



EMPEROR WILLIAM II.

THE FOUNDING  
OF THE  
GERMAN EMPIRE

BY WILLIAM I.

BASED CHIEFLY UPON PRUSSIAN STATE DOCUMENTS

By HEINRICH VON SYBEL

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BOOK XVII.

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*WAR IN NORTH GERMANY AND ITALY.*

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# FOUNDING OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### PLANS FOR THE CAMPAIGN.

IN striking contrast to the haste with which Austria's Ministerial Council brought on the commencement of the war with Prussia at the beginning of May stood the prudent caution of her military leaders. The same thing was exactly repeated which had proved so fateful to Austria in 1859: the politicians of the State Chancellorship had passionately and inconsiderately torn asunder the diplomatic bonds, before the responsible army officers were either ready or disposed to fight. To be sure, the preparations made by Frank and Henikstein hastened the catastrophe, as we have seen; but the Minister of War, as well as the Chief of the Staff, had advised these equipments wholly with a view to defensive action, that is, properly speaking, only in the interests of peace. The ones that urged war were that group of Ministers: Belcredi, Larisch, and Esterhazy, who staked everything upon their feudal-clerical system, and those fanatical adherents of the doctrine of an "entire Germany" that were in the State Chancellors-

ship: Meysenbug, Biegeleben, and Max Gagern, to whom the elevation of the Protestant King of Prussia meant the success of all the powers of hell. But in the army there was not much of such sentiment to be found.

It is true that the unfortunate fellowship of 1864 had now turned into soldierly indignation against Prussian arrogance; but otherwise the corps of Imperial officers did not trouble themselves much with politics. They were neither Liberal nor Clerical, but straight-out Imperialists. At the threatened approach of war the younger officers, as ever under such circumstances, rejoiced at the prospect of earning glory and honor, of receiving additional pay while in the field, and of military advancement. Among the generals of high rank there were many to whom it was not exactly agreeable that the supreme command lay in the hands of the Protestant *bourgeois* Benedek; but they were determined to do their duty, and confidently believed they should be able to lay in the dust all enemies of the Imperial State.

But it was with the highest authority itself, at headquarters, that the assurance of victory was not great. Master of the Ordnance Benedek had by his own cleverness as a soldier risen from the lowest step to the highest. After a succession of brilliant deeds in a subordinate position he had been in 1859 the only one that had fought with success at Solferino; and since then he enjoyed such a popularity that at this time public sentiment had almost forced the Emperor

to offer to him the supreme command. When he arrived in Vienna in May, he was greeted by the people with enthusiastic cheering wherever he showed himself. He alone did not feel contented in view of the great task which he was to undertake. He was a conscientious, sensible, and well-instructed man, who had weighed carefully his circumstances and his powers: a warrior of unswerving bravery, ready for any risk, wherever his superiors chose to place him. When the duty was once set before him, and the command given to go ahead, his iron will defied every danger. If successful, he modestly congratulated himself at his soldier's good fortune, which once again had been faithful to him.

But to him as a commander-in-chief there was one thing lacking, the power to decide quickly. The art of war was said by the First Napoleon to be a matter of tact. This signified that it depended upon the intuitive ability to see men and things at every moment just as they are, and then to act accordingly with quick decision. Benedek had a firm character, but a slow one. If it was not given to him to carry out what another had ordered, if he himself was to give the final decision, then he was obliged to work his way step by step in coming to a clear conviction: he hesitated, and then gave an order, only to correct and recall it.

He himself was very conscious of this limitation to his natural talents. One day he came to Mensdorff and announced to him that he had just been to the

Emperor in order to beg his Master to release him from the supreme command. He had told the Emperor that at the head of a division, he would do what it was possible for any man to do, but that to lead a great army into a country unknown to him was beyond his powers. The Emperor had contradicted him, and finally had told him that he must undertake it, as there was no other general who could be appointed in his place. Nothing had pained Benedek more, he said to Mensdorff, than that the Emperor should say that Austria nowhere possessed a better general than he.<sup>1</sup> He said that he would certainly obey; but he begged the Minister to try his utmost to change the Emperor's opinion.

When, in the beginning of April, Austria took the first steps in the way of armament, and Count Mensdorff again and again emphasized the dangers of every aggressive measure, General Krismanic, who had been appointed to the head of the department of military operations, received orders to draw up a plan of campaign to be pursued in case of war. "We make our preparations," said he, "for this eventuality, because we expect in the immediate future an attack from Prussia, but not because we wish to make the attack: therefore our first duty is to choose for our army a position that can be well defended. A second argument for this lies in the fact that Prussia can mobilize

<sup>1</sup> Gramont, p. 262. This authority is, to be sure, extremely unreliable wherever Prussian affairs are concerned. Nevertheless, this account agrees with everything that is otherwise known of Benedek, and does the unfortunate General the greatest honor.



much more quickly than Austria, and consequently there is danger lest the Austrian army be surprised in an unprepared condition by the enemy's attack. Consequently, the place where the Austrian forces are to be collected must not be easy to reach by the enemy in a sudden sally, and must have a firm point of support of the first order." Thus the conclusion was drawn that the army should not be stationed in Bohemia, but in Moravia, in the vicinity of the great gathering-place, Olmütz, with the exception of the first corps, to be garrisoned in Bohemia, which should guard those frontiers, and according to circumstances be ready to join the main army. The memorial of General Krismanic further considered a succession of possibilities, which might be necessary in the way of defence according to the offensive movements of the enemy. We need not specify these in detail, since, although many other possible cases were discussed, just that one was not foreseen which later actually took place.

This plan of campaign was approved. The further development of the campaign was first to be determined by a great battle on the defensive near Olmütz, where Austria's whole power was to be matched against all the forces of her opponent. At that time, in the beginning of April, when this plan was sketched, much could be said in its favor; for if Prussia were already mobilizing her troops, she might be ready to make an attack three weeks before the Austrian preparations would be completed. But, as

we know, this did not occur. Prussia gave her orders for mobilization, not at the beginning of April, but between the 3d and 12th of May, and then had on her part to make great exertions to recover the advantage which Austria had already gained upon her.

When this was fully known in Vienna and Olmütz, there seems to have been no other thought entertained than the removal of the headquarters of the army, and the place where the troops were to be collected, from Moravia to Bohemia, whether this was for the sake of defending this important country, or whether it arose from a greater feeling of self-confidence and a desire to make a promising offensive movement upon Silesia or Brandenburg. If this resolve had been made in the middle of May, the army could have been collected four weeks later as well in Northern Bohemia as at Olmütz;<sup>1</sup> how important this would have been for its further operations we shall learn below from the most reliable sources; namely, from the deliberations of Austria's opponents.

But such a resolve was not made. To begin with, the defensive position at Olmütz was maintained, where, accordingly, six army-corps gradually collected: the 2d under Count Thun, the 3d under Archduke Ernest, the 4th under Count Festetics, the 6th under Baron Ramming, the 8th under Archduke Leopold, and the 10th under Baron Gablenz. Three divisions of cavalry were likewise encamped in Moravia, while a fourth was advanced towards Austrian Silesia. The

<sup>1</sup> *Oesterreichs Kämpfe*, I. 161.

1st army-corps under Count Clam-Gallas in Bohemia was strengthened by the arrival of the cavalry division under Edelsheim, and the return of Abele's brigade from Holstein, bringing it in all up to 41,000 men. The whole number of these forces together was normally 238,000 men,<sup>1</sup> to which must be added also the Saxon army-corps, composed of 23,000 men.

These were imposing figures; and self-sacrificing ardor and knightly valor were abundantly evidenced by the individual soldiers in every part of the army. But otherwise Benedek was obliged to learn of many things that were not calculated to strengthen his hopes for brilliant success.<sup>2</sup> The financial embarrassment of the Empire during the last few years had constantly been the unavoidable cause of inadequate recruiting and of very many leaves of absence, even from the companies on a peace-footing; so that when war began to threaten, additional levies had to be made in large numbers in order to fill out the ranks. Indeed, a large portion, perhaps one-half, of the troops had scarcely spent a year in service, and consequently had only superficially acquired the spirit of their place in the army as a whole, or the habits of unconditional obedience and accuracy in military exercises.

To this deficiency was added the lack of capable subordinate officers, because there was no money at hand with which to obtain competent and efficient

<sup>1</sup> *Oesterreichs Kämpfe*, III., 1.

<sup>2</sup> Concerning the following statistics cf. J. N. *Rückblicke auf den Krieg von 1866*, pp. 321 and 331; also Nebel von Chlum., p. 33 *et seqq.*

men, so that it was necessary to put up with persons of very little ability, for instance, with members of the music-bands. Whereas, then, in Prussia the reserves, after having served their three years' term, were at definite intervals summoned to short seasons of exercise, so that they quickly renewed their skill and refreshed their memories with what they had learned before: Austria had saved expense in this matter also, so that many a man who had served his time had sunk back to the stage of a raw recruit. And beside all this, these troops were composed of men from the very lowest classes of the population, to a great extent from races that possessed hardly the rudiments of civilization, and from regions where far and wide there was not the least trace of school-teaching to be found, much less, as Liebig says, where soap was recognized as a criterion of gentility. However unnecessary it may be for the common soldier to be a learned man, it is nevertheless advantageous for the army, if he understands the art of reading and writing, and still more so, if now and then among the rank and file a certain number of well-educated men are to be found.

Now, in all these respects the Austrian troops were far behind the Prussian; and when this is taken in connection with the above-mentioned imperfections in the military organization, the causes are manifest which produced the superior skill in manœuvring and the solidity in composition of the Prussian battalions. Benedek did what he could to cure these defects, but

could not do more than to enforce more strictly the rules of the barracks concerning obedience and cleanliness. So far as the introduction of new tactics in fighting was concerned, necessary as these were in view of the Prussian needle-guns, nothing whatever could be done during these last moments ; in fact, so far as we know, nothing of the kind was talked of.

Since the war of 1859 the French had constantly emphasized the decisiveness of their bayonet attacks, which nothing could resist. Carnot had already called the bayonet the true weapon of Republicans; and soon afterwards Suwaroff had declared: "The musket is a fool, the bayonet is a whole man." Hence it had become the rule to endeavor to make tremendous attacks in a solid body; and this system was the longer persisted in, since in the course of the last Danish war the Prussian troops had had an opportunity only in one small skirmish to display the murderous effect of their fire upon the close bodies of soldiers.

But what, more than anything else, kept the Austrian Commander-in-chief in his defensive attitude was the circumstance that in spite of the fact that preparations had been begun early, and although eight weeks had now passed since all necessary orders had been issued, in actuality, as was usually the case, many important things had been left undone. In the midst of the most fruitful provinces of Austria itself the care and provisioning of the troops were inefficiently organized, and on the very first marches of any length the soldiers suffered serious want. Then, too, the

actual number of the troops was far behind their normal strength, so that on the 16th of June the army at Olmütz contained only 174,000 men in the infantry instead of 197,000; and Benedek, who, according to the incomplete statistics which he had at hand, supposed that he should be able to have under his command only 158,000, believed that his Prussian adversary possessed a force superior to his own by more than 40,000 men.

The General therefore looked about for fresh accessions with no little anxiety. He desired very urgently to draw over to Bohemia as great a portion as possible of the forces from the German Lesser States. From all the previous negotiations and decrees, it was thought in Vienna that about 100,000 men from South Germany and 50,000 from North Germany might, in round numbers, be counted on; and it did not seem to be asking too much to request that about one half of these numerous forces might be transferred to the critical point, to the seat of the war, Bohemia.

But the nearer the day of serious trial approached, the more uncertain did the fulfilment of this hope become. It must be said that the Court of Vienna was forced by a righteous law to reap what it had itself been sowing for the past fifty years. Up to this time the Lesser States had been enjoying a comfortable existence under the glass roof of the German Confederation. Austria and Prussia protected them against foreign nations; and so the Lesser States had spared their subjects from the burdens of maintaining an

active army, although upon paper their contingent to the Confederate troops was in fine order. When the Confederation then began to talk about a mobilization, it happened that one powerful Government inquired in breathless haste where manufactories of cloth and of arms were to be found that could furnish their soldiers with coats and guns.

