allowed without hinderance to send money and volunteers across the frontier. In London public opinion was enthusiastic in favor of Poland; and on the 20th, the very day before the outline was sent, the Minister, Lord John Russell, had declared in Parliament that the conscription in Warsaw was the most unwise and the most unjust step that Russia could have taken, and that Prussia, by entering into the convention, had, as an accessory after the deed, become a sharer in responsibility for the hateful measure. What ground, then, could the two Powers have for refusing to sign together a note couched in such mild terms?

But in spite of all this, the calculation was a mistaken one.

Lord John, as an orthodox Whig, was certainly full of sympathy for the Poles, as for all oppressed nations, but recognized the danger to Prussia involved in the insurrection, and, as a practical statesman, he had for many reasons no desire whatever to injure Prussia or to see her injured. He therefore answered the French communication by saying that, in spite of any courtesy of expression, a common note, as such, was the most serious and most threatening way of making a remonstrance. Much as he disapproved of the convention, its practical importance was not sufficient to justify such a step. And, at any rate, if a desire was felt to interfere, why should such interference be directed at the aider and abettor, rather than at the originator of the trouble? England, therefore, refused to take part in the note addressed to Prussia, and instead of this, called upon the signers of the Act of the Vienna Congress, to take steps in common against Russia.

Austria, who was at that time constantly strengthening her connection with England, refused from mistrust of Napoleon to sign the proposed note, in spite of any differences of her own with Prussia. The action of the French Minister ended, therefore, in a diplomatic *fiasco*. But it was, nevertheless, of great importance. By it the French Government had confessed its obligation to support the cause of Poland. In the effort to do this it had suffered a defeat, which Napoleon was much less able to bear in the sight of his people than a

legitimate sovereign would have been. When, therefore, England now proposed fresh steps against Russia, the Emperor found it doubly difficult to refuse, though none of the consequences of such a step could be foreseen.

Bismarck had watched the development of the French policy during that time not without anxiety but with firm determination; and immediately after receiving the first reports on the subject, he had declared beforehand to the French ambassador, that there was no choice for Prussia in Polish matters, and that he could therefore give no other than a negative answer to any intercession in favor of Poland. But after this he was astonished by an unexpected announcement from the opposite quarter. On the 22d of February, the Russian ambassador, Herr von Oubril, called on him, and informed him that in the opinion of his Government the state of things in Europe made it desirable that the clauses of the convention which gave the generals on both sides liberty to cross the frontier, should go out of effect. That meant nearly the same as a suspension of the entire compact; indeed, the liberty to cross the frontier was the only provision of that compact that required an agreement of both sides. The Prussian general in command, however, was at once given orders in accordance with Oubril's wish, and Oubril was informed of it.

Two days later there came another surprise in the shape of a telegram from Warsaw stating that the Grand Duke Constantine had received notice that

Prussia, on account of news from Paris, desired, in spite of Alvensleben's arrangement, to have no passing of the frontier, and that corresponding instructions should be given to the Russian generals. Bismarck was not a little astonished that the desire for the suspension or the giving up of the convention was thus attributed to Prussia. But, at any rate, by such action the convention was deprived of all significance; and Bismarck had, therefore, no hesitation in announcing to the English ambassador in Oubril's presence that the compact would from that time remain a dead letter.

Immediately after, however, it appeared that this whole affair had been managed by Gortschakoff behind the Emperor's back. Alexander first learned of it through Gortschakoff's false announcement that Prussia desired that the convention should be abandoned; and the Emperor was much disturbed. On the 25th of February, he received the Prussian military plenipotentiary, Herr von Loen, and asked him excitedly: "Do you know what has happened? When soldiers deal with one another, everything goes well; but when the diplomats begin to meddle, everything is done foolishly and stupidly. I agreed to the convention with great satisfaction, at the wish of the King; now I hear that Prussia, on grounds of internal and external policy, desires that the agreement should come to an end; I am ready to assent to that at once, though I do not see how it can be any concern of France. Or has there been a feeling in Berlin that Russia desires to withdraw from the compact? It is true that we no

longer need it in view of the improved state of things in Poland, but I never thought of drawing back; though, as I have said, I am perfectly ready to do so, if I can save Prussia any embarrassment. If Oubril has said anything else than this I will not sustain him."

Loen sought instructions by telegraph from his Government, and on the 28th received word that the Prussian Cabinet saw no object in giving up the compact; it was added, that so far as outsiders were concerned, it would be more to the purpose to say that the convention had as yet remained unfulfilled through the want of the necessary provisions in regard to its being carried out. On the following day the Emperor again received Loen with the question: "Prussia, then, desires the convention to be given up?" He was agreeably surprised when Loen read him Bismarck's despatch; and he dwelt at length on his satisfaction at the clearing up of the misunderstanding, and at the determination to keep up harmonious feeling.

Gortschakoff's intrigue was thus thwarted in its main object, the disturbing of the intimate relations between two sovereigns. But Bismarck had at the same time other difficulties to contend with at home, in the unfriendly disposition of the Lower House, which included the Polish matter also within the limits of its deliberations. Since the close of the preceding session, the view that the carrying on of an administration without a budget was a breach of the Constitution had spread more widely in the country, and had taken

firmer root among the parties. At the very opening of the new session, this view found energetic expression in an address to the King containing an open complaint against the Ministry. As, however, the King stood firm by his counsellors, and the Constitution offered no means of legal procedure against these, the opinion gained ground that it was best to compel a dismissal of the hated Ministers by rejecting or opposing every motion made and every step taken by them, to open the battle, as it was called, along the whole line.

When, then, the convention of the 8th of February came under discussion, in regard to the unpublished text of which the most extravagant rumors were current, it was only a few deputies that were moved by enthusiasm for an independent Poland to desire speedy action in regard to the same: the majority were much more affected by the fear of a great European war towards which the country, by reason of the foolhardy policy of Bismarck, seemed to be driving. The great body of the people and of the House felt, with regard to him, as in the contest about the budget, the conviction that this haughty aristocrat had nothing in view but a reactionary suppression of all freedom, and that for that reason he was assisting to suppress the Polish insurrection, even at the risk of Prussia's being overwhelmed by an attack from the superior force of the Western Powers.

After a passionate debate which lasted three days, during which Bismarck refused to make any communi-

cation concerning the contents or the object of the convention, the House voted by an overwhelming majority that Prussia's welfare demanded a strict neutrality while the struggles were going on in Poland. In the midst of the bitterness of the quarrel about the Constitution, there was no thought that such a vote might affect the prestige of the Government in Europe, and so increase the possible dangers that were threatening Prussia. Still less had any one in the House or in the country any suspicion that Bismarck had, by the convention and the assurance of Russian friendship thereby obtained, laid the first stone for the foundation of Prussia's future greatness.

During all this, the Minister did not allow himself, either by these attacks, or by Gortschakoff's machinations, or by French threats, to be moved a hair's-breadth from the line of action he had adopted. The English invitation to participate in steps to be taken by the Powers who had been present at the Vienna Congress, he rejected as not according with Prussia's standpoint in the matter. Moreover, the storm about the convention of February gradually abated, when the English papers published Bismarck's statement that it would remain a dead letter, and above all when it was clear that the progress of the struggle in Poland no longer gave occasion for any crossing of the frontier.

The National Committee had appointed Mieroslawski dictator. The latter had, on the 17th of February, taken command of a strong body of troops in the vicinity of the Prussian frontier, but had on the 22d been attacked

by Russian troops not far from Kalisch, and been completely beaten; his men had been scattered, and he himself had fled, and thus disappeared forever from the scene.

This aroused a new spirit of independence in the White party of the great landed-proprietors, who had up to this time remained completely in subordination to the Reds. Through Ladislas Czartoryski, they learned from Paris that Napoleon would have nothing to do with Mieroslowski, as one of the stamp of Mazzini and of the London Revolutionary Committee, but that he was ready to support more moderate patriots. The party, therefore, chose as their leader a certain Langiewicz from Posen, who then got together a considerable body of men in the southern part of the country, took the title of dictator in his turn, and established a civil administration, but by so doing excited to such a degree the wrath of the National Committee that they sent three agents to his camp to slay the mutineer who had taken the government into his own hands. These men were, however, discovered, arrested, and condemned to death; they were just on the point of being hanged, when the Russians attacked the camp on the 19th of March, scattered the insurgents in all directions, and compelled Langiewicz to fly into Galicia.