How often had Prussia proposed a reform of the Confederate military organization, so that a possibility might be effected of legally putting an end to this shiftless and lazy conduct, and of forcing the small, and even the smallest, states to fulfil their duties and do their share in the matter of providing for the national safety! But since this end could not be accomplished without granting to Prussia, at least in the North of Germany, certain rights of supervision over her smaller neighbors, Austria and the Confederate Diet had always made it a point to nip every such attempt in the bud. Now they were to suffer the consequences. They wished to march into the field against Prussia, and found at every turn all the most indispensable things wanting. After the Majority of these states had five weeks before ordered the mobilization of their troops, there was now, at the middle of June, no point at which they were ready for action or even for operations.

The Bavarian army upon a war-footing ought normally to number 72,000 men, beside 21,000 recruits that were on leave of absence, but had never done service, and 114,000 reserves, who had served out

their regular time, but had never been summoned to any military training since. The Kings of Bavaria had manifested only a slight personal interest in their army, and had on the other hand suffered the Government to yield readily to the constant cry of the Chambers for a reduction of the army budget, to shorten the time of service, to lessen the number of officers and subalterns, and to reduce in the cavalry regiments the supply of horses necessary even upon a peace-footing.

So it happened that now, when Bavaria was to mobilize the 7th Confederate army-corps, which according to her certificate of membership in the Confederation ought to consist of 53,400 men, she could muster by the middle of June, after the greatest exertions, only 45,000 men, of whom one-third were recruits that had served, at most, only three months, with a scarcely adequate corps of officers, with horses of questionable quality, and with insufficient means for maintenance and provisioning. On the 15th of June the brigades stood scattered among all the provinces of the kingdom. The Commander-in-chief was the aged, but still very zealous, even if not well-trained, Prince Charles of Bavaria, who was on the 27th of June appointed also to the command of the Confederate troops, that is, of the remaining West German contingents.

But the 8th Confederate army corps was even worse off than the 7th. The only contingent that was ready was that of Hesse-Darmstadt, a force always acknowl-



edged to be excellent, and the Nassau brigade, which temporarily belonged to this corps, and which was united with the Austrian garrisons of the Confederate fortresses into one division. Out of 16,000 men from Würtemberg only one brigade was able to be on hand in Frankfort on the 17th of June; the second appeared on the 28th of June, and the third not until the 5th of July. In Baden, the Grand Duke had resisted until the last moment the demands of the Confederate Diet and of Edelsheim. But his enemies had had no scruples about inciting the soldiery through the Catholic clergy, so that a military revolt like that of 1849 was at hand, had the Grand Duke continued to disregard the orders of the Confederate Diet. Accordingly, the armament began in earnest on the 17th of June. On the 25th the first brigade started for Frankfort; but it was not until the 9th of July that the contingent was wholly furnished and in its place in the army corps. The command over these heterogeneous forces, consisting of 35,000 men instead of the normal number of 47,000, subjects of five different masters and accustomed to five sorts of disciplinary regulations, signals, and systems of arms, was assumed on the 18th of June by Prince Alexander of Hesse, an officer with a good record in many battles, but as yet entirely unacquainted with his present subordinates.

Finally, with regard to the North German contingents of the 9th and 10th Confederate corps, the Kingdom of Saxony had already fully equipped its troops, owing to the energy and circumspection of the

Minister of War, Rabenhorst, and now placed a fine body of 23,000 men with all the necessary requirements under the command of the Crown Prince Albert, an excellent leader in all respects. The Saxons had resolved to abandon upon the first appearance of the Prussians their own territory which could not well be defended, and to station the army outside of this in as safe and advantageous a position as possible. The first thought of the Government was directed in this connection to Bavaria. It was considered that if Bavaria joined with the Saxons an equally strong corps in the vicinity of Baireuth and Hof, Prussia would be forced to give very serious attention to a hostile force of such size. Herr von Beust thought, too, that if this were done, Saxony could still abide by her favorite declaration that she had not armed against Prussia, but only to defend the laws of the Confederation. The proposal, however, was rejected very decidedly in Munich; and consequently there was nothing left for the Saxon army to do but to march off to Bohemia and join with the Austrians.

Also in Hanover and in Hesse-Cassel, all intention of hostility against Prussia in the order of June 14th to mobilize was emphatically denied, and the command was supported under the cloak of loyalty to the Confederation. Prudence was indeed necessary; for in Hesse-Cassel not the first step had been taken towards arming, and in Hanover, although the reserves had been called in and provisions collected in abundance at Stade, no portion of the troops was ready to march.

Thus things looked bad enough for the armament of the Governments that were loyal to the Confederation; and they could not complain, if the Prussian Press occasionally referred to Rossbach and spoke no longer of the Confederate, but of the Imperial army. Yet still worse things came to light when, on the 10th of June, the Chief of the Bavarian Staff, General von der Tann, started off to Vienna and Olmütz, in order to consult about the operations that it would be necessary to undertake in the event of a war against Prussia. Tann discussed in Vienna with the Emperor's Adjutant General, Count Crenneville, the outline of a common military disposition. According to this, Prince Charles of Bavaria was to have the permanent independent command over the 7th and 8th army-corps, but to arrange and govern his operations in conformity to the general plan now to be fixed upon, and to the controlling directions of Benedek. Article III. said, however, that it was expressly to be understood that these operations should always be consistent with the interests of the countries contributing these contingents, and that their chief business was to be the protection of the territory of their own sovereigns. The Bavarian army was, further, to be stationed by the 15th of June in proper form in Franconia and in the vicinity of railways. Austria was to agree not to form a separate peace with Prussia, and to use her influence in the conclusion of a peace to save Bavaria from suffering losses or even to secure for her an indemnification.

The striking feature of this document, so far as the conduct of the war was concerned, was evidently Article III., according to which the chief duty of each contingent was the immediate protection of the territory of its sovereign. Count Mensdorff at once called Henikstein's attention to this point, emphasized the necessity of united action in the operations, and very correctly observed that the territories of the individual Governments could not be better protected than by an overwhelming attack directly upon the enemy and the latter's speedy overthrow. General von der Tann, of whom it has been indeed said that he was not exactly born to be the chief of a staff, but who was a brave soldier with clear insight and good common sense, agreed with this and approved the amendment: "protection of their own territory, so far as this does not militate against the chief object of the war, whenever the latter can be attained only by the greatest possible union among all the forces engaged."

Thereupon he signed the agreement on the 14th of June. But in Munich they would not listen to such a subordination of private interests to the general cause. The compact was not ratified by Bavaria until the 30th of June, upon Austria's consenting to a wording of the Article by which it was declared indispensable to have regard to both interests "in equal measure," so that consequently each should have the right to withdraw her troops from any operation in which the protection of her own territory did not seem to be sufficiently taken into account.

In Olmütz, Tann and Henikstein had also immediately considered the plan of operations suggested in the agreement. According to Bavarian reports Tann now returned to the plan of uniting the Saxon and Bavarian forces at Hof, which it is hard to understand after the former rejection of the Saxon proposal. At any rate, Henikstein, who had in mind only the strengthening of the Austrian army, would not hear of this. On the other hand he proposed, quite in harmony with Mensdorff's ideas, that not only the Saxons but also the Bavarians and, so far as practicable, the troops of the 8th Confederate corps, should be ordered into Bohemia, holding the irrefutable theory that here, at this decisive point, as great a force as possible ought to be assembled, not only in the interests of Austria, but also of all the allies.

With this understanding, Benedek promised to lead his army by the end of June from Olmütz into the north-eastern part of Bohemia (to the Upper Elbe and Iser with the front towards the Riesengebirge), and then, after uniting with the Bavarians, to move in the offensive. When Tann, then, having recognized with his military sagacity the excellence of this plan, had subscribed to it, likewise on the 14th of June, Benedek, who immediately afterwards was also urged by the Emperor Francis Joseph to begin operations, gave orders to his army on the 17th to march forward, at first toward Josephstadt and vicinity on the Elbe. It was expected that the accomplishment of this would consume the space of eleven days, so that the arrival at

the Elbe was fixed for the 28th. But the half of this time had not elapsed when he received the news from Vienna that the Bavarian Government had categorically refused to allow its troops to march to Bohemia, a consideration which was hardly calculated to fan his weak desire of making an attack into a much stronger flame. But the march had been begun; and so the plan of acting on the offensive was maintained, with the hope that a union could be effected at least with the Saxons.

Meanwhile, Baron von der Pfordten had at this time told the Saxon ambassador, that Bavaria needed her troops in the first place for the defence of her own territory, but intended, when the general crisis came, to increase her position of power and to secure the permanent supreme control over the troops of the South German states; and that especially for that reason she could not consent to place her army in unconditional dependence upon Austria.

Naturally this was very soon communicated to the South German Courts and aroused in them great distrust of Bavaria's policy and military operations: a feeling which increased considerably when, a few weeks later, the contents were learned of the agreement of June 14th, which had until then been kept secret. That Article, in particular, in which Bavaria demanded indemnification in the event of her having suffered losses, seriously excited the feelings of her neighbors; especially in Carlsruhe the conviction was firmly rooted that this signified the old wish to acquire Heidelberg and Mannheim.

Thus in this coalition, so loyal to the Confederation, there was to be found the most pleasing variety of purposes in pursuing the war which promised peculiar results in the line of military operations. Austria desired the brilliant overthrow of her Prussian rival, which would mean for the Imperial Court supremacy over the whole of Germany. Bavaria, in her zeal for the continuance of the system of dualism in the Confederation, was very determined to prevent the carrying out of such plans, and though she would let Prussia be somewhat weakened she would not allow her to be too badly beaten. The other states entertained precisely the same feelings towards Bavaria that she did towards Austria. They were anxious not to be mediatized by Prussia and much less by Bavaria. So far as we know, there was among these South German Governments only one whose Prime Minister in the midst of these sentiments already began with distinct consciousness to count upon French support in case of necessity; but it seems very simple to see how inviting such a condition of things actually appeared to Napoleon in view of his own thoughts and his secret compact of the 12th of June. There is, however, no need of trying further to portray in this connection what Prussia's defeat in the great impending struggle would have meant for the future of Germany.

If, after all this, we see that Austria had no very great help to expect from her German allies, so also, on the other hand, it was evident before the beginning

of hostilities that Prussia could hope for just as little military gain to accrue to her from her Italian alliance. There was in Italy no lack of well-equipped forces nor of patriotic thirst for action; but here, too, as we shall see later, a wretched course of policy was to blast with barrenness all courage and enthusiasm.

So that everywhere we meet the same spectacle: great masses of armed men are on all sides; but nowhere among the leaders strength of thought and of will, a clear, systematically arranged purpose, nor determined dauntlessness. Benedek was not altogether sure of what he was to undertake with his quarter of a million of soldiers; nor did he make up his mind to advance until he was sure of the assistance of the Saxons, and hoped to be joined by the Bavarians. Prince Charles, however, was the more inclined to remain in Bavaria, since the greatest part of the Prussian army was moving against Bohemia. Moreover, he was still waiting for the battalions of the 8th Confederate corps, which were *in statu nascenti*. La Marmora lived in constant fear of being carried away by public opinion and of becoming over-energetic. He hoped, in short, not to need to fight, but only to march, and intended in no case to march very far.

In Berlin, there was indeed a different wind blowing in the Department of Foreign Affairs, as well as in the Ministry of War, and among the members of the Royal Staff. No one there was blind to the criticalness of the impending war: neither the mortal danger connected with defeat nor the glorious rewards



of victory. There was no longer any hesitation nor doubts. The arduousness of the task clouded at no point the power or the distinctness of the resolve. So soon as war should be declared, it was already decided to rush forward with all speed to the attack, to abandon every side-issue, and to unite all powers upon the attainment of the one great end, the overthrow of Austria and the extortion of peace in the very sight of the Imperial Palace.

There was only one difference of opinion; and this was over the question of when to begin. The King, just as he had given the order for mobilization several weeks later than the Austrians had done, also wished to leave to the enemy the beginning of hostilities, whether by a formal declaration of war or by an armed offensive. On political grounds this was undeniably well founded; but it caused the generals much serious anxiety. It was giving the enemy time to make good the faults in her equipment. It would be putting in her hands perhaps the initiative for all the movements of the campaign. At any rate, it was forcing one's self at the very beginning into a defensive position of doubtful security. The chief trouble was, that very insufficient information was received concerning the situation of things on the side of the enemy. It was learned that one Austrian army-corps was stationed in Bohemia, another in Moravia, and a third in West Galicia; but nothing whatever was known of where the adversary's main army was being collected, whether in Moravia or in Bohemia; nor had the Prussians any

idea at all of whether General Benedek was ready or inclined to undertake any great action on the offensive, although they were forced to believe so after Austria had been arming so long.

Therefore it was necessary to secure as well Berlin as Breslau against such an attack; and now the disadvantages were evident which resulted from beginning the mobilization so late. This double defence would have been best attained, if the whole army in the field had been concentrated at some point between the two, say at Görlitz. But to do this it would have been necessary to give up the use of several lines of railway in order to bring together from the east and west the various army-corps at this frontier, which seemed absolutely impracticable, after Austria had been allowed to get so much the start in the very first steps toward armament.

It would have taken until the end of July to complete the collection of the whole army at this point. Consequently it was decided to make use of all the railways at the same time, and to station temporarily at Torgau the troops coming from the Rhine, in Lusatia those arriving from the more central provinces, and in Silesia those from the eastern provinces. But this could not be accomplished before the 6th of June, and then resulted in a scattering of the forces upon a curve about two hundred and eighty miles in length, from Torgau to Waldenburg. Had the Austrian main army, with more than 200,000 men, been united in Bohemia, as would have been possible, how disastrous this might have proved for Prussia!

General Steinmetz, indeed, the leader of the 5th army-corps, which was now advanced to Silesia, a man worthy to be compared in spirit and ability, as well as in austerity and censoriousness, with old York of 1814, was quite indignant at such a project, which would be giving up Silesia, with the prospect, at best, of having to win it back again. "There is only *one* thing to do," he wrote to Moltke; "and that is to get ahead of the enemy, and to press from all directions into Bohemia." Moltke explained to him in his answer very calmly, that it had become impossible to avoid this extended position on account of the necessity of using all the railways, and further declared to him quite as categorically that the beginning of operations did not depend alone upon military considerations, although it was true that these demanded a speedy initiative; that the fact that Bohemia lay between Silesia and Lusatia could not be helped; and that consequently the Prussian forces must find their place of meeting on ahead in the enemy's country.

At last, on the 11th of June, after long uncertainty, reliable news came that the mass of the Austrian army stood assembled, not in Bohemia, but in Moravia. Moltke had considered it probable that Benedek would wish to make a move in the offensive as quickly as possible, to pass through Bohemia into Saxony, liberate that kingdom, and then march upon Berlin. Yet this did not now seem to agree with the Austrians' sticking so close to Olmütz. This seemed rather to indicate, if not a distinct defensive policy, then a plan of attack

upon Silesia. Therefore the forces in that province were raised to four army-corps; and the rest of the troops were moved farther towards the east, in order to reduce the length of the curve, which was thus fortified, from two hundred and eighty to about two hundred and ten miles in length.

Meanwhile, on the frontier between Silesia and Moravia everything remained perfectly quiet, even when the Confederate decree of June 14th gave the signal for the outbreak of the war. To be sure, upon the same day Benedek and Von der Tann agreed upon the advance from Olmütz into Bohemia, and Moltke also, whether because he had learned of the decision of the enemy or because he guessed it, went back to his original idea, out of consideration for Silesia, no longer to delay taking the offensive, but to allow the Prussian armies, by boldly going forward, to unite upon Bohemian soil.

Objections, indeed, were made against such a plan. General Alvensleben declared that nothing was more injudicious than to march into Bohemia from different directions in divided columns, and thus to expose one's self to the danger of being beaten separately by the united forces of the enemy. But Moltke did not allow himself to be deterred. Every other way showed worse conditions. Indeed, no great undertaking can be carried out in war without danger; and here, if the projected advance succeeded, mighty results could be expected. The chief consideration, however, was, that it might be presumed from the latest news

that the transfer of the enemy's army from Moravia to Bohemia would still consume considerable time, and the different Prussian corps before uniting would have to do only with detached portions of the hostile troops.

The Prussian forces at this time were grouped into three armies: in Silesia, 115,000 men (the Guards, the 1st, 5th, and 6th corps), called the "Second Army," under the command of the Crown Prince; in Lusatia, the Divisions of the 2d, 3d, and 4th corps, 93,000 men, bearing the title of the "First Army," under the command of Prince Frederick Charles, who had won fame formerly in Silesia; and near Torgau, the 14th, 15th, and 16th Divisions, 46,000 men, called the "Army of the Elbe," under General Herwarth von Bittenfeld, the victor of Alsen. Further, two patrol corps, consisting of 9,000 men, guarded the Moravian frontier of Silesia; and there was in Berlin a 1st corps of reserves, comprising 24,000 men from the mobilized militia, equipped and organized, ready for service in the field. The latter, however, did not at any time during the whole war come into contact with the enemy, and were employed only as a garrisoning troop in the rear of the fighting armies.

Thus in the eastern arena of the war Prussia placed an active army of 263,000 soldiers, almost as many in number as that of the enemy (238,000 Austrians and 23,000 Saxons). The first order to the Army of the Elbe was the occupation, as speedily as practicable, of the Kingdom of Saxony; this accomplished, it was

to cross the Bohemian frontier from the north, at the same time with the First Army, through the passes of Lusatia and of the Erzgebirge; and three days later, the Second Army was to force its way into Bohemia from the east through the passes of the Riesengebirge.

Being thus powerfully equipped at the most critical point, there was little left with which to confront the German Lesser States: 14,100 men under General von Manteuffel near Hamburg, 14,300 under General von Göben near Minden, and 19,600 under General von Beyer at Wetzlar, making together 48,000 men — that was all that there was any hope of raising in Western Germany against a force that would under the most propitious circumstances reach double that number. Over all these troops there was appointed the former commander of the 7th army-corps, General Vogel von Falckenstein, an intelligent, strong, and enterprising veteran, who had taken part in the campaign of 1815, and who had, during his long period of service, become acquainted with all branches of military affairs. In his new position he needed to their fullest extent all his knowledge and his ability acquired in these different lines; for now it was necessary to make up for inferiority in numbers by quick movements and indefatigable daring, by anticipating the enemy at every point, and by overcoming the different portions of the hostile forces before they could be united.

At present, however, the sections of this new Army of the West were themselves widely separated. Moreover, only Göben's Division (the 13th of the army) was

still an old united portion of one corps. The two others had only recently been put together and made up of garrisons of fortresses and of detached regiments, and were consequently but insufficiently supplied with bridge-trains and ambulances, with stores of ammunition and provisions. But Falckenstein took hold of these difficult problems with energetic courage. The union of his troops would of itself be the result of their next task, the occupation of Hanover and Hesse-Cassel. The deficiencies in equipment could be at once supplied here and elsewhere from the enemy's own possessions; and then the Confederate contingents would be scattered like dry leaves before a hurricane.

We will in the first place follow the operations of Falckenstein. He had received from the King to this end general instructions to consider less the possession of certain points than the disarming or overthrowing of the enemy's troops; so that by making quick movements his forces might as soon as possible be employed in operations upon another theatre of the war.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE CONQUEST OF NORTH GERMANY.

ON the very same day, the 14th of June, upon which the Confederate Diet passed its momentous resolution, the Prussian ambassadors in Hanover, Cassel, and Dresden received, as we have seen above, telegraphic orders to proceed in the manner indicated in Bismarck's memorial of the 12th. Nassau was for the moment disregarded, partly on account of her insignificance, and partly from the consideration that General Beyer's Division would probably not be strong enough to occupy at the same time Nassau and Hesse-Cassel.

Inasmuch as a negative answer was anticipated from the three other Courts, the respective generals were instructed to advance at six o'clock on the morning of June 16th, unless they received before this orders to the contrary through the embassy. The officers were delighted. Hour by hour they had been waiting for this command that set them free to move. Just before its reception Manteuffel had telegraphed to the King: "I can start at once to-morrow with my corps at Harburg, cross the Elbe, and do up Hanover. Would fall like a thunderbolt upon all Germany. To-day no decision but by a timely use of the sword.



Diplomatic delay dangerous. Your Majesty may graciously telegraph afterwards. I should be summoned before court-martial. Then the political position is saved. I will act. Military effect depends on that."

On the morning of June 15th, the ambassador at Dresden, Count Schulenburg, gave to Herr von Beust the message requesting an alliance with Prussia upon the conditions that Saxony should reduce her troops to a peace-footing again and assent to the immediate convocation of a parliament; in return for which Prussia on her part would guarantee to her her possessions and sovereignty in conformity to the propositions of June 10th for reform. An answer was desired in the course of the day, with the understanding that a negative or evasive reply would be considered equivalent to the declaration of war. On the part of Saxony all preparations had been made. Even on the afternoon of the 14th, the Minister of Finance had sent thirty-six million thalers for safe keeping to Munich. The reply to Schulenburg was a simple refusal to comply, inasmuch as Saxony could not disarm contrary to a legal decree of the Confederation.<sup>1</sup>

In the evening, then, Schulenburg handed to the King personally the Prussian declaration of war; and Herwarth's battalions crossed the Saxon frontier the very same hour.<sup>2</sup> Beust called upon the Confederation by telegraph, especially upon Austria and Bavaria, for assistance against this act of violence, whereupon

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Friesen's *Erinnerungen*, Vol. II.

<sup>2</sup> Schulenburg's Report.

the Confederate assembly on the 16th passed the appropriate vote.

But Benedek's troops stood at this time in Olmütz, and the Bavarians had not even gathered together. So King John and his Ministers of War and of Foreign Affairs set out first for Pirna, whence he afterwards led his troops over the frontier into Bohemia. The other ministers remained behind in Dresden under the name of a "Commission of the Land." On the 18th of June Dresden was occupied by the Prussians without resistance; and in a few days the whole country was subject to their commands. Provincial Councillor von Wurnb was appointed to be at the head of the administration as Prussian Civil Commissioner, and then through the hands of the Commission of the Land everything kept on in its usual way.

In Hesse-Cassel, the Government, now one with Hanover in being perfectly "loyal to the Confederation," had immediately upon the 14th of June announced the mobilization of its army-corps, and at the same time convened the parliament for the purpose of raising the necessary money. The parliament, however, protested at once, on the 15th, against the legality of the last Confederate decree, and after refusing to provide the desired money, requested the Government by a vote of 35 against 14 (the nobility, Ultramontanes, and Democrats) to revoke its order for mobilization and to preserve a perfectly neutral attitude.

During these discussions the Prussian ambassador,

General Röder, called in the course of the forenoon upon the Minister, Abée, in order to lay before him the Prussian ultimatum. Abée tried to make out that the Confederate decree had no hostile reference to Prussia — which of course could not make any impression upon Röder. He, on the other hand, urged the Minister to consider that the very existence of the Elector was at stake, and that consequently a personal audience with the Elector must necessarily be granted to him. Accordingly, at two o'clock Röder was summoned to an audience. The sovereign received him very ungraciously, and asked him what business he had to appear there without having any autograph letter from His Majesty the King to present. After a few hateful remarks about Bismarck, he declared that the German Confederation was indissoluble and had been established to continue forever. When Röder referred to the advantages of a Prussian alliance and the possible acquisition of Upper Hesse from Darmstadt, the Elector assumed a virtuous air, and said: "I will never take anything from my Darmstadt brethren! Poverty and honor were better! I have never forsaken the path of rectitude!"<sup>1</sup> Then he talked about Austria's power, about the 800,000 men that were moving against Prussia, said that he must have time for consideration, that he would not allow a pistol to be held at his breast, and finally dismissed the ambassador with the words: "I must regard you as a disturber of the peace."

<sup>1</sup> "What a mockery from this man's mouth!" wrote Röder afterwards.

There was no more use of attempting a mobilization. On the contrary, the order was sent in the course of the afternoon to the troops in Cassel and vicinity to retreat "as quickly as possible" by way of Fulda to Hanau, in order to escape the threatening entry of the Prussians. The conveyance of the state treasury thither was prevented by the committee of the Estates. The Heir Apparent, Prince Frederick William, who was just then expected to arrive in Cassel from Berlin, had communicated to the Elector his assent. The Elector thereupon telegraphed to Vienna for assistance, and had word sent to General Röder at ten o'clock in the evening that he refused to make any reply whatever to the Prussian ultimatum. Röder accordingly declared war.