A few days later the same thing happened to two other large bands; so that now no force of rebels of any consequence anywhere kept the field. A systematic co-operation of the different bodies of Russian troops would soon have resulted in the restoration of

order, especially as the great body of the peasants had remained loyal to the Emperor, had killed some who spoke for the rebels in the pulpit, and had delivered over disaffected landholders to the police; so that, if a vote had been taken on a basis of universal suffrage, the Polish people would have recognized the Czar as their ruler by a large majority. But the imperial Government, so far as harmony was concerned, was not much better off than the revolutionary one. The Grand Duke, and even more decidedly than he, the Grand Duchess, stood by Wielopolski, who, in spite of the state of siege, strove to keep his system of civil administration on foot, and to soften the severity of the military measures. The officers, however, were indignant with the whole system. General Ramsay urgently prayed to be allowed to resign, and proposed the appointment of the prudent and energetic general, Count Berg, as Assistant to the Grand Duke with full powers in both military and civil affairs.

In St. Petersburg also, a strong feeling now prevailed against Wielopolski, to whom the delay in the suppression of the revolt was attributed; yet for several weeks more the Emperor allowed himself to be restrained by his brother and the Vice-Chancellor from taking decided steps. Ramsay was succeeded by a man whose chief merit was his intimate connection with the Grand Duke, and the war against the rebels dragged on in the slow course it had followed hitherto. The soldiers conquered every band that they encountered; but the indifference of the civil authorities was such, that the

troops remained masters of the country only in the spot they actually occupied.

Towards the end of March, the Emperor finally decided to bring, by means of a more vigorous hand, system and vigor at least into the military operations, without, however, completely subordinating the civil administration and its chief to a military dictatorship. On the 30th of March, Count Berg was appointed military Assistant of the Grand Duke, that is, commander-in-chief in Poland. The whole world saw in this a sign of the approaching downfall of the system of Wielopolski, and of the recall of the Grand Duke and the Minister that would naturally result. Together with this appointment another step was taken, not so much intended to affect the Polish insurgents as the Foreign Powers who were connected with the revolt in Poland. Up to this time, in consideration of the insurrection, Russia had mobilized four army-corps; now the order was given to place the whole army on a war-footing, and to arm the coast fortress of Cronstadt, which protected St. Petersburg. At the same time considerable reinforcements were despatched to Poland, and the positions hitherto held by these were now occupied by forces quite as numerous brought forward from the interior of the country. Russia was preparing herself to stand on the defensive against any show of hostility coming from the West.

The Russian Cabinet had sufficient occasion for taking such steps. England was, indeed, determined not to declare war herself against Russia on account of

Poland, but she rejoiced at everything that gave increased embarrassment to her Oriental rival, and exerted all her energies to bring the other Great Powers to accept her theory, that Russia had not fulfilled the conditions on which Poland had been allotted to her by the Vienna Congress in 1815, but that the constitution promised and brought into effect at that time had been abolished in 1831, and that consequently Russia ought to be kept, by an expression of European opinion, to the fulfilment of her duties, or else to be ejected from the possessions that she had forfeited.

From a legal point of view this line of argument was open to attack in two directions, both in regard to the substance of the complaint and to the right of the complainant to make it. For in 1815 Russia and Austria had mutually agreed by compact on the 3d of May to grant their Polish subjects a representation and national institutions, framed according to such a model of political existence as their Governments should deem useful and expedient. The promise of representation, therefore, was by no means equivalent to an assent to a parliamentary constitution. Only after the conclusion of the Congress had the Emperor, Alexander I., acting on his own independent judgment, granted such a constitution to the kingdom of Poland; but unfortunately the Poles themselves, by their revolt in 1830, had overthrown this, and the Emperor Nicholas, after the suppression of the revolt, had not restored it.

Moreover, by the compact of Münchengrätz in 1833, the two German Powers had bound themselves in

common with Russia to maintain the existing state of things, and had by this action admitted that they interpreted the compacts of 1815 in the same sense as Russia. These compacts, indeed, immediately after they were concluded, had been incorporated into the Act of the Vienna Congress; but, as we have before seen, this only imposed upon the other Powers that took part in the Congress the duty of respecting on their side the contents of the compacts, and by no means implied that no alteration in the same could be made by the original contracting parties without the consent of all those who signed the Act of this Congress. From this point of view, England's right to demand a restoration of the Polish constitution of 1815 on the ground of the compacts, could not but appear decidedly questionable.

Considering all this, it is easily understood how important it was to England, in her diplomatic action, to have at least one of the German Powers on her side; and Lord John Russell, therefore, used every means to gain Austria's support in Polish matters, as well as in the eastern complications. In this he was most warmly seconded by Drouyn de Lhuys, who was in 1863 just as strongly of the opinion as he had been in 1854, that a Franco-Austrian alliance contained the remedy for all European troubles, and who therefore did everything in his power to keep Napoleon firm in the course he had adopted, which was favorable to Poland, and which was now to be distinctly hostile to Russia.

Napoleon hesitated for a time; then the political world was astonished by a journey of the Austrian

ambassador in Paris, Prince Metternich, to Vienna, where he arrived on the 14th of March, and remained for a week in anxious deliberation with the Emperor and Count Rechberg. The substance of these deliberations is not yet known from authentic sources. At the time many rumors were afloat: it was said that Napoleon offered Austria an alliance with himself and the acquisition of Silesia and Roumania in return for the abandonment of Venetia; according to other statements Napoleon desired that Galicia should be relinquished, and in return agreed to the acquisition of Roumania and to the guaranteeing of Venetia; while the Russian Emperor received information that Austria, in return for acting in harmony with the Western Powers against Russia, was promised a strengthened position in Germany and accessions of territory in the East. On the other hand, the Prussian ambassador, Herr von Werther, reported from Vienna that he had received the express assurance from Count Rechberg that Metternich had been called to Vienna only that both sides might be in possession of accurate information, and that there was no mention whatever of any French propositions communicated through him. Austria, said the Count, would not falter in her attitude in the Polish question, and would not hear of an independent Poland.¹

In fact, Austria had sufficient reason for thus holding back. Constituted as her Empire was, every appeal to the principle of nationality could not but be a danger to her; a revolt in Poland rendered her supremacy

¹ Werther, 18th of March.

in Galicia uncertain ; a combination of the revolutionary parties in Poland and Hungary was only too probable, and it was impossible to say what Napoleon's attitude would be in such a case. But on the other side, constantly increasing pressure was exerted from England ; it was urged that there could be no greater danger for both England and Austria than the realization of the Russo-French alliance that had been threatened since 1857 ; at such a juncture the Polish question and Napoleon's attitude in regard to it seemed as if sent from Heaven ; the breach between him and Russia would be beyond healing if he should decide to take any steps in favor of Poland, and he was perfectly ready to do this, if Austria would take part also.

Then, at the end of March, the official invitation was extended from Paris to London and Vienna to make a common effort at St. Petersburg in favor of Poland.

What was to be done ? In his relations with Prussia also, Count Rechberg, saw both attractive and repellent points, and this fact naturally did not render the decision any easier. The refusal of Austria to take part in the common note which Napoleon had prepared to be sent to Prussia had been acknowledged in Berlin with sincere gratitude. Bismarck expressed repeatedly to Count Karolyi his contentment with Austria's firm and befitting attitude, and by a detailed despatch to Werther conveyed to the Court of Vienna the assurance that the same feeling was entertained by the King. After Werther had read the despatch to the Austrian Minister, the former reported on the 28th of March that

Rechberg had received the communication with keen satisfaction. Everything seemed to indicate that the community of interests of the two Courts in Polish matters would bring about a more intimate relation in every direction.