In the early morning of the 16th of June General Beyer started against Hesse-Cassel from Wetzlar by way of Giessen, reached Kirchhain on the 17th, and, after getting possession of a number of railway-carriages, arrived in Cassel on the 19th. The Elector had calmly remained in the palace at Wilhelmshöhe, because he would not recognize the existence of war. He was there guarded as a prisoner of war. After having repeatedly refused to accept the offer of an alliance, he was transferred a few days later first to Minden and thence to the royal palace at Stettin, where he was compelled to remain, although in other respects he was in every way treated as a friend and sovereign. The administration of Hesse-Cassel was undertaken by General Beyer; and under him,

as Prussian Civil Commissioner, first, Privy Counsellor Max Duncker, and later, the Provincial President Von Möller. Except the former Ministry, all the authorities in the country continued to exercise their functions; so that here, also, no harmful disturbance was perceptible in the administration of official business.

The course that things took in Hanover was rather more far-reaching.

Here, too, King George, long since grown impatient over Prussia's intimation that he should show his neutrality by reducing his troops at once to a complete peace-footing, had immediately, upon receiving telegraphic information of the Confederate decree, given orders for mobilization. This would require, as we have seen, several weeks still. Nevertheless, the King had no thought of fulfilling the Prussian demands which were laid before him by Prince Ysenburg on the morning of June 15th. He had already had no inclination to bind himself by a treaty to an unarmed neutrality; how should he now, in addition to that, agree to subject himself to the Articles of the Confederate reform! He hastily summoned a Ministerial Council, before whom he repeated his oft-asserted determination to preserve a strict neutrality. And for that very reason, he said, he was obliged to decline an alliance with Prussia, as he had formerly declined one with Austria; and the more so now, since the recall of his order for mobilization, just given, would be dishonorable, and the acceptance of

the Prussian plan of Confederate reform would be a degradation of the rights of the Crown imparted to him by God.

The Ministers all agreed with these sentiments; and since this decided the outbreak of war, the thing to do now was, as speedily as possible, to make all necessary preparations for it. Instructions were sent by telegraph to all garrisons in the kingdom, for the soldiers, just as they were, to retreat quickly into the southern half of the country, to Göttingen, and for the remaining reserves, as well as all military equipments, to be also transported thither. In the meantime the session of the Estates was opened; and in view of the dangers which were immediately threatening the existence of the State, Rudolf von Bennigsen, apparently without knowing the contents of the Prussian ultimatum, brought forward a new motion, proposing a change of the Ministry, discontinuance of all armament, and entire neutrality. The excitement in the city increased hourly, when the troops began to move. It was learned that Harburg was already held by Prussians, and that the Westphalian Division had advanced close to the Hanoverian frontier. On all sides the country seemed exposed to serious hostilities.

Meanwhile, Count Platen had drawn up an answer to the Prussian note. It was not until late in the evening that it could be laid before the King, who remained in Herrenhausen. He examined it carefully, erased one place which hinted at the possibility of coming later to an understanding about the pro-

ject of Confederate reform, and made here and there corrections in the style. So it was one o'clock in the morning before the document received the royal approval. Count Platen had already, at midnight, called at the residence of the Prussian ambassador, to see if it were not possible to secure a postponement. But Prince Ysenburg unyieldingly insisted upon receiving a decisive answer. Platen said that it was still in the hands of the King and would be in the negative, but that there was room for further negotiations. Hereupon, however, the ambassador cut off all further discussion, and, in the name of his Most Gracious Sovereign, declared war upon the King of Hanover.

It was in vain that, later in the night, a deputation of the officials of the city of Hanover presented themselves in the palace at Herrenhausen, and tried to induce the King to change his policy in favor of Prussia. They received the reply that the King must refuse to do so, as a Christian, a Monarch, and a Guelph. At four o'clock in the morning on the 16th of June, the unfortunate Sovereign set out, in company with the Crown Prince, the Generals that were in Hanover, Count Platen, the Minister of War, Von Brandis, and the Austrian ambassador, Count Ingelheim, for Göttingen and his troops.<sup>1</sup>

Two hours later, the corps under Manteuffel followed its advance-guard at Harburg across the Elbe;

<sup>1</sup> Ysenburg's report; also Meding, *Memoiren* II, p. 104 *et seq.*; and V. d. Wengen, p. 212 *et seq.*

and General Falckenstein was on his way to Hanover with Göben's Division. Here he arrived on the 17th of June, took possession of the reins of government, and seized upon all the military supplies that were to be found, which were considerable. Manteuffel, on the 17th, moved upon Lüneburg and Celle, and in the evening sent a battalion to Stade, which was taken by surprise in the night and occupied without any shedding of blood. All arms and provisions that were in the place fell into Prussian hands. Inasmuch as General Falckenstein had been instructed above all things to aim at disarming the Hanoverian army, he immediately ordered, on the 19th, as soon as the first companies of Manteuffel's corps arrived in Hanover, that Göben's Division should advance to the south in the direction of Göttingen.

The impression which these events produced throughout all Germany was tremendous. To be sure, there had been no opportunity for any heroic deeds of valor; but very striking was the contrast between the overwhelming energy, discretion, and celerity of action on the one side, and the utter irresolution, helplessness, and absence of preparation on the other. Within three days three states had been taken possession of by Prussia, three states, whose duty it has been since 1870, in the event of a foreign war upon the German Empire, to provide 75,000 men, and who even at that time should have been able to furnish 50,000. Although the Saxon corps was concealed for the time in Bohemia, yet the



actual possession of the Saxon territory took from the enemy the position for attack that was the most dangerous for Prussia. Of the excellent soldiers of Hesse-Cassel, about 5,000 had escaped, who had now, however, to be mobilized and equipped, even in the name of the Confederation. All the resources of the countries occupied stood at the disposal of the Prussian victors, and were exceedingly useful in completing the proper equipment of the armies of Manteuffel and of Beyer, which were but just organized.

When, under these circumstances, Prussia sent on the 16th of June a circular note to the host of North German Petty States with the request that they should withdraw from the Frankfort assembly, form a new alliance with Prussia, and place their troops at the disposal of the King: then there were manifested misgivings and, resentment enough, but only Meiningen and three or four of the small states ventured to answer with a determined *No!* For the time everybody was in great suspense over the impending fate of the Hanoverian army, which was collecting at Göttingen.

Here things were by no means in a satisfactory condition. While, all day long on the 17th of June, the separate battalions and great masses of recruits and reserves were arriving, so that the infantry reached the number of 15,000 men, the cavalry 2,200, and the artillery 1,800, with forty-two cannon, the internal weakness of this army was manifested in the

distrust which almost the whole corps of officers felt and openly spoke of with regard to the supreme command. The King had assumed this position; and on account of his blindness, this led to the result that his first Adjutant-General, General von Tschirschnitz, actually had the deciding voice. Officially, the oldest of the generals, Gebser, should then hold the chief command with General Sichart as Chief of the Staff. But the officers did not believe that any of these gentlemen possessed ability or cleverness enough to bring the army victoriously out of these untoward emergencies.

The officers, through the Crown Prince, presented their wishes before the King, and as the generals holding the above-named positions raised no serious objections, the desired change was made at once, on the 17th. General von Arentschild was appointed to be the highest in command, a capable officer, who was perfectly aware of the disagreeable aspects of the situation, and who accepted the dangerous post of honor only with reluctance. The position of adjutant-general, both of the Commander-in-chief and of the King, was to be filled by Colonel Dammers, a well-informed man of lively, easily-excited temperament and restlessly busy. The new Chief of the Staff, Colonel Cordemann, was disposed to go ahead as little as possible.

In a council of war about the further plans for the campaign, opinions differed. The King urged an immediate advance toward the south, in order

to join the Bavarians or the 8th Confederate corps.<sup>1</sup> The generals, on the other hand, declared very decidedly that a pause of a few days was absolutely indispensable, in order to equip and drill in some measure the troops, which had been so tumultuously hurried together. In fact, much was to be said in favor of their view. Of the eight batteries of the corps, only five were properly furnished with horses; the rest had been fitted out as best they might be. The same lack was felt in the trains, both the ammunition and the provision trains. In many instances there were no iron supports for the regiments, and ambulances and hospital appointments were very generally wanting. The King consequently granted a few days' delay for providing what was most necessary. On all sides everything was done that the greatest efforts could accomplish, but on account of the army's being cut off from the resources at home, its equipment remained deficient, its supply of provisions was uncertain, and, above all, its stock of ammunition was low, and could not possibly be renewed.

Under these circumstances, two officers of the Staff,

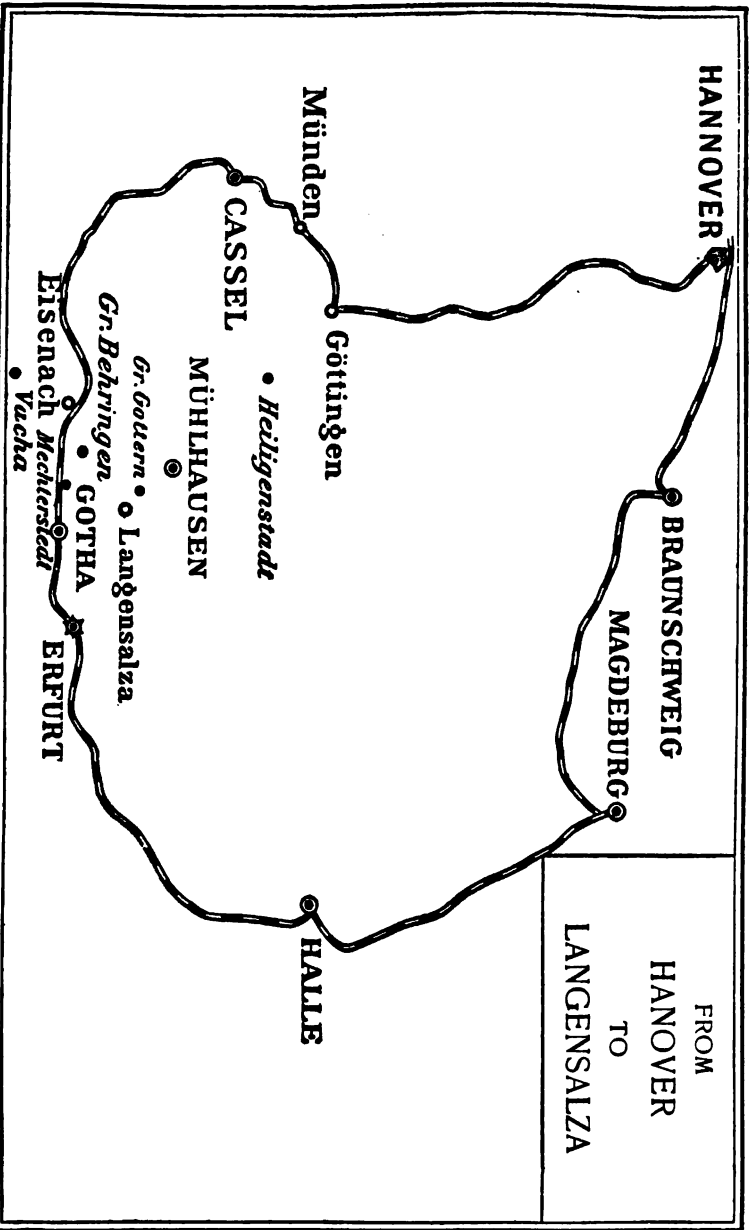
<sup>1</sup> Meding, *Memoiren* I. p. 133. There seems to be no reason for doubting these statements.

Knorr, in his *Feldzug in Westdeutschland*, and others, following him, have gone so far as to assert that if this decision had been made at once, the army would have been able, inasmuch as General Beyer did not arrive at Cassel till the 19th, to reach Cassel easily by the railway, thence to Bebra, and then to march on to Frankfort without being molested by any enemy. But it has been overlooked that a Prussian detachment had already on the evening of the 18th torn up the *Friederich-Wilhelm's-Nordbahn* at Melsungen.

Rudorff and Jacobi, declared to the King that the advance to the south could be successful only on condition of its being a simple march; for no serious fighting could be done by the troops. They advised accordingly that negotiations be entered into with Prussia.<sup>1</sup> This, however, the King determinedly refused to do; and so the discussion of the question began in what way the allies were to be reached. It was not known where their troops were to be found, nor how soon they would be ready for action.

It was learned that a Prussian force was spreading itself over Hesse-Cassel; but nothing was known of its strength nor direction of marching. Now, the straightest road from Göttingen to Frankfort would have been through Hesse-Cassel, and probably after crossing the Werra by way of Bebra towards Fulda and Schlüchtern. But since it was entirely uncertain whether the army might not run across Beyer's Division, and since no reply had been received from several messengers that had been sent to Princes Charles of Bavaria and Alexander of Hesse, it was decided on the 20th of June to bend somewhat further towards the east, where at present there were no Prussians, and to take the direction by way of Heiligenstadt and Mülhausen towards Eisenach, whence then the road would be perfectly free towards the south. By unwearied efforts the army had meanwhile been brought into a tolerable condition, at least for the immediate future, and on the morning of the 21st the march could be begun towards Heiligenstadt.

<sup>1</sup> V. d. Wengen p. 337.





The prospects of success in the undertaking, although there was no suspicion of it at the Hanoverian headquarters, were just at this moment exceedingly favorable. General von Falckenstein had, as we have remarked, received royal instructions to place special importance upon disarming the Hanoverian army, and had accordingly ordered Göben's Division to begin on the 19th the march from Hanover to Göttingen, a distance of about seventy miles. All the news received on that day intimated that the enemy had intrenched themselves in Göttingen and were ready to give battle. Consequently, Falckenstein gave the order to General Beyer, to move his troops northwards, starting out from Hesse-Cassel to march upon Göttingen, and there with Göben and Manteuffel to attack the enemy from all sides on the 23d, and annihilate them.

So it happened that on the 21st, while the Hanoverians were marching from Göttingen towards the south-east, and General Beyer, coming from Hesse-Cassel, might have harassed them severely on the flank, instead of this he was making his way in great haste towards Göttingen, which had already been abandoned. Thus, for the time, all roads to the south were open to the Hanoverians. Wholly unhindered, and annoyed only by the heat, their headquarters arrived on the 21st at Heiligenstadt, on the 22d at Mülhausen, and on the 23d at Langensalza. From here it was about fourteen miles to Gotha, and not quite eighteen to Eisenach. Each of these cities

was garrisoned by only 2,000 men. Accordingly, King George needed only to continue his march on the 24th, taking as he chose either Gotha or Eisenach, and crossing the Thuringian railway to proceed unhindered to join the Bavarians.

It was carrying the matter pretty far that Falckenstein had let it come to this. It happened as follows.

Just as his troops began their march upon Göttingen, he received two despatches from General Moltke with the news of the weakness of the 8th Confederate corps in Frankfort and with the request to turn as soon as possible to the south, and in a hurried advance to scatter the contingents of this corps. "As soon as possible" meant and could not mean anything else than immediately after the disarming of the Hanoverians. But when Falckenstein on the 21st of June received the news that the enemy had withdrawn from Göttingen to Mülhausen and Eisenach, that is, that they had the start by more than two days' march: then he abandoned the pursuit as hopeless, and gave himself up wholly to the prospect opened to him by Moltke of gaining brilliant laurels in Frankfort. He wrote to the King on the 21st, that he now, after the retreat of the Hanoverians, could say nothing about his further plans of operation; from Göttingen he should turn in whatever direction he might hope to fall in with any considerable hostile force. We shall presently see that it was not Hanoverians that he had in mind.

It may be questioned whether the disarming of the



Hanoverians really was so important for Prussian success as it was considered in Berlin.<sup>1</sup> Certain it is, however, that even after their departure from Göttingen, Prussia possessed all the necessary means for stopping them and forcing them to surrender. For the Prussian Government controlled the whole circle of railways, from Cassel *via* Göttingen, Magdeburg, and Halle to Gotha and Eisenach, and thence again to Cassel. The line from Göttingen toward the east *via* Halle to Eisenach was entirely passable.<sup>2</sup> Between Göttingen and Cassel the Hanoverians had blocked up a tunnel and destroyed a bridge at Münden; and damage of less importance had been done to the railway between Cassel and Eisenach, in some places by Prussians and in others by Hessians. But everywhere repairs were being hastily made, which might take, in the worst spots, about two days. Thus, on the 21st, any number of troops might be transported from Hanover to Gotha or Eisenach, on the 23d from Cassel to Eisenach, and on the 24th from Göttingen to Cassel and further; so that the Hanoverians could be anticipated in the possession of the Thuringian railway, and their escape thus be cut off.

Moltke had already, in a despatch on the 19th of June, called the attention of General Falckenstein to

<sup>1</sup> The completion of the mobilization of the Hanoverian army in a foreign country and with foreign equipments would have been attended with great difficulties, and would have assuredly consumed more than a month.

<sup>2</sup> Manteuffel's corps was transported by railway just at that time in the vicinity of Göttingen.

the advisability of sending one of his divisions *via* Magdeburg to Eisenach. But the General passed over this hint in silence. Moltke then, on his part, caused some militia and garrison troops to be speedily sent to Gotha, where they united with the two battalions from Coburg under Colonel von Fabeck, and also two battalions of the Guards under Colonel von Osten-Sacken to be sent to Eisenach.

But when on the 21st of June news kept coming to Berlin about the march of the Hanoverians, General Podbielski, at the request of His Majesty telegraphed during the following night<sup>1</sup> to Falckenstein that there was still time to send a division from Hanover by way of Magdeburg to Gotha to confront the Hanoverians lying at Mülhausen, and requested Falckenstein to reply by telegraph, if he agreed to this. Now, it is well known that the recommendation of a measure by the Supreme Authority amounts to a command, unless physical impossibilities or serious dangers lie in the way. Certainly, neither of these was the case in this instance, and Falckenstein was in duty bound to send the division. But he, full of the desire not to be turned away from Frankfort by fighting with the Hanoverians, replied that the proposed project could not be carried out, since his troops were all on the march to Göttingen, leaving only an insufficient remnant in Hanover to send to Gotha.

Upon receiving fresh communications from Moltke concerning the march of the Hanoverians, he com-

<sup>1</sup> The time is thus stated in the diary of the Army of the Main.

manded Beyer's Division on the 22d of June to turn about, to assemble at Oetmannshausen on the Werra, about eighteen miles north of Eisenach, and to send out scouts toward the latter city. His intention was to give a day of rest at Göttingen to the other two divisions on the 23d of June, and then to have them on the next day begin the march to Cassel and Frankfort. But first there came on the 23d an urgent request from Moltke, and a few hours later a formal order from the King to send a strong detachment composed of all classes of troops as speedily as possible by the Cassel railway to Eisenach.

It would have been easy to do this by allowing the troops to go by railway from Göttingen to the barricaded tunnel, thence by a short march on foot to the bridge over the Werra, and there to take a train which should be sent to meet them from Cassel. But in spite of all this, Falckenstein stuck to his own idea. He reported to the King and also to the Minister of War that the railway between Göttingen and Cassel was not yet in order and that consequently the royal commands could not be executed. "My purpose," said he, "of preventing the enemy's retreat by way of Eisenach or Gotha is thus frustrated." He then said that he thought of having Göben and Manteuffel march to Frankfort *via* Cassel and Beyer from Oetmannshausen to Eisenach, where he might perhaps be able to cut off a few Hanoverian stragglers. "It is my intention," he concluded, "to annihilate the 8th Confederate corps at Frankfort, and thus cover the

Rhine Province, disengage Baden, and draw away the Bavarians from Saxony and Bohemia.”

Thus matters stood on the Prussian side on the 23d of June: Göben and Manteuffel were in and near Göttingen; Beyer reached Oetmannshausen; and two insignificant companies held Gotha and Eisenach. Why did not the 18,000 Hanoverians break through at this point?

It is marvellous, upon what slight threads the destinies of men and of nations sometimes hang. The transactions which immediately followed we must examine somewhat more closely, since they have many times been made the subject of false and malicious representations.

As yet no thought had been entertained in Berlin of any annexation other than that of Schleswig-Holstein nor of the overthrow of any German sovereign House. To the King it was a cause of personal distress to be at enmity with princes so nearly related to him by ties of blood and of friendship as were the Kings of Hanover and of Saxony; and Bismarck even, from consideration for the foreign Great Powers, urged that the policy adopted should be as moderate and as conciliatory as possible. Just as he had after the 15th of June repeatedly offered an alliance with Prussia to the Elector of Hesse-Cassel, so he now advised that a last attempt should be made to negotiate about peace with George V. Accordingly, after the despatch had been sent on the night of the 22d to General Falckenstein, advising him to send ahead a division upon the

Thuringian railway, Moltke telegraphed to Colonel Fabeck at Gotha orders to summon the Hanoverian army through one of his officers to lay down their arms since they were wholly surrounded. And then, quite in accordance with this, the order was sent on the 23d to Falckenstein to effect the speedy occupation of Eisenach.

In the Hanoverian headquarters at Langensalza, the Prussian demand, which was delivered on the 23d, came at a favorable time.

Here no one was in any way clear about the situation. Contradictory reports came about friends and enemies. The officers persisted in their opinion that, in view of their deficient equipment, the troops might very well march, but could not fight; that, indeed, their ammunition would be used up in the very first encounter. They would not, to be sure, listen to the proposition of surrendering, but were very anxious to reach South Germany in peace. Therefore, the King sent Major Jacobi to Gotha to negotiate from there by telegraph with Moltke, and also to find out about the strength of the enemy's force at that place. Jacobi reached Gotha in the evening, and upon announcing himself to Moltke received from the latter the proposal in return, that King George should temporarily take up his residence outside of Hanover, should send his army back to Göttingen, and then furlough the officers and allow the soldiers to return to their homes.

Jacobi replied with the counter-proposition that,

if Prussia would permit King George to proceed with his troops unmolested into South Germany, the King would pledge himself not to allow his soldiers to take any part in hostile actions against Prussia for a long time to come; but that in no case could there be any thought of surrendering, until some Hanoverian officer had been convinced with his own eyes that they were surrounded by an overwhelmingly superior force. Moltke promised to lay all this the next morning before King William. Thereupon, in the early dawn of the 24th of June, Jacobi returned, after having, in consequence of several observations, gained the false idea that a strong Prussian garrison was stationed in Gotha.

Upon his report, King George determined to continue the negotiations. To this end, the Adjutant-General of the King, Colonel Dammers, was to accompany Jacobi to Gotha, and put himself into communication with the Prussian commander at that place. This was an unfortunate choice, since Dammers was of a very excitable temperament, and was at such times likely to have recourse to questionable means. It turned out that in Gotha there was no Prussian general other than Duke Ernest. He held no command, but declared himself ready, as the Duke of Coburg-Gotha, to try to effect a mediation between the two Kings. With him Dammers drew up a despatch to Berlin, in which Hanover, in return for a free passage of the army into South Germany, offered to keep her troops inactive for one year. Immedi-

ately afterwards, however, Dammers sent a secret message to Langensalza, saying that the Prussian garrison was very weak, and it would be advisable to make a speedy attack.

Meanwhile there came also Moltke's answer to the proposals that Jacobi had made in the night. It was, that Colonel Fabeck should give to the Hanoverians full information concerning the strength and position of the Prussian troops; and that His Majesty's Adjutant-General, General von Alvensleben, was on his way to Gotha by an extra train to negotiate about the terms of a peace.

After this Colonel Dammers could not doubt Prussia's sincere desire for peace. But when he now learned from Colonel Fabeck positively how insignificant the forces in Gotha and Eisenach really were, he continued a course of conduct which it is impossible to call straightforward. At first he assented to an agreement between the Duke, the Minister Seebach, Colonel Fabeck, and himself, that no hostilities should be manifested before the arrival of Alvensleben in Langensalza, unless this should not take place until the following day: the Duke of Coburg promising on his part that before then no increase of Prussian forces should be received by the railways. Now, if this compact were to be kept on the Prussian side, as Dammers hoped, and broken upon the Hanoverian, as he intended, then Hanover's prospects would be materially improved.

Dammers then returned at about noon to Langen-

salza. Jacobi remained in Gotha, in order to accompany Alvensleben later on his way to King George.

Meanwhile King George had entertained thoughts very similar to those of Colonel Dammers. During the early morning hours another of his Staff Officers, Lieutenant Colonel Rudorff, had, without receiving any orders to do so, ridden with a small company of scouts towards Eisenach, and from one of the Prussian Guards who was taken prisoner, had learned of the weakness of the garrison in the city. He then took upon himself on his own account the office of a negotiator, and ordered Colonel von Osten-Sacken to quit the place before three o'clock in the afternoon, inasmuch as he of course would not be able to hold out against the superior force of the whole Hanoverian army.