But a new turn of affairs in the sphere of commerce obliterated again at one stroke all these favorable impressions. Prussia, in the name of the Tariff-Union, had concluded a commercial treaty with Belgium on the same liberal basis as the French. This was a new difficulty in the way of the tariff-union desired by Austria, and it aroused great anger in Vienna. In vain did Bismarck declare that the disagreement in regard to commercial matters need be no obstacle in the way of political friendship, as was shown by Prussia's relations with Russia and with Mecklenburg. Rechberg insisted that it was impossible to separate the two; and when Bismarck again observed to Karolyi that it would be for the interests of peace to pass over in Confederate matters all motions that required a unanimous vote, Rechberg answered decidedly that Confederate reforms were indispensable, since, if they were not brought about by the Governments, they would surely be by revolution. "In the Polish matter, also," he declared, "a closer sympathy with Prussia will be possible for us only when it has been preceded by an understanding in regard to the tariff and to Confederate reform."¹

The disagreement with Prussia was therefore once more present in full force, and this undoubtedly made

¹ Werther, April 4th, May 10th.

the establishment of friendly relations with France seem very desirable, especially as England daily repeated her urgent requests to that effect. Besides this, there was the consideration on the one hand that the liberal majority of the existing Reichstag was hostile to Russia, and on the other hand that the Clerical party was angry on account of the measures taken by Russia against the rebellious Polish clergy. Under all these influences Rechberg began gradually to incline to the French side; he did not miscalculate the force of the arguments against this; but he thought that, by the very fact of becoming a participant in the action taken by the Western Powers, he could accomplish more for peace and for the adoption of moderate measures. He announced, therefore, to the Western Powers, that he did, indeed, object to the harsh method of a common note, and that he could not appeal to the compacts of 1815, which had not been infringed by Russia, but that he was ready by a note sent at the same time with those of the other Powers to support their demands.

This was agreed to in Paris and London; and on the 10th and 12th of April, therefore, the three notes were sent to St. Petersburg. Austria in hers complained only of the injurious effect of the state of anarchy in Poland on Galicia, and begged the Emperor on that account to grant to his Polish provinces the conditions of a permanent peace.

England took a sharper tone, and declared that Prussia's obligations to the Powers that took part in the Congress of 1815 had not been abolished by the

revolution of 1830, and that consequently Great Britain had a right to desire the fulfilment of those obligations, that is to say, the restoration of the Constitution of 1815.

France spoke of the constantly recurring convulsions in Poland, which kept all Europe in a state of turmoil; she requested that the Russian Government would at last grant to Poland the conditions of a permanent peace, since all former attempts at constitutions had failed. This meant the same as pronouncing both the Constitution of 1815 and Wielopolski's autonomous administration to be insufficient, and, as a matter of fact, designating the complete independence of Poland as the only satisfactory solution of the difficulty.

Count Rechberg had neither said nor thought anything like this, but he had nevertheless supported it by taking part in the representation: however much he might persist in his assertion that he was only acting in the interests of peace and would co-operate in no hostile action against Russia, from this time on the fact could not be disputed that Austria had abandoned her neutrality and become a sympathizer with the Western Powers.

The Western Powers hastened to inform the world of the step they had taken. All the Cabinets of Europe, among the rest the Courts of all the German States also, naturally with the exception of Prussia, received an invitation to give their support to the three notes; and even the Confederate Diet might almost have been the scene of deliberations favorable to the Poles, if Rechberg, quite as decidedly as Bismarck, had not forbidden such an exhibition.

In Paris the Government was in doubt as to what was to be done, if Russia remained obstinate. There was talk of a Swedish-French landing in Courland, but the plan was abandoned when Bismarck announced in London that Prussia would make an armed resistance to such an undertaking. It was also proposed to land 60,000 French in Triest, whence they might then march to Poland in conjunction with an equal number of Austrians. But Austria's love of peace made it necessary to postpone this scheme also to a more advanced stage of the proceedings.

Meanwhile the Polish committees in Paris and London, in Posen and Galicia, worked all the more zealously. In spite of all surveillance on the frontiers, they sent over volunteers, arms, and munitions, transmitted large sums of money, and spread abroad in all parts of the land the news of the action taken by Europe. The consequences were manifest at once in a revival of the revolt, which had been dying out, in an increase in the number and strength of the different bands, and in a rising of the Polish nobility in Lithuania and Volhynia. The National Government at Warsaw developed its authority still further, and gave still harsher orders to its dreaded agents, which punished all disobedience to its commands with steel, fire, and pillage.

The Russian Ministry beheld these proceedings with wrath and anxiety. In Warsaw, Count Berg, like his predecessors, had quarrelled with Wielopolski, and now remained passive, since the Grand Duke refused him

his support against the Marquis. The great military preparations advanced but slowly; more than one month might pass before the whole force was in condition for active service.

Under these circumstances the Government decided to restrain for the time its anger at the interference of the outside world, and to answer the three notes as mildly as possible. In the reply addressed to England on the 26th of April, Gortschakoff observed that Russia recognized all compacts, but must insist upon an accurate interpretation of them: in no document of 1815 had a parliamentary constitution been promised to the Poles; the attempt to carry out such a constitution had been rendered abortive by the Poles themselves; the Emperor had now been trying for years to introduce salutary and liberal reforms in Poland, and in return for his efforts had been obliged to encounter a new insurrection. He was ready, the reply continued, to enter into explanations in regard to the principles laid down in the Act of the Congress, but above all he wished to call the attention of the Powers to the true cause of the disturbances, the stimulus constantly applied by those parties that were fomenting revolution everywhere. This last point was especially insisted upon in the note addressed to France, and somewhat more briefly in the one intended for Austria; but both these Courts were referred in general to the note that had been sent to London.

Though perfectly courteous in form, the reply was substantially a decided refusal to admit the unasked-for

interference of the Powers. In Paris and London, it was felt that this could not be allowed to pass unanswered: indeed, the note addressed to England had contained an expression of willingness to enter upon further explanations. The only question was, what positive demands were now to be made; and on this point there was so great a difference of opinion that during several weeks there seemed to be no prospect that an understanding would be arrived at.

At the same time, the course things were taking in Poland called urgently for further action, unless the three Powers were willing to acknowledge themselves beaten. Their notes had at once called forth a great burst of national indignation among the Russian people. Up to that time, as has been said, public opinion had been divided, one party desiring the punishment of the Polish assassins, the other the severance of this corrupt member from the body of sacred Russia. Now, however, at the news that the heretic West was trying to cry halt to Russian arms, a flood of patriotic pride filled all hearts: the recruits hastened to their colors, the nobles and the cities offered voluntary contributions, hundreds and hundreds of voices urged the Emperor to recall the Grand Duke, to remove Wielopolski, and to put down effectually the Polish rebellion.

The Government was ready. In Warsaw, Count Berg received increased authority: in every district, Russian officers undertook the most important positions in the administration, and organized from the peasant population strong and reliable police forces for the

pursuit of the fugitives from such bands as might be broken up and to prevent the formation of others. The secret National Government answered this by establishing in every district of Poland and Lithuania revolutionary tribunals, which were to get rid of the enemies of national freedom in a summary manner and by any means whatsoever.

Upon this, the new Governor of Lithuania, General Muravieff, an able man, of an imperious disposition, and as inflexible as iron, determined to meet terrorism with terrorism by means of a military administration carried into the most minute details and holding the power of life and death. Thus beside the guerilla war in the open field, there was carried on in endless repetition a horrible struggle between sword and dagger, between military tribunal and secret tribunal, between the soldiers and the butcher-police, as the people termed the agents of the National Committee. The result could not be doubtful; in the public opinion of Europe there was a mixture of horror and astonishment; but the three Powers felt it to be impossible longer to watch the continuance of such a frightful state of things and remain inactive.

On the 17th and 18th of June they sent for the second time notes in part identical with one another to St. Petersburg. Austria declined to have anything to do with the more extensive demands of the Western Powers, and declared that she must confine herself to the following six requirements: a general amnesty,¹ a

¹ On the 13th of April Alexander had proclaimed an amnesty to be extended to every rebel who should submit before the 13th of May. But not a single Pole had taken advantage of this.

national representation that should take part in legislation, an autonomous administration carried on by Polish officials, the removal of the restrictions that burdened the Catholic Church, the exclusive use of the Polish language in the administration of the government, and the introduction of a legal system of recruiting.

The Western Powers accepted these six points, with the understanding that they were to serve as the basis for deliberations at a conference of the eight Powers that had signed in 1815; and to this Austria agreed. In this connection Napoleon was of the opinion that the conference should take place at any rate, even if Russia refused to consent to it. This would have been substantially the same as a declaration of war. Austria, therefore, insisted that the conference should only be undertaken with Russia's participation. The Western Powers further desired that while the negotiations were going on, there should be a truce to hostilities in Poland. This Austria regarded as impossible, and therefore did not embody such a demand in her note.

Drouyn de Lhuys was wholly prepared for a still more decided rejection of these proposals on the part of the Russian Government. His desires were centred in the re-establishment of Poland, which would make any coalition against France in the future impossible; it was now his hope, in spite of the love of peace that was felt in Vienna and London, to draw both Powers into a common war against Russia. Immediately after the sending of the notes, therefore, although even his own colleagues, Fould and Morny, expressed themselves

decidedly against warlike measures, he sent to Vienna and London proposals for the establishment of a closer understanding, in the form of a convention or a protocol, in the event of obstinacy on the part of Russia, at the same time offering the Cabinet of Vienna every sort of guaranty against any danger that might threaten it owing to its geographical position.

In Vienna, as in Paris, different influences were acting in opposition to one another. The Emperor Francis Joseph, for his part, had always been against co-operating in the action of the Western Powers: he felt the solidarity with Prussia and Russia, in which his possessions in Galicia necessarily involved him, and he had no confidence in the Emperor Napoleon in any particular. On the other hand, it is said that the Minister Schmerling was strongly in favor of a policy friendly to the Poles, partly for the sake of securing the good-will of the Liberal majority in the Reichstag, and partly for the sake of winning, if not the support, at least the approval, of Napoleon for his German projects. Count Rechberg stood undecided between these two tendencies, and sought to comfort himself with the formula: "Alliance with the Western Powers so long as they confine themselves to peaceful measures, separation from them as soon as they take any warlike action." He had no thought of the possibility of any third course.

The first effect of the three notes in St. Petersburg was the removal of Wielopolski under the form of an indefinite leave of absence. The second was an

increase in the fierceness of the battle against the insurrection carried on by Count Berg, who now became the head of the civil administration also, and began to follow the example of Muravieff in Lithuania.

So far as the answer to the notes was concerned, Prince Gortschakoff had long since announced to the envoys of the Powers that in his note of April he had meant by the explanations there proposed nothing else than a friendly interchange of opinion to take place on the spot in St. Petersburg. If this had been tried it would have been seen that the Emperor Alexander, in accordance with his natural mildness and humanity, was ready to agree to the substance of the six demands, and indeed had himself already offered nearly the same thing to the Poles. But, the Prince said, it was contrary to the dignity and independence of a Great Power to allow itself to be dictated to by a conference of outsiders in such arrangements as in part touched upon matters that belonged most peculiarly to the internal administration of the country. In any case, such a conference must be preceded by an understanding between the three Powers that had taken part in the partition, since these three, by reason of the similar conditions prevailing in their Polish provinces, were more competent to judge in the matter than any others. And, above all, such concessions and negotiations could be considered only after the rebellion had been thoroughly put down and order restored. That in the existing condition of the country an armistice was simply impossible, every one who understood the situation would bear witness.

To this effect, then, the notes were drawn up, which, on the 13th of July, Prince Gortschakoff despatched as an official answer to the three Courts. In them, however, the constantly increasing indignation of the Court, of the people, and of the army, necessitated the employment of curt and decisive language; but this was somewhat moderated in the note intended for Vienna, since Gortschakoff desired, by the proposition of a conference confined to the three Powers that took part in the partition, to draw his Austrian neighbor away from the dangerous society of Napoleon and back into her old connections. On this account he had confidentially communicated the contents of his note to Count Rechberg a few days in advance; but he received a telegram from Vienna on the 14th, in which Rechberg categorically declined the conference of three as contrary to the dignity of Austria, in her position as the ally of the Western Powers. On the 19th, an Austrian note followed to the same effect, but in a still sharper tone. Just at that time the Cabinet of Vienna was occupied in getting great German plans under way, and was anxious to give the Emperor Napoleon no occasion for anger. Count Rechberg had, it would seem, no conception of any danger that might threaten Austria from any other quarter.

The Russian army was now wholly on a war-footing. Its strength, without counting the troops in Orenburg, Caucasia, and Siberia, was 400,000 men, of whom nearly half were in Lithuania, Poland, and Volhynia; and a new levy of 150,000 men was just being com-

pleted. It was felt that, without doubt, a small part of this force, with the militia composed of the loyal peasants, would be able, under a determined leader, quickly to put down what was left of the Polish insurrection; but beside this, the army had no more eager desire than to punish, sword in hand, the impertinent interference of the Powers in Russia's internal affairs; and the stream of national enthusiasm turned so decidedly in this direction, that the Emperor, in an autograph letter, proposed to King William that they should make a common declaration of war against France and Austria.

The proposal had its attractive side for Prussia. In Austria, there was no sort of preparation for a contest, and the quarrel with Hungary was going on as hotly as ever. If the King, therefore, accepted the suggestion of Russia, Austria, in her almost defenceless condition, would be overwhelmed and subdued, before a single French regiment could come to her assistance. Prussia would then have her hands free in Germany, and at home she would have no more trouble in regard to the military reforms. But undeniably there were also serious objections to this proposal. There could be no doubt that France would throw herself with her whole power into the struggle. And in all probability Prussia would then have to bear alone the chief burden of it, and would finally be forced to accept such a peace as should be arranged between France and Russia, very likely quite in accordance with the old ideas of Gortschakoff. "In such a case," said Bismarck, "*Russia would be sitting on the longer arm of the lever.*"

The King, whose personal feeling, in consideration of old friendship and connections, was always opposed to a breach with Austria, decided at once in favor of maintaining peace. He wrote his answer to the Emperor Alexander, following a draft outlined by Bismarck with his own hand, which explained the reasons for the decision with perfect frankness. King William said that his confidence in the Emperor's good intentions was unbounded, but asked how it would be, if, when such an agreement had once been made, a new system under the pressure of other influences should come into control of things. Several other letters were exchanged between the Sovereigns. Finally Alexander, who was naturally much more fitted to reign in peace than to be a conqueror, allowed himself to be convinced; and his personal feeling toward the King underwent no change whatever.

On the Prussian side no one but King William and Bismarck knew at that time anything of the matter. With such strict observation of secrecy, there could naturally be no claim upon Austria to feel any gratitude for the part Prussia had taken. At the same time, the King could not but have had a peculiar feeling, when just at this juncture there arose new developments emanating from Vienna, of a nature not a little surprising and by no means friendly to Prussia in their tendencies.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ASSEMBLY OF PRINCES AT FRANKFORT.

ON the 2d of August, 1863, King William received at Gastein, where he was making his usual summer stay for the sake of the baths, a visit from the Emperor of Austria. Francis Joseph then communicated to him his intention to invite, on the 16th of August, *all the German Princes to Frankfort, that they might deliberate and decide in person in regard to a new German constitution.*

So far as I know, no authentic statement of the facts concerning the genesis of this imperial idea has as yet been published. The proposal that not the ministers, but the Princes themselves, should be called together to undertake the cutting of the Gordian knot, occurs at the conclusion of a treatise printed as manuscript in 1862 and written by Count Blome. The Count was a Holsteiner in the Austrian service, son-in-law of the Minister Buol, and one of those "converts from abroad," like Meysenbug and Max Gagern, of whom the Viennese said that they came to teach the Austrians what true Austrian patriotism meant. We have already seen him active in his zeal for the preparation of the notes of the 2d of February, 1862. It was soon after this that he composed the brilliant plan for Con-

federate reform, which gives signs of literary talent, but in which one feels a lack of comprehension of human nature. He concludes with the question: "If to-day the Emperor Francis Joseph were to summon an assembly of German Princes, and were to invite his sovereign colleagues to appear in Ratisbon or Frankfort for the purpose of taking counsel with His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty in regard to the present and the future of Germany, who would hold aloof? The King of Prussia? Perhaps; but for how long?"

It is easy to understand that this appeal found sympathetic hearers in Vienna. It is stated, moreover, that a proposition of the same sort had been made to the Emperor by the Duke of Coburg.