After receiving Osten-Sacken's determined refusal, Rudorff had galloped back to the King in haste; and then was manifest the first results of Falckenstein's arbitrary conduct. "No strong garrison in Gotha!" cried the King, "nor one in Eisenach! Then it was a piece of unfounded swaggering on the part of Moltke to announce that we were completely surrounded." He ordered at once that his troops should move forward and take a position ready for making an attack upon Eisenach, and sent Captain von der Wense to Gotha with the announcement that all negotiations were broken off and that military operations would take their course.

Both Duke Ernest and Major Jacobi were greatly



surprised at this announcement. "It cannot be," cried the Duke, "but that this decision was taken in Langensalza, before Colonel Dammers had arrived there with the news of our agreement about an armistice." The Captain confirmed this, by saying that he had met the Colonel at about half-way and had communicated to him his errand: but that he had received from the Colonel only the command to proceed with the execution of his commission. The astonishment of the Duke increased. "This looks like felony!" he said. Thereupon came a telegram from Bismarck in Berlin in answer to the last proposition of Dammers, to the effect that the King approved of the same, provided the necessary guaranties should be given for the inactivity of the Hanoverian troops, and that Alvensleben was ready to discuss this point.

This seemed to the Duke to insure the conclusion of a peace; and he persuaded the Captain to hasten back, in order to prevent an entirely unnecessary shedding of blood. The Captain rode as fast as he could; but he was unable to make any impression with his message of peace upon the blind King, who was being urged onward by Rudorff and Dammers. The King had just started one of his brigades for Eisenach, and now remarked in a letter to Duke Ernest, that he should not be able to stop the military operations any longer, but would be ready, while they were going on, to treat with Alvensleben.

Undoubtedly he expected as victorious conqueror

to receive the General in Eisenach. But King George, who had suddenly grown so spirited, was not destined to have this pleasure.

In Gotha, after Captain von der Wense had ridden away, the Duke and Jacobi talked over the situation again. The news came just then that a fight was going on near Mechterstedt, half-way between Gotha and Eisenach. The Duke declared again that King George must have given the orders to begin hostilities before Dammers' return, and accordingly without any knowledge of the armistice agreed upon with the latter. Jacobi thought the same; and surely, after receiving Bismarck's despatch, any bloodshed seemed doubly criminal. Therefore he consented to the sending of a telegram to the Hanoverian commander in Mechterstedt, to the effect that, in consequence of Prussia's acceptance of Hanover's conditions of peace, all hostilities were to be avoided.

The result of this was that Colonel Bülow, the commander of the brigade that was marching toward Eisenach, stopped the attack; and, since his regiments were extremely weary from so much marching here and there by day and by night, he arranged with Osten-Sacken a mutual truce until the next morning. On hearing of this King George was furious, but did not find himself obliged to break this compact too, especially as the announcement came in the evening that General Alvensleben, who had just arrived in Gotha, would not come to discuss the subject of a

peace unless all hostilities ceased during the mean time.

Since that time the Guelph Press has most severely branded Major Jacobi as a black monster, were it not for whose interference King George would have taken Eisenach, led his army triumphantly into Bavaria, and thus given another turn to the world's history. We have seen, however, that, in the first place, Jacobi acted from perfectly honorable motives; and then, so far as an attack upon Eisenach was concerned, the King had left two of his brigades to cover Gotha, and the other two contained only 5,500 men, so that the taking of Eisenach in the face of Osten-Sacken's 2,000 needle-guns was by no means certain beyond a doubt. And even if this had succeeded, it would have been necessary above all things, before continuing the march to the south, to bring up the other brigades and the baggage to Eisenach on the 25th of June, which was a march of fifteen or sixteen miles. By the time this was accomplished the day would have been gone; so that the march towards Bavaria could not have been begun before the 26th, and how things stood then we shall presently see.

After Rudorff's threatening demand, Osten-Sacken had not delayed in summoning his allies most urgently to come to his aid. General Beyer, in accordance with the orders received on June 23d, was on the march from Oetmannshausen to Eisenach. On the 24th he had, indeed, reported to Falckenstein that his troops were so exhausted from being hurried hither

and thither, that only two battalions at the most would be able to reach Eisenach on that day; but after receiving Osten-Sacken's appeal, there could be no more thought of weariness, and by evening six companies had entered Eisenach. In the course of the night five battalions reached Kreuzburg, only a three hours' march distant from Eisenach, and on the 25th were ready to take part in the fight.

At the same time, Osten-Sacken had also telegraphed to Göben, who had arrived with his Division in Münden on the forenoon of the 24th. Having in mind the royal orders of the day before, he forwarded Osten-Sacken's appeal to Falckenstein, and announced that he intended to march without stopping to Cassel, in order to send from there by the railway reinforcements to Eisenach.<sup>1</sup> This was done with untiring energy. Before dawn Göben entered Eisenach with five battalions. In the course of the forenoon the force assembled here swelled to the number of 11,000 men, who could be reinforced at any hour by troops from Cassel. There was no more chance for the Hanoverians to break through at this point.

Moreover, Moltke had at the same time looked out for the security of Gotha. We have seen how Falckenstein had not heeded the advice to do this, which had been twice given. At eight o'clock on the morning of the 24th of June a categorical command from the King was finally issued. As has been observed

<sup>1</sup> Wengen's remark on p. 768 sets Göben's initiative in too sharp a light. Göben had no idea of making a breach in military authority.

above, the feeling in Berlin was that Jacobi's request to be given information concerning the Prussian position was very justifiable. Accordingly, Moltke communicated this request to Falckenstein, and appended "the repeated command of His Majesty" to strengthen the Prussian forces, which might be accomplished even then by railway *via* Magdeburg.

When no word came during the afternoon that the command had been executed, Moltke telegraphed to Falckenstein again shortly before six o'clock: "Orders from His Majesty this morning early to send troops *via* Magdeburg to Gotha and Eisenach. Reinforcement of the small detachments there most imperative. Negotiations with the Hanoverian army continue. Presumably they will not end to-day and be broken off to-morrow. What measures have you taken?" The anxiety here expressed concerning a rupture was well founded in the threatening of Eisenach by the Hanoverians. As for Falckenstein's measures, the telegram from Berlin had crossed with his own report, sent soon after five o'clock, that Göben was to send half of his Division to Eisenach, and Manteuffel five battalions of his corps under General von Flies to Gotha, in fulfilment of the royal orders.<sup>1</sup> The latter transportation, however, met with difficulties upon the railways, so that the troops did not arrive at Gotha until the evening of the 25th, then raising the garrison to the number of 8,500 or 9,000 men.

<sup>1</sup> According to these documents the representation of V. d. Wengen on p. 710 is to be corrected.

While the trains were rolling these different companies towards the Thuringian Forest, the question of the advance of the Hanoverians into South Germany was being discussed during the morning hours of June 25th by General Alvensleben and King George at Langensalza. But irreconcilable differences came up very soon upon two points. One of the conditions to which Dammers had agreed the day before had been that the Hanoverian troops should remain inactive for a whole year in the south. The King, however, was willing only to limit this to eight weeks. And in the second place he would not listen to giving any guaranties for this inactivity: his royal word, he said, was enough. It was in vain that Alvensleben pointed out how strong a pressure might under certain circumstances be there brought to bear upon the Hanoverians to induce them to take part in the war.

The King remained unmoved. Yet he did not wish to break off negotiations, and asked to be allowed to consider the matter twenty-four hours, at the end of which he would announce his final decision in Berlin. Alvensleben agreed to this respite, and thereupon signed with Dammers a document with the following contents: "There shall be until further notice a truce between the Prussian and Hanoverian troops. The possible removal of hostilities will be by command." Unfortunately, the wording of this paper did not correspond exactly with the understanding which had been given orally. The Hanoverians considered that the armistice was to continue until some announcement

should be made: in Berlin and Gotha it was understood according to Alvensleben's report that a truce of only twenty-four hours was intended.

Alvensleben, having returned to Gotha, telegraphed at three o'clock to King William the result of his mission with the request that the existence of the truce might be announced to Falckenstein from Berlin, inasmuch as the connection between Gotha and Eisenach was interrupted by the presence of the Hanoverians at Mechterstedt. The King ordered this to be done, with the addition that for the sake of greater safety the announcement should be also made directly to General Göben at Eisenach. It was the day before the entrance of the Silesian army into Bohemia and the first engagements of Prince Charles on the Iser; and it is easy to understand how business was pressing in Berlin and how many telegrams were to be sent. So it was six o'clock before Moltke's despatch was sent to Göben, and nine o'clock before it reached Eisenach. Moltke sent word that a truce of twenty-four hours had been granted; that he would later announce the exact time of its commencement and close; and that everything was to be got in readiness, so that in the event of a rupture the affair could be ended by an attack.

Meanwhile, General Falckenstein had himself come to Eisenach on the afternoon of June 25th; and, however little desire he otherwise felt to fight with the Hanoverians, he now, in accordance with Moltke's telegram of the day before, had made all preparations

for a concentric advance upon the enemy the next morning at four o'clock from Kreuzburg, Eisenach, and Gotha. He was in the worst possible humor. The postponement of his fine advance upon Frankfort, his being forced to send off General Flies, and his being compelled to pursue the Hanoverians, for whom he cared not a straw: all this set his naturally hot blood boiling. Thereupon, soon after his arrival, Lieutenant-Colonel Rudorff requested to see him, and, upon the ground of the truce concluded by Alvensleben, asked for an extra train to Berlin, in order to carry thither King George's answer.

Falckenstein had heard nothing about any truce, but had received professedly certain, but actually false, information about the appearance of Bavarian troops at Vacha. He took Rudorff's visit for a Hanoverian trick in order to gain time to effect a union with the Bavarians, and dismissed Rudorff sharply and impolitely with the remark that he might get his extra train from Alvensleben himself.<sup>1</sup>

King George, when he learned this, was beside himself. He believed that he saw in it a faithless violation of the compact agreed upon in the morning, and prudently withdrew his troops from the vicinity of Eisenach. Falckenstein, even after receiving

<sup>1</sup> There must be taken into account the distrust of Hanoverian fidelity because of the attempt upon Eisenach in spite of Dammers' agreement. And it seemed also strange that Rudorff, in his very great hurry to reach Berlin from Langensalza, should not have gone to Gotha, but have taken the round-about way *via* Eisenach. This is brought out very well by Knorr, I. p. 272; nor can Wengen, p. 737, explain it satisfactorily.



Moltke's telegram, was still convinced that Alvensleben was utterly mistaken, that the twenty-four hours requested for consideration had been only desired with a view to joining the Bavarians, and that it was necessary to act in self-protection. This he wrote on the margin of Moltke's despatch, and telegraphed at once in reply, that in view of the approach of the Bavarians he must attack the Hanoverians the next morning, lest otherwise he should come between two fires, and not be able to take the responsibility for what might happen.

Just as he was about to mount his horse at four o'clock in the morning on the 26th, he received Moltke's reply that the truce lasted till ten o'clock, and that Colonel von Döring would be sent before then to negotiate with King George; and that after ten o'clock an attack should be made unless Döring announced the conclusion of a peace. Falckenstein, as vexed as possible, dismissed the troops and sent an officer to Langensalza with the message that he should respect the truce. This quieted King George to some extent, so that he again meditated sending Lieutenant-Colonel Rudorff to Berlin, deciding to send him this time by way of Gotha.

Rudorff was to promise, in return for the free passage to the south, neutrality for eight weeks, with the understanding that if other Governments were urgent in their solicitations the King would give his army a leave of absence. This offer would hardly have sufficed in Berlin: Bismarck had already, the

day before, obtained permission from the somewhat hesitating King to make at Langensalza another attempt with the alliance-proposal of June 14th; since it would perhaps stand a better chance of being accepted, in view of the dangerous position of the Hanoverian army which was now actually surrounded, than it had had on that eventful night at Herrenhausen. That very evening of the 25th, Döring was despatched on this mission. Once more there was a possibility of arriving at a peace on the 26th of June. But again an unexpected incident was to change the situation completely.