As to the outline of the constitution to be laid before the noble assembly, Ebeling, in his biography of the Minister Beust,¹—a book containing many misrepresentations in regard to Prussian affairs, but much useful information about other matters,—relates that, after the miscarriage of the project of an assembly of delegates in January, 1862, the ruling and mediatized Princes of South Germany had caused a plan of a Confederate constitution to be worked out, and to be laid before the Emperor Francis Joseph by the Postmaster-General of Thurn and Taxis, Baron von Dörnberg. Ebeling says also, that at the same time the Minister, Von Schmerling, who in 1861 with the approval of the German Liberals had restored the parliamentary constitution in Austria, in view of the

¹ Vol. II., page 64, ff.

unpopularity of the Prussian Government, of its struggle with the representatives of the people, and of its disputes with the Lesser States, had hit upon the idea of seizing this moment of supposed weakness on the part of the enemy for the carrying out of German Confederate reform in the sense approved by Austria, by means of the extraordinary measure of holding a congress of Princes. Count Rechberg, our author adds, had no particular confidence in the plan, and hoped at most to obtain by it a closer connection with the Lesser States. The Emperor, however, accepted Schmerling's proposal with joy, though he substituted for the outline of a constitution proposed by him the somewhat less liberal one of Herr von Dörnberg.¹

However all this may have been, in the interview at Gastein on August 3d the Emperor did not lay before his Prussian associate in the Confederation any detailed outline of a constitution, but contented himself with sketching out by word of mouth the main features, mentioning above all a Confederate directory of five members and a Confederate parliament consisting of delegates from the German Chambers, who should only have a consulting, not a deciding voice. He then gave the King a memorial that was to explain his intentions more in detail.

This was, indeed, a remarkable document. In the first part, the necessity of reform was confirmed by a portrayal of the existing state of things, which could not have been written more effectively by Robert Blum

¹ Ebeling, Vol. II., page 79.

or Mazzini. "The compacts of confederation," so the argument ran, "have long been shaken to their foundations. . . . It must be confessed that the German Governments are now no longer united by the firm bonds of mutual compact, but are only living along side by side from day to day with the presentiment of an approaching catastrophe. . . . The actual condition of things is simply chaotic."

A second paragraph gave the main lines of the Austrian propositions of reform: "Both a single head and a parliament constituted by popular election are impossible, because they would be in contradiction to the principle of federation. The Emperor holds firmly to the ideas contained in the note of February 2d, 1862, and to the statement made in the Confederate Diet in January, 1863. He will, therefore, propose a Confederate directory and an assembly of delegates from the German parliaments, further, a Confederate court of appeal and periodical congresses of the Princes. As to the means to be employed for attaining this object, experience has shown that if conferences of ministers and diplomatic negotiations are resorted to, conflicting interests and the differences of opinion that exist will render any agreement impossible. The German Princes, however, being those to whom the rights in question belong, and all having regard for the interests of Germany, will understand each other much better by meeting personally and exchanging opinions than they can do by the agency of third parties."

Finally the third paragraph declared that "Prussia has

the power, both in practice and in theory, to hinder the reform of the German Constitution. If she interposes her veto, the Confederation as a whole cannot raise itself from the wretched condition into which it has fallen. But a complete stoppage of the agitation for reform is no longer possible: the Governments that recognize this fact will feel themselves compelled to take hold of it as a work of necessity, by making up their minds to the partial carrying out of the proposed Confederate reform within their own boundaries, and by giving, for this purpose, to their rights as independent members of the Confederation the widest possible interpretation that shall still be consistent with their relations to that Confederation."

In conclusion, an urgent request was addressed to Prussia, to the effect that she should abandon the policy hostile to the strengthening of the Confederation, which she had pursued hitherto, since upon her decision now depended the raising of the Confederation to that fulness of power which was so infinitely important in its consequences both for Germany and for Europe.

It will be admitted that this memorial was not of a nature that would be likely to inspire Prussia with a feeling either of obligation or of inclination to accept its conclusions. The assertion that the compacts of confederation were already, properly speaking, dissolved, a statement which Rechberg soon afterwards explained in a positive sense, to the effect that Prussia was wholly to blame for this misfortune; then the *undisguised*

revival of the constitutional plans so often rejected by Prussia ; the express reference to the fiercest documents of the polemic that had been carried on against her ; and finally, the announcement of the intention, if Prussia proved obstinate, to form a more restricted union within the Confederation, an intention, which, when Prussia had entertained it, had repeatedly been received with the most violent protests in the name of the principles of the Confederation, — all this was by no means calculated to dispose the King to favor the Austrian plans.

The conversations of the two Sovereigns in regard to the great question took place without witnesses ; but, as is shown by their correspondence afterwards and by the memoranda of the King, the tone of them was thoroughly friendly. The subject of Poland was also discussed in detail. The Emperor distinctly repeated the assurance, that he had joined the Western Powers in their diplomatic action only with the object of maintaining peace, and that he would abandon them so soon as they showed any intention of resorting to arms. “I am only afraid,” said the King, “that you will find it very difficult to separate yourself from the Western Powers.” — “Not the least in the world,” was the answer ; “the Western Powers have long known my determination, neither to carry on war nor to agree to any change in existing territorial arrangements, and I rejoice that England also is determined to use only diplomatic means and not force, in her support of Poland. In Galicia, moreover,” he added, “everything

is as ready for revolution as in Poland, and I shall be obliged to resort to serious measures there."

At the conclusion of the last interview, Francis Joseph asked the King to send to him at Vienna a *résumé* of the comments made by word of mouth about Confederate reform. The King wrote such a *résumé* immediately after the Emperor's departure on the afternoon of the 3d of August; from it we learn exactly what his views in the matter were.

"I entirely concur," he says, "in the belief of the necessity of Confederate reform; but I consider the convening of a congress of Princes, both in itself and especially at so early a date as the 16th of August, to be a doubtful experiment. For in so short a time, the Princes cannot fully prepare for so important a decision, and even with a longer interval for preparation, it seems impossible that, the working capacity of an assembly so constituted being what it would be, due deliberation could be given to so weighty a question. A preliminary discussion of the outline by a conference of ministers would therefore be preferable, the results of which could afterwards be sanctioned by an assembly of Princes. Considering the constitution of many of the German Chambers, it is probable that delegations from them would not be contented with a consulting voice, but would immediately demand further powers, so that from the very beginning harmonious action would be endangered. If a conservative electoral law should be adopted, good results might be looked for from direct popular elections. As to the Confederate

directory, the appointment of the three members in addition to Prussia and Austria would cause great difficulties; the composition of the directory would be essentially conditioned by the extent of its powers; the greater its authority, the harder it would be to obtain for it the approval of the states that were not to be represented." In conclusion the King wrote: "It is important to consider what an impression would necessarily be made, if the congress of Princes were to adjourn without having accomplished anything. A greater service to revolutionary tendencies than would be rendered by such a result cannot be imagined. It is, therefore, all the more necessary to take preliminary measures which shall insure a satisfactory outcome."

As is seen, the King avoided a direct refusal. Indeed, with the modifications he had suggested, the idea of a solemn convention of German Princes for the sake of the great national object seemed rather attractive than dangerous to him.

King William certainly had no reason to expect anything else than that the Emperor would await the arrival of the *résumé* before taking his final decision. He was, therefore, not a little surprised, when, on the evening of the 3d of August, an imperial adjutant delivered to him the official invitation, dated July 31st, to be present at Frankfort on the 16th of August. Upon this, he sent the *résumé* to the Emperor on the 4th, together with a private letter in which he expressed regret that his health prevented him from accepting the

invitation. On the same day the invitation was also declined officially. Although all this was communicated that same morning by telegraph to Vienna, yet afterwards in the course of the day the invitations were nevertheless sent from there to all the German Courts.

The decision of the Emperor was thus irrevocably taken. But the King persisted quite as firmly in his view, which was not altered by a letter from Francis Joseph on the 7th of August. On the contrary, on the 13th and 14th two ministerial despatches were sent to Herr von Werther at Vienna, of which the first expressed astonishment at those passages of the Austrian memorial, according to which the Confederate Constitution had already ceased to exist. In the second, it was declared beneath the dignity of the King to take part in an assembly the object of which, though infinitely important, had not been previously discussed with him, and of which the details were only to be communicated to him in the assembly itself. "A final judgment," said the despatch, "regarding the outline of a constitution there to be proposed cannot be given on such meagre information as has been communicated. So far as can be seen at present, a Confederate directory, if its decisions required unanimity among five members, would leave the existing state of things unchanged; on the other hand, if such a directory were empowered to act on the vote of a majority, Prussia would never agree to subordinate her independence and her legislative competence to the orders of three voices out of five. Delegations with a consulting voice

amount to nothing whatever. Prussia persists in her original declaration, that she can approve any extension of the Confederate authority only on the condition that the decrees of that authority are made dependent upon the consent of a parliament chosen by the people."

In communicating this despatch to the Prussian deputy in the Diet, Von Sydow, who had succeeded Usedom in 1862, Bismarck wrote: "I regard the Austrian project of reform as a piece of display, intended by Schmerling rather as a manœuvre in internal Austrian policy than as a move of anti-Prussian diplomacy. He is arranging for the Emperor a brilliant birthday festival with Princes in white uniforms, and means to show him the great results of the constitutional era in Austria. But when you get rid of the smoke of fine phrases, the substance of the poodle is so wretchedly meagre, that really it would be better not to give the people practical proof beforehand that such a scheme can *never* be made to work. . . . It does not at present seem desirable to attempt to exert any influence over the negotiations; we must first allow the wisdom of the reforms to manifest itself undisturbed."

While now, at this very same time, the act of reform was taking its final shape at Vienna, — among other things the third place in the directory was allotted to the King of Bavaria, and an active voice in all Confederate legislation was conceded to the delegations, — Count Rechberg was once more busy with Polish matters. Napoleon was strongly inclined not to rest

satisfied with Russia's answer, and laid before the two other Powers the outline of a note which this time was to be sent in common, and which, after emphatically denying all Gortschakoff's premises, in its concluding words took almost the shape of an ultimatum.

But neither Lord John Russell nor Count Rechberg would listen to any project of a common note. The plan of simultaneous protests hitherto employed was persisted in, the note from Vienna having a much more moderate tone than that from Paris, though the former cast, as before, all responsibility for evil consequences upon Russia. The proposal of an alliance, made by Drouyn de Lhuys, had indeed been rejected by Austria, but just at the very point of entering upon the assembly of Princes, the Vienna Court was unwilling to break entirely with Paris. After the two Western Powers, therefore, had sent their notes on the 3d and 11th, the Austrian note followed on August 12th.

These notes, like those that had preceded them in June, received first of all a practical answer. On the former occasion, Wielopolski had been given his leave of absence; now, the Grand Duke Constantine, in spite of his great reluctance, was recalled to St. Petersburg. The dictatorship of Count Berg was thus freed from the last restraint. Though the National Government increased the horrors of its reign of terror,—at that time the assassinations that had taken place at its command since the beginning of the revolt were calculated at five hundred,—nevertheless Lithuania was completely subdued, and in Poland the iron circle of

Russian military power was ever drawing closer about the nucleus of the rebellion.

In the mean time more agreeable things were taking place in South Germany. Above all, the ancient city of the imperial elections and of the Confederate Diet was decking itself for the reception of the youthful ruler, who, as it was thought, would, in the midst of the German Princes, place the crown of the new Empire firmly upon his head. Frankfort had long been Austrian in feeling, owing to the influence of the Diet, to the activity of the organs of the Austrian Press, and to the friendliness of the Austrian officers, perhaps also to the great number of Austrian government-securities deposited in the safes of the good citizens. Expectation was raised to the highest pitch. On the 14th and 15th of August, the city was already in a state of restless agitation: Kings and Princes were arriving, welcomed with salvos of artillery, with peals of bells, and with deputations from the senate of the town.

All, indeed, were present, with the exception of Lippe, Anhalt-Bernburg, and Holstein: the King of Prussia, it was generally believed, would yield in the end. Finally, on the evening of the 16th, appeared in dignified state, the chief figure of the festival, the Emperor Francis Joseph. All the streets were decorated; an immense concourse of people accompanied the imperial *cortége* with unceasing shouts of joy; the municipal senate in a body offered the young Sovereign an address of welcome. The Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, rising from the caverns of the Kyffhäuser,

could not have been received with more boisterous enthusiasm.

The assembled Princes, also, did not fail to be impressed by this enthusiastic expression of popular feeling. Many a one among them looked with an anxious heart, on the 16th of August, at the outline of a constitution, hitherto unknown to him, concerning which he was to enter into deliberations on the morrow; but the demeanor of the Emperor, as calm as it was firm, made an impression on all of them, since it gave them, still undetermined as they were, a feeling that there was conviction and deliberate purpose at the bottom of the whole affair. The four Kings (the King of Würtemberg was represented by his son) sustained the Emperor entirely, and there were not many among the petty Princes who ventured to stand against such superior power; while the assertion of Austria, which she had once made in Dresden, that it would be impossible to leave the city without having accomplished *something*, daily found now, as formerly, many who were moved by it from sheer fear of revolution.

On the 17th of August the Emperor, as president, opened the first sitting with a well-calculated speech, which was answered and substantially seconded by King Max of Bavaria. Upon this, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin moved that the Assembly should send a written invitation to the King of Prussia to take part in their proceedings. King John of Saxony said that he would not discuss the fitness of such a step, nay, that he would give his voice in favor of it, but

only on the condition, that it should be preceded by two resolutions, first, that the Assembly recognized in the imperial proposition a suitable basis for their future deliberations, and secondly, that the Assembly would not allow a possible negative answer on the King's part to prevent them from continuing their deliberations on that basis. The Emperor and King Max supported the motion in this form, which was then, after a short discussion, approved.

The Emperor expressed his satisfaction at having thus received evidence that the august personages there assembled were all agreed that in any case their deliberations should produce a definite result. King John of Saxony then undertook the task of drawing up the letter to King William and of conveying it in person to Baden. In spite of advice to the contrary from the Grand Duke of Baden, it was decided that the fact that the Austrian outline had already been adopted as the basis of their deliberations should be expressly mentioned in the letter. On the morning of the 19th, King John went to Baden, and the Assembly was adjourned until his return.

All this caused King William much discomfort. His head and heart were at war in regard to the Assembly of Princes. It would have been a real satisfaction to him, there, in the midst of his fellow Princes, to have put a hand to the great work, — if only the reasons for a contrary course had not been too strong. Then came the doubt whether, after all, he could not act more effectively for Prussia's interests and for Germany's

welfare on the spot than at a distance. Queen Maria in Munich, and in Wildbad his sister-in-law, the Dowager Queen Elizabeth, whom he so highly revered, urged him in the same direction; while, on the other hand, Bismarck remained firm in his determination: if the King commanded, he would accompany him to Frankfort, but would never again return as Minister from there to Berlin.

The stimulating effect of the baths acting together with this struggle of opposing convictions made the King nervous, and when he came to the interviews with King John he grew decidedly ill. He expressed to the august messenger his strong desire to go to Frankfort, but after explaining his reasons, said that he preferred to give his decision in writing, in his answer to the Assembly.

When consulting with Bismarck after the interview, he cried: "Thirty Princes sending an invitation, and the courier a King—how can one refuse?" Yet in the end, as always with him, the head held the heart in check. After much hesitation and doubt, the letter of refusal was written, sealed, and then delivered by Bismarck to the King of Saxony at his departure. Bismarck's wrath was boiling inwardly over the long suspense. When the door had closed behind the Saxon, he smashed a plate which was standing on the table with some glasses: "I had to break something!" he said; "now I can breathe again."

Meanwhile in Frankfort the Assembly continued to strike while the iron was hot. The order of business

usually followed in such deliberations, first and second reading, discussion of the matter as a whole and in detail, etc., naturally did not come in question here; what was important, was to attain the object as quickly as possible, no matter under what form. On the morning of the 21st of August the Princes listened to an Austrian memorial, in which the Emperor, taking as a basis the acceptance of his outline, continued with the hope that only such amendments to that outline would be proposed as should not alter the system as a whole; he then recommended for the speedy consideration and decision of the Princes twelve especially important articles, and left the remainder to be discussed by the Ministers with the condition, that, whenever no understanding could be arrived at in regard to any change, the text of the original outline should be left untouched.

When the Emperor, at the sitting on the 22d, advocated this method of proceeding, he was at once supported by the King of Saxony and by some of the other Princes. In vain did the Grand Duke of Baden point out the need of a regular order of business, and raise the question whether resolutions passed by the majority of the Assembly were to be binding. King John replied that naturally each one could bind only himself by his own vote, but that it was desirable to arrive at a general understanding, and that for that purpose it was necessary to learn the opinion of all, or at any rate of the majority; he said that for his part he was always ready to subordinate his opinion to that of the majority.