During Döring's journey in the night Bismarck received at two o'clock a despatch from the Provincial Counsellor of Mülhausen, saying that when he returned home the evening before from a visit to Gotha, he found the city in the greatest state of excitement: the whole Hanoverian army was said to have passed through the town and to have committed acts of hostility.<sup>1</sup> In Berlin, this could be interpreted only as indicating that the enemy had been making an attempt to escape the impending danger of being entirely surrounded by marching to the north. This would have changed the whole basis of negotiations. So Bismarck telegraphed to the Duke of Coburg that Döring's mission had thus become useless; while Moltke sent word to Falckenstein and Flies to pursue the enemy and to reinforce Manteuffel, who was still at Göttingen, for an encounter with the Hanoverians.

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, it was only a foraging party.

When, then, on the morning of the 26th, Döring arrived at Gotha and found that the information of the Provincial Counsellor had been incorrect, and that the Hanoverians were standing quietly at Langensalza, he continued without hesitation on his way thither to fulfil his mission. But General Flies was already, in consequence of Moltke's orders, on the march against the Hanoverians; and when, about four or five miles from Gotha, he was met by Lieutenant-Colonel Rudorff, who asked permission to pass through on his way to Berlin, the General told him that the truce of twenty-four hours had already expired, and that he had received orders to advance. He told Rudorff that he could not therefore allow him to pass; but sent with him to the King a Prussian officer, who was to announce the coming of Döring to Langensalza. Flies himself halted his troops in order to await the result of Döring's negotiations.

This second obstruction of Rudorff's journey, accompanied like the first by warlike behavior on the part of the Prussian commanders, made the cup of the proud King of Hanover run over. When Döring later arrived in Langensalza, the officer who was sent to meet him declared that the King declined all the offers that might be made to him. After being admitted to the King's presence, Döring found him in company with a general and a civil official. Döring expressed his regret that His Majesty was not inclined to make some arrangement by which bloodshed might be prevented; but that his orders

compelled him nevertheless to make an attempt to bring about an agreement. The King asked abruptly: "Who gave you the orders?" To Döring's reply that they were from His Majesty, the King of Prussia, the question followed: "From the King himself?" Döring answered: "Through the President of the Ministry, Count Bismarck;" to which the King cried: "What is that creature after?" The Colonel begged the King most respectfully to consider that he was speaking of a Prussian Minister. "Well, then!" said the King, "we are all creatures for that matter! Tell me your mission."

Döring then read to the King in substance the contents of his instructions. At the place where an alliance was again offered, the King interrupted him with: "Oh, pshaw! an alliance!" and followed with a passionate outburst to the effect that he could answer these propositions only by a solemn protest against Prussia's unlawful conduct towards a sister kingdom: his messengers had been stopped; a truce had been concluded with him for an indefinite length of time; and after he had, trusting to this, scattered his troops into different districts, he was now being attacked. Döring interrupted him by saying that he had heard only of a truce for twenty-four hours, which had already expired. "No!" cried the King. "Alvensleben concluded the truce for an unlimited time, and both of the men who accompanied him confirmed it." "Well, then!" said Döring. "In that case, I consider myself authorized to announce its

expiration; and if Your Majesty persists in declining the proposals, this will take place, and an attack will follow." "I have nothing further to say to you," concluded the King, "than to repeat my protest."<sup>1</sup>

Thus the die was cast, and open hostilities renewed. In Berlin the news was accordingly awaited every hour, that Falckenstein had immediately after ten o'clock opened the attack from all sides and had forced the capitulation of the Hanoverians. This was considered so certain, that Moltke at once wrote out Falckenstein's instructions for operations in South Germany; and the King commissioned the General to assume the temporary administration of Hesse-Cassel, with special instructions to make at once a certain demand of the commander of the troops of the Electorate.

But Falckenstein behaved in quite a different manner from that which was taken for granted in Berlin. After Moltke had restrained him in the early morning from making the attack upon the Hanoverians, his thoughts were turned wholly upon the supposed approach of the Bavarians; and when the not wholly unfounded news came that the 8th Confederate corps was advancing towards Giessen, his

<sup>1</sup> This is given according to Döring's report, written immediately afterwards, the contents of which correspond also in matters of fact with the events in every particular. When King George wrote in the autumn to Herr von Hammerstein that Döring himself before stating his mission had said that in reality the matter was already settled, since Falckenstein was advancing to the attack, such a misunderstanding must be referred to the very greatly excited state of the King. The self-evident impossibility of Döring's having spoken in such a way at the beginning of the negotiations needs no proof.

attention was completely absorbed by the fear of being caught between two fires by the South Germans and the Hanoverians.

He accordingly decided to make a stand on both sides, and to station Göben and Beyer with 18,000 men westward from Eisenach at Gerstungen and Berka to confront the Bavarians, while Manteuffel's corps, which could be brought up to 15,000 men, and the detachment under Flies, which numbered 9,000, should act against the Hanoverians, the former from the north and the latter from the south. But since Manteuffel, who was still in Göttingen, was two days' march distant from the enemy, and consequently could take no part in the operations before June 29th, Falckenstein accordingly sent orders to Flies not to make any attack for the present, so long as the enemy remained in Langensalza; but if they should start away, he was to keep at their blades (meaning that he should not lose them out of his sight).

The error in thus scattering the forces is clear even to a layman. Precisely because Falckenstein feared being caught between two fires, nothing was more important than for him to keep his own forces together, in order to take advantage of their certain superiority in numbers to crush the nearest adversary before the other could reach him. Had the Bavarians actually been standing at Vacha, eighteen miles from Eisenach, as had been reported, Falckenstein would have had plenty of time to carry out such a

plan of decisive operations. This was also the unhesitating opinion in Berlin; and when, on the evening of the 26th, no news had yet been received of any engagement by Falckenstein, but on the contrary the Provincial President of Erfurt announced (mistakenly) that the Hanoverians were marching eastward towards Tenstedt and Sömmerda, King William then telegraphed, himself, to Falckenstein: "I repeat the order sent through General Moltke, that you are to concentrate everything at your disposal per march and per railway, and force a capitulation, *coûte que coûte*. Bavarians are said to be in Meiningen." How little this agreed with Falckenstein's idea is evident from his reply, sent at once: "Your Majesty's commands will be executed. Whether a successful issue is possible cannot be foreseen." His opinion was as before, that Göben and Beyer were not at his disposal against the Hanoverians, and consequently Manteuffel and Flies were not absolutely certain of victory. According to that view nothing should be undertaken on the next day, the 27th of June, since Manteuffel was still at a great distance.

Meanwhile, Duke Ernest and Colonel Döring came over to Eisenach late in the night and reported that according to last accounts the Hanoverians were on the move towards the north, perhaps with a view to seeking refuge in the passes and valleys of the Harz. Falckenstein informed Manteuffel of this, and ordered Flies to follow the flight of the Hanoverians, and, if opportunity offered, to attack their rear. But

when the Duke to this end asked for some reinforcement for Flies, Falckenstein refused him shortly, saying that he needed his troops himself at Eisenach for protection against the Bavarians.

Then, on the morning of the 27th, Falckenstein received that despatch from the King in which he was appointed Provisional Governor of Hesse-Cassel; and upon that, he decided to go himself to Cassel in the afternoon, although the letter, which was to be at once addressed to the Hessian general, might just as well have been written and sent from Eisenach. At the moment of his departure (about three o'clock), he received orally from an officer that had just come from Gotha the news that Flies was fighting with the Hanoverian rear on the Unstrut near Langensalza, but that he did not intend to cross the river. At the same time, Lieutenant-Colonel Veith of the General Staff handed to Falckenstein a telegram from Moltke to himself, the contents of which, however, Falckenstein seems not to have observed until on his journey, since its main sentences would certainly have caused him to take further measures and give a speedier answer.

These sentences were: "All Bavarians and Imperial troops now secondary. Unqualified will of His Majesty that the Hanoverians be at once attacked and disarmed. What arrangements has General Falckenstein made for to-day? Answer immediately." The General sent the answer from Cassel in the evening to the effect that the Hanoverians



were on the march to the north; Manteuffel had orders to block all the roads; Flies was following them, and had had that morning a skirmish on the Unstrut; of this no news as yet; Göben and Beyer were still at Eisenach; Falckenstein intended to return to Eisenach, where matters needed attention; the telegram to Veith had come into his hands too late, but could herewith be considered answered.

We have seen that so far the General had been all the time quite satisfied with his own arrangements. But a severe blow was to awaken him from these illusions. Towards midnight he received a telegram directly from King William himself: "General Flies, for want of sufficient support, was driven back by superior numbers, and stands now at Warza before Gotha. I command you to march with all the troops you can summon, directly and without delay, against the Hanoverians. For the present no attention is to be paid to Bavarians and South Germans; but in accordance with my will, already expressed, the complete disarming of the Hanoverians is alone to be considered. The receipt of this command is to be acknowledged immediately, and the arrangements made are to be announced at once."

This was in every way bitter for the old veteran. Before this, he might well defy disagreeable orders by thinking himself, unfortunately, wiser than his superiors in office. But now his mistake was unanswerably and clearly proved by the facts before his eyes: Göben had far and near found no Bavarians, and

Flies had been beaten by the Hanoverians, because, the King said, Falckenstein had not sufficiently supported him.

The events at Langensalza had taken place as follows.

Inasmuch as after Döring's departure on the 26th of June the expected attack from the Prussians did not ensue, the idea arose again in the Hanoverian headquarters of taking the offensive against Gotha. But the generals were unanimous in the opinion that the troops, who had at no time during the last three nights had undisturbed rest and had been but very scantily fed, were not fresh enough for that. On the other hand, they were inclined to move far away from here. On the 23d, Superintendent of Archives Onno Klopp had been sent to Bavaria with the announcement that the Hanoverians did not wish to capitulate, but thought they could hold out a whole week, if there was a prospect of receiving aid. No report had arrived from Klopp, but the same rumors were heard which had come to Falckenstein; namely, that the van of the Bavarian army had already reached Vacha. The Hanoverians hoped every hour to hear the cannon of their liberators.

So it was decided to seek out in the neighborhood as good a defensive position as possible, and there to await the arrival of the Bavarians. Such a place was found not far from Langensalza upon a row of hills behind the Unstrut. The troops that had been already advanced towards Gotha were withdrawn in

the evening and led to the river, which necessitated spending a good part of the night in marching. It was these movements that gave occasion to the above-mentioned report made to Falckenstein, that the enemy were retreating northwards, and to the commands sent to Flies to follow at their heels and attack their rear.

Now, General Flies had already, besides this order, received a copy of the royal telegram of the 26th, which demanded that the Hanoverians should be disarmed *coûte que coûte*. Even without these additional inducements the old hussar would have had, in spite of his gray hair, youthful energy and boldness enough to rush upon the enemy, so soon as an attack was no longer forbidden. He could, to be sure, only suppose from Falckenstein's despatch that he was merely to follow a retreating enemy and harass their rear. But his advance was, after all, in its isolation from allies, a bold undertaking, since it led him with 9,000 men into the reach of an army of double that number.

At nearly eight o'clock on the morning of June 27th, he started out from his bivouac. Shortly before ten o'clock the first cannon was fired; and an hour and a half later the weak van of the enemy had been forced out of Langensalza and beaten back over the Unstrut. The right bank of the river was in the possession of the Prussians. Then began a lively firing of artillery and guns across from both sides of the river. General Flies felt convinced that he was dealing with more

than the rear of a retreating army. It was at this point that he sent word that he did not intend to cross the river. Now would have been the time for him to have stopped the fighting; but, unfortunately, just at this moment the heat of the sun caused such a rush of blood to his head that he lay for more than an hour unconscious. The other officers did not venture to begin the retreat without orders. A sally across the Unstrut was unsuccessful; but, on the other hand, an attack from a Hanoverian brigade was bravely repulsed.

Meanwhile, General Arentschild could no longer fail to recognize the weakness of his adversary's numbers, and soon after one o'clock he crossed the river on the offensive with his whole force. Bülow's brigade waded across the little river toward the west and fell upon the Prussian position near Langensalza in the flank, while to the east the Hanoverian cavalry came dashing over and threatened the adversary's line of retreat; so that at last the Prussian centre, which had been fighting with grim resoluteness, saw itself forced to withdraw.