The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin thereupon declared that he could regard the votes upon the special articles for the present as only preliminary; not until a general vote upon the whole was taken would the opinion of the Assembly be finally ascertained. The Emperor Francis Joseph at once assented to this, but expressed the hope that when the vote upon the whole was taken, it might be regarded as binding.

After the question of the form of proceeding had been thus summarily disposed of, the Assembly at once proceeded to business; that is, to the consideration of the special articles. It would not be interesting for us to follow out in detail these discussions, condemned from the beginning to result in nothing, especially as there is no authentic report of the speeches of the august participants, and as in the records of the sessions there is only an occasional reference to particular propositions that were made. From the very beginning a decided majority declared for the imperial proposals; these proposals exactly met the wishes of the Lesser States, and only a small number of the others had the courage to maintain an opposite view under the eyes of the Emperor.

During the whole course of the sessions Francis Joseph displayed a talent for presiding, as prudent and energetic as if he had been occupied his whole life with parliamentary business. King John of Saxony showed himself to be a no less successful leader of the Majority, whether it was a question of making convincing speeches or of employing strategic skill in

the harmonizing of conflicting opinions. In opposition to him, it was above all the Grand Duke of Baden who fought against the whole system without flinching and did not hesitate to give expression to the heretical view, regarded with horror by the other side, that any fruitful activity on the part of the Confederation would be impossible so long as two Great Powers belonged to it.

For his propositions of amendment, however, he could not obtain more than from four to six votes: Weimar, Oldenburg, and occasionally Coburg, Waldeck, and Reuss.

In its contents the propositions of reform followed exactly the lines of the latest deliberations of the Confederate Diet, already known to us: the enlargement of the object of the Confederation; the authorizing of the Confederation to extend its legislative and administrative power to institutions of common usefulness of every sort, and hence the decided limiting of the requirement of unanimity in passing votes; in compensation for this, the communicating to delegates from the Chambers of a share in legislation, and the creation of an executive in the shape of a directory, in which, as well as in the Diet, Austria should have the presidency and could count upon having, in connection with the Lesser States, a permanent majority. Besides this there was to be a Confederate court of appeal, which should have the function among others of making a decision, in case of disputes between the Government and the popular representation in any state in respect

to the interpretation of the constitution of that state. In order to recommend the Act of Reform to the King of Prussia, it was pointed out to him that by this means he could escape entirely from every contest with the Lower House in regard to the budget. He said with a smile: "That would not be so bad;" but immediately added, "but it will not do."

From the point of view of Austria's wishes, Article VIII. of the Act of Reform, that concerning peace and war, was especially characteristic. "Should there be danger of attack upon the Confederation or upon any part of the Confederate territory, or should the European balance of power appear endangered in any way likely to affect the Confederation, the Directory shall take all necessary steps, shall arrange the mobilization of the Confederate army, and shall appoint the Confederate commander-in-chief. The formal declaration of war shall be resolved upon by the Diet (or, as it was here called, the Confederate Council), by a majority of two-thirds. Should there be danger of a war between a Confederate State that at the same time has possessions outside of the Confederation and a foreign Power, then at the motion of the Directory the Confederate Diet shall decide in regard to participation in this war (for instance, an Austrian war about Venetia) by a simple majority-vote." This arrangement, however, — a qualified majority for the defence of Confederate territory, a simple majority for the protection of non-Confederate countries, — was too much even for the faithful Lesser States. On the motion of Saxony and

Nassau, the majority of two-thirds was adopted for both cases. Nevertheless, the article still remained an advance in the direction desired by Austria; since Article XLVII. of the Vienna Final Act had provided for the second case, that, in the event of a hostile attack upon non-Confederate territory, the Confederate Diet must have recognized in that attack a danger for the Confederation, before deciding to resist it.

If the Act of Reform thus drawn up was unacceptable to Prussia, it was quite as unsuccessful in winning the favor of the German people. Besides the Assembly of Princes, there also met at that time in Frankfort an Assembly of three hundred members of all the German Chambers with the exception of Austria. This Assembly, on the 22d of August, resolved upon the demand of a Parliament chosen by the people, of the equalization of the two Great Powers in the Confederation, and of the settlement of the future constitution by the Governments and the Parliaments in common. "It is impossible," said the resolution in polite language, "to adopt a wholly negative attitude in regard to Austria's proposal." But it was evident to all the world that the statement of these demands implied the complete rejection of the outline brought forward by the Emperor.

At the last sitting of the Assembly of Princes, on the 1st of September, 1863, Hanover and Brunswick proposed that the Articles hitherto reserved for the Conference of Ministers should be accepted at one vote, and that the deliberations of the Ministers should thus

be rendered unnecessary. The proposal was well received, and after a short debate was unanimously adopted, Baden only making a reservation. Thus the discussion in detail was ended, and the vote in regard to the whole could be approached.

In regard to this, the Emperor Francis Joseph put two distinct questions: 1. Does the Assembly accept the final result of the deliberations? 2. Does the Assembly consider itself bound by these resolutions until the members of the Confederation not here present have either definitively refused the outline or have communicated to us their counter-proposals? Both questions were thereupon answered affirmatively by twenty-four voices and negatively by six: Baden, Schwerin, Weimar, Luxemburg, Waldeck, and Reuss (younger branch).

The members of the Majority then signed a declaration of their readiness to complete, so far as in them lay, the future constitution of Germany according to the standard of the resolutions thus adopted, and to put it into execution, and with this object to strive for a general understanding on the basis of these resolutions with the members of the Confederation not represented in the Assembly, especially with the King of Prussia. It is noticeable that in the original draft of the declaration, instead of the words "general understanding," had stood the words "an understanding in accordance with the principles of the Confederation;" the change was preferred, however, in order to exclude any doubt as to the intention being really to secure a unanimity

of all the members, and not to bring about a more restricted union by means of Article XI. of the old Act of Confederation.

This was a bad sign for the fulfilment of the desires of Austria, which were directed toward just such a union, in case the great Confederate reform now aimed at should prove a failure.

Finally, a second communication from the Assembly to the King of Prussia was proposed and accepted; and then the German Assembly of Princes was closed by a speech of the Emperor of Austria. To speak figuratively, a brilliant display of pyrotechnics, with noisy rockets, flashing stars, and Bengal lights, had been exhibited before the astonished public; what was left of it after the last gleam had faded away?

In Berlin the outline of the constitution sent from Frankfort had been officially placed before the Council for consideration, and the report was presented to the King on the 15th of December. This contained the advice not to enter into a criticism of the special articles, but rather that the Government should declare itself ready to carry on further negotiations in regard to Confederate reform by means of conferences of ministers, provided a preliminary understanding could be arrived at concerning three decisive and essential principles. First, Prussia must demand for herself as well as Austria the right of vetoing a declaration of war on the part of the Confederation, since Prussia, as a European Power, could not make her foreign policy unconditionally subservient to that of the Confederation, and

since, beside this, she had more inhabitants than the Lesser and Petty States together, who by joining forces in the Confederate Diet could at any time prevent for their part a declaration of war. Secondly, Prussia required that her position in the Confederation should be equal to Austria's, which would imply an alternation in the presidency of the supreme Confederate authority; for historical developments had given both States an equal importance in Europe, and in the Confederation Prussia counted more inhabitants than Austria. Thirdly, Prussia could not agree to an enlargement of the functions of the Confederation, which would naturally imply a limitation of her own independence, unless a guaranty were offered to her that this sacrifice would be for the interests of the German Nation as a whole and not for those of particular States: such a guaranty, however, Prussia could recognize only in a German Parliament chosen directly by the people, while the proposed assembly of delegates would be the exact opposite of this, a mere representation of individualistic tendencies.

King William at once expressed his acceptance of this report; and on the 22d of September he sent the same, together with letters of similar purport, to all the members of the Frankfort Majority. By this, every hope of an understanding was cut off.

A characteristic interlude may here be mentioned.

Lord John Russell, always well-intentioned and always convinced of the value of his good intentions, could not refuse himself the pleasure of communicating

to the Prussian Government, on this occasion also, his opinion of their attitude. In a despatch sent to Berlin on the 30th of September he declared that the first two Prussian demands, concerning the veto and the alternation in the presidency, were just and reasonable; but he urgently entreated that the third, the demand of a German parliament chosen directly by the people, might be given up; for, he said, an electoral law with a high qualification would arouse the opposition of all the Liberals, and if one with a low qualification, or with no qualification at all, were adopted, elections would follow, which, as in 1848, would throw everything open to Revolution.

Bismarck's answer to this is worthy of notice, because it shows already the train of ideas according to which he three years later gave the stamp to the future imperial constitution. "As to what concerns a German parliament," he said in a despatch of the 8th of October, "our standpoint is based, not upon a political theory, but upon material Prussian interests which are identical with those of the majority of the German nation. The interests of the German Governments are not the same as ours, but those of by far the greater part of the German people are so. Prussia requires something to oppose to the dynastic policy of the Governments, and that something she can find only in a national representation. . . . Even the lowest electoral qualification would offer us better guaranties against revolutionary extravagances than many of the electoral laws upon which the representative bodies of

the individual States are now based, better guaranties, for instance, than the present method of election in Prussia."

As is seen, if this view were adopted, general universal suffrage would not be at a great distance.

In conclusion, Bismarck gave the assurance, that, according to Prussia's intentions, the proposition of a national representation would not serve either unifying or revolutionary purposes. Such a representative assembly would have great authority in matters affecting the Confederation, but would be much less authorized to interfere in the internal affairs of any country than would a Government established according to the Austrian proposal.

With this for the present Earl Russell was content. The reports from St. Petersburg and Paris at that time were much more favorable to Prussia. Prince Gortschakoff expressed to the Prussian ambassador the conviction that, considering the dangers which threatened from France and from revolutionary tendencies, all friends of order ought to take care that any difficulty between Prussia and Austria might be avoided. He accordingly expressed sincere regret at the inconsiderate action of Austria in the Frankfort Assembly of Princes, which had tended to produce, not harmony, but discord. Russia, he said, had spared no pains to dispel in Vienna the illusion that the Act of Reform met with her approval.

In Paris an entire change in the tone of feeling that had prevailed since February was now taking place.

As we have seen, Napoleon had been in the beginning but little inclined to a diplomatic campaign against Russia. By the persuasion of England and the approval of Austria he had gradually allowed himself to be led into such measures, and then, when Russia's friendship had once been hazarded, he had taken hold of the matter seriously, had made imperative demands, and had wished to support them, in case of necessity, by force of arms. England, however, was ready to take part in the harshest notes, but would have nothing to do with war; and Austria, even in the notes, refused to make more decided demands than the six requirements, and rejected every suggestion of war even more energetically than England.

In the midst of his vexation at this, the Emperor received news of the Vienna Act of Reform, which with its directory could not but seem to him the first step towards the "empire of seventy millions," and with its eighth article a German guaranty of Venetia. He was angry from the bottom of his heart. If Rechberg, by taking part in the Polish notes, had expected to gain Napoleon's approval for the Frankfort Assembly of Princes, the exact contrary of this had happened. Napoleon thought that he had first been maliciously drawn into a quarrel with Russia, in order that then that one of all the forms of a German constitution which was to him the most disagreeable might be easily established.

He at once turned again to Prussia. "This unfortunate Polish question," said he to Count Goltz, "has not

indeed made a quarrel between us, — it has never come to that, — but has made our relations somewhat less close. It is our only point of difference. I would give much if it could be got out of the way altogether. Prussia is in a position to accomplish fruitful results for this object.” Drouyn de Lhuys seconded his master: “The Emperor’s most anxious wish,” he said to the Ambassador, “is to do something in concert with Prussia.” Bismarck answered at once on the 5th of September, expressing satisfaction at the renewal of friendly relations, and also readiness to act as a mediator at St. Petersburg.

But before he could take such a step, there appeared on the 9th of September Gortschakoff’s answer to the notes of the 3d and 12th of August, containing the not very courteous announcement that Russia did not care to continue a profitless negotiation. This naturally caused new thoughts of war in Paris; since a Power like France could not let itself be put off in such a way as that.

Further negotiations with London and Vienna followed. Lord John Russell made an extremely bold speech, declaring to the world that Russia, after the breach of the agreement of 1815, had forfeited the support of the Act of the Vienna Congress for her possession of her Polish provinces. But Lord John had no intention of contributing more than these crushing words to the Polish cause. Count Rechberg would not even indulge in threatening language, and redoubled his opposition to any warlike action. This made it

impossible for the French Emperor to punish Russia for the note of the 9th of September. He expressed great indignation at Austria's policy, and showed increased friendliness toward Prussia. "In the Polish matter," he said to Count Goltz, "you were among my opponents; but your conduct was plain and open: with you one always knows what to expect." He had already considered how he would make his untrustworthy ally feel the weight of his dissatisfaction.

Meanwhile Count Rechberg was endeavoring to gather some fruit, whether great or small, from the Frankfort Assembly of Princes. When Herr von Werther communicated to him the Prussian documents of the 15th and 22d of September, the Count cried with great indignation: "Prussia herself can hardly expect that such demands will be fulfilled. She claims for Austria and for herself alike the right of objecting to a declaration of war on the part of the Confederation; but this is by no means the same thing for the two Courts: Austria may very easily come to require the help of the Confederation on account of Venetia or Hungary, Prussia is not likely to need such assistance. The alternation in the presidency is contrary to the old compacts; Austria cannot possibly give up an historical claim of her Emperor in point of honor. Finally, a parliament chosen by the people means nothing more nor less than revolution, mediatization of the Princes, and suppression of the individual States. What it all amounts to is, that Prussia, as usual, is opposing every fruitful development of the Confederation."

In his excitement and anger the Count did not even wait for the orders of his Sovereign, who was then at Ischl, but at once, on the 26th of September, proposed, by a circular to the Princes who had met at Frankfort, that the confutation — which could easily be drawn up — of the confused and involved Prussian statements should be sent to Berlin in the form of a common note, in which also a fitting place might be found for the declaration that it was out of the question that the Frankfort resolutions should remain without practical results. This would have been the proclamation of a more restricted union within the Confederation, and hence would have meant the abandonment of all those principles, relying on which Prince Schwarzenberg had resisted the Prussian Union, and the senders of the common note of 1862 the programme of Count Bernstorff.

But Rechberg found little soil for the acceptance of such ideas among the Lesser States. Even at Frankfort the Bavarian Minister, Von Schrenck, had declared: "We will have no confederation without Austria, but likewise none without Prussia." This was the guiding thought in the entire policy of the Lesser States at that time: to consider the presence of both the Great Powers in the Confederation as the best, if not the only, guaranty of their own independence and power, to find in the one an assurance against the ambition of the other, and finally to make the decision in any difference between the two depend upon their own casting vote.

The Lesser States were now, therefore, quite as little disposed to listen to a more restricted alliance with Austria as they had been formerly to a union with Prussia. "That means the destruction of the German Confederation," said Schrenck. And Beust expressed the opinion, that, in the uncertain state of European affairs, it was of the greatest importance not to push the quarrel with Prussia to extremities, but to bring about a good understanding between Vienna and Berlin. With this view, these States would not agree to the harsh method of a common note; so that some weeks were spent in considering in what way the confutation of the Prussian document was to find expression. Finally, for this purpose a conference of ministers was convened at Nuremberg on the 23d of October, and it was decided that Austria should take upon herself to answer the Prussian document in the name of all.

But when Rechberg called upon his Frankfort friends now to carry out in their own States the Confederate Constitution that had there been agreed upon, and at once to proceed to the establishment of a directory, he was met on all sides with a categorical refusal. The overthrow was complete. In the hope of confounding their opponents, the Austrian Government had played a bold game; they had at length found opponents even in their friends, and now had to regret the double loss.

Rechberg returned to Vienna with the feeling that if an accord with Prussia were possible, how much more fruitful it would be than dealing with all these insignificant and wilful potentates! *If* it only were possible!

The trial was near at hand. But here we will pause in the course of our narrative. We have arrived at the point at which the contest in regard to Schleswig-Holstein began to be decisive for the future of Germany. For the understanding of the questions that arise in this connection, it is indispensable to take a comprehensive glance at the origin of the German-Danish complication and at the course it had taken up to this time.