What may here have been lacking in the leadership was made good by the soldiers through their steadfast self-forgetfulness and valor. The retreat took place under a hot June sun, from one field to another, interrupted by short sallies wherever it was possible, each individual company being obliged to fight continually. Not only the enemy's balls made havoc in their ranks: whole sections fell fainting and exhausted by the heat. It was well for them that on the other side, too, the

powers of the Hanoverians began to give out. Soon after four o'clock their infantry ceased from the pursuit. So much the more eagerly did their regiments of cavalry seek to accomplish the destruction of the Prussian corps; but in all their attacks, though they rode with the greatest energy, they were forced to fall back with heavy losses from the closed ranks of the Prussian infantry.

At nearly half past six the battle ceased about four or five miles from Gotha. An hour later all the companies of the small corps were in order, although for the moment tired almost to death and able to make no further exertion. The loss on both sides was considerable: upon the Prussian, 170 killed, 600 wounded, and 900 taken prisoners; on the Hanoverian, 400 killed and 1,000 wounded.

After King George had late in the evening summoned his generals to a council of war, Count Platen proposed an immediate advance of the army towards Gotha, since the defeat of the Prussians had doubtless left the roads to the Thuringian Forest free. The officers, however, called his attention to the fact that armies cannot be pushed from one spot to another, like chessmen; that the soldiers were excessively weary, and unequal to a six or seven hours' march in the night; that there was a want of provisions and of means for caring for the wounded; and that the only sensible thing to do at present was to send a messenger to propose a truce. The King made up his mind, too, to this effect and did very well in so doing. For

even with the greatest possible haste Gotha could not have been reached before the morning of June 28th, and the Hanoverians would have found themselves confronted there, not only by the troops of General Flies, but also by a strong brigade of General Göben's, which had been transported thither by railway in the night. The result would have been a fresh and useless bloodshed.

The offer of a truce of several days was declined by General Flies. When the negotiator thereupon threatened an immediate attack from the Hanoverians, Flies replied by saying that he could only humbly leave that to their own choice. In doing this, Flies was acting wholly in harmony with the ideas of his Government, which would now listen no longer to considerations, truces, and negotiations, but which had, immediately after receiving the telegraphic report of Flies on the evening of June 27th, sent to Falckenstein, Göben, and Manteuffel that categorical command already known to us, ordering that without any heed whatever to the Bavarians all forces should be immediately set in motion against the Hanoverians and as speedily as possible effect their surrender.

In Berlin there was not a little indignation felt towards Falckenstein, for his having refused to send troops to Gotha on the 21st, for his having delayed the march to Eisenach on the 23d, for his having omitted to execute the order to attack the Hanoverians on the 26th, and for his having brought about by all this the misfortune at Langensalza. That he

could no longer retain his present position had been already decided by the supreme military authority.

On the morning of the 28th the Prussian columns began at last the march from all sides. General Göben from Eisenach with 12,000 men reached Grosz-Behringen, and General Manteuffel arrived at Grosz-Gottern with 8,000 men from Mülhausen, while Flies with 13,000 kept watch over Gotha—all of them ready so soon as an engagement arose in any quarter to take the enemy in the flank and in the rear. Any further resistance was hopeless. The Hanoverian army had scarcely ammunition enough for a single action, nor provisions enough for a single day. It was surrounded by a force of double its numbers. And so, at the unanimous request of his generals and colonels, King George resolved to authorize General von Arentschild to surrender. The latter sent Brigadier-General von dem Knesebeck to General von Flies at Gotha with the declaration that the fate of the Hanoverian army was so far placed in the hands of His Majesty the King of Prussia, that that Sovereign was requested to state the conditions of a military capitulation and the disposition to be made of the troops.

Flies sent this message to General von Falckenstein, who had meanwhile arrived in Grosz-Behringen, and telegraphed at once its contents to Berlin. The answer of Falckenstein, which was received by Arentschild at midnight in Langensalza, imposed as conditions the dismissal of the soldiers to their homes without arms or equipments of war, and the placing

of the officers upon leave of absence with the privilege of retaining their arms and full pay, and without any other restrictions. Arentschild replied to this early on the morning of June 29th by saying: "The Hanoverian troops have surrendered unconditionally. It is therefore my duty simply to acknowledge the terms which have been decided upon by His Majesty the King of Prussia. This I hereby do."

Thus the capitulation was concluded. It was consequently not a treaty, but a surrender at discretion, a one-sided disposition made by the victor according to his own pleasure. The final arrangement was delayed a few hours by the circumstance that General Flies forwarded during the night a telegram from Moltke, which commissioned, not Falckenstein, but Manteuffel, with the conclusion of the capitulation. The latter was therefore in a position, since King William wished to express to the Hanoverian army his recognition of their honorable conduct, to add certain favorable conditions to Falckenstein's Articles, and especially to grant to King George, the Crown Prince, and such of their suite as they might designate, perfect liberty to choose their place of future residence anywhere outside of the Kingdom of Hanover.

Thus the last effort at resistance in North Germany had been overcome, and General von Falckenstein could now turn his attention to his second task, the struggle with the South German States.



## CHAPTER III.

## CUSTOZZA.

IN Italy, the King and the people exulted loudly, as Austria's conduct in the Confederate Diet and the events in Holstein finally gave the signal for the beginning of the struggle. The Italians were not, like the South German states, behind in their equipments; the mobilization went on rapidly and smoothly towards its completion. The troops were, to be sure, of various quality. The Neapolitans and Tuscans were not made of such solid stuff as the Piedmontese, the Lombards, and the Romagnoles; but all were filled with zeal and devotion to the cause. The supply of ammunition, provisions, and horses, although not perhaps abundant, was nevertheless sufficient.

No less than twenty Divisions were equipped, each comprising nearly 12,000 men, and making in the whole something like 230,000 soldiers,<sup>1</sup> of whom the larger half were assembled in Lombardy under the leadership of the King with La Marmora as Chief of the Staff, and the smaller half under General Cialdini to the south of the Lower Po near Bologna and Ferrara. In addition to this there was a corps of volunteers under Garibaldi, reckoned originally at

<sup>1</sup> *La Campagna del 1866 in Italia* (from official sources), p. 31.

15,000 men, but soon swelled by the zeal of the Italian youth to the number of 35,000. And finally, the Kingdom backed the army in the field with a force of over 150,000 men for substitutes and troops for garrisons. It also continued unweariedly the levies for the formation of new 4th and 5th battalions.

In opposition to all these masses, the Austrian forces in Venetia were limited to an army in the field of 82,000 men,<sup>1</sup> to which must be added 30,000 men in the garrisons of the Quadrilateral, while 13,000 men were also employed in covering the South Tyrol, and 16,000 in guarding Istria and Friuli. The Archduke Albrecht was obliged under these circumstances to be prepared to face in the field a force at least twice and even perhaps three times as strong as his own: while nothing was more natural than that the enthusiasm of the Italian people at its high tide should indulge itself in painting brilliant pictures of glorious deeds.

The King shared this feeling with his nation, and was ready for any bold stroke, when there was any possibility whatever of success. Yet he yielded to the larger experience and supposed thorough technical knowledge of La Marmora, who was by no means inclined to run any risk, but who was rather determined upon preserving prudence and circumspection. In spite of his great coolness in the midst of a shower of bullets, he had not much courage in undertaking great responsibility. Only this did not induce him,

<sup>1</sup> *Oesterreichs Kämpfe*, II, 52. Cf. the appendix to the same work, p. 18, concerning the strength of the artillery.

as it did General Benedek, to ask for his dismissal; but on the contrary, and consistently with his arbitrary disposition, it led him to hold fast with redoubled zeal to his office, lest some one else succeeding him might by foolhardiness and stupidity do serious damage.

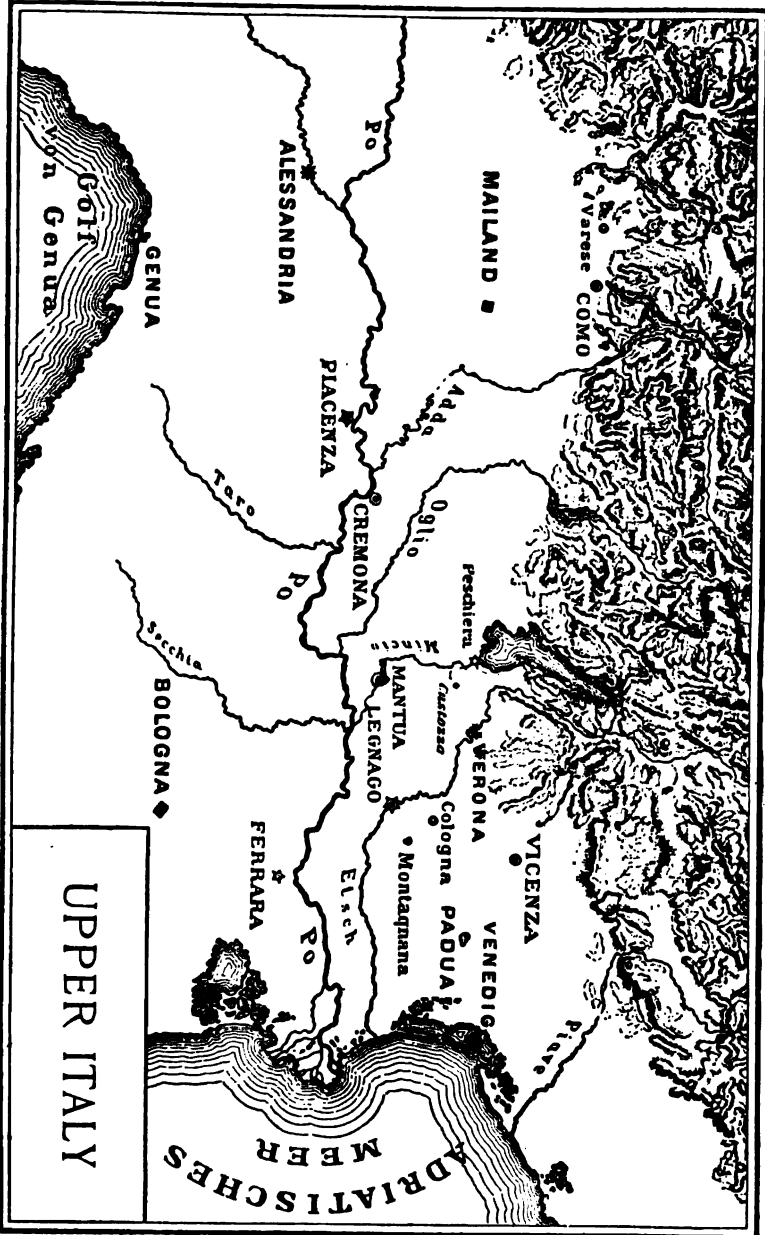
For La Marmora was in reality of the opinion that upon this theatre of war there was no need of any great, dangerous, nor glorious actions. That Austria no longer placed very much weight upon the possession of Venetia, had been repeatedly asserted to him by his honored patron Napoleon, and at last, as we have seen, together with the hint that in the course of events it might possibly be best for Italy not to carry on the war altogether too energetically. That remark of Count Karolyi to Barral ("If we conquer Prussia, we shall easily come to some understanding with you about Venetia") agreed perfectly with this.

From such premises such a clever politician as La Marmora might very easily draw the conclusion that Austria did not wish to shed the blood of a single soldier for Venetia, but would evacuate the province without a blow, if the Italians on their part did not by headlong precipitation make a war unavoidable. This calls to mind the observation of Jacini already mentioned: that it was no longer a question of a regular war, but rather of a duel after the fashion of cavaliers; for Austria would cede the province to Italy so soon as she had saved the honor of her arms by some small victory over the Italian army.

In our opinion, however, La Marmora's complacency did not go quite so far as that: better than to let one's self be beaten would evidently be not to fight at all; and by this latter way there would be no danger, at least to start with, of getting into any serious conflict on the score of Italy's obligations to Prussia. The thing to do was simply not to go ahead with too much zeal.

Resting upon this standpoint, it was disagreeable business for La Marmora to have to deliberate over the conduct of the war with the representatives of Prussia. • Nothing came of the proposition to send Moltke to Italy, inasmuch as the presence of the General in Berlin had been indispensable since the middle of April; and the more Prussia found it necessary to equip soon after that date, the more urgent it became to have at hand every officer of superior rank, that might otherwise be capable of representing Prussia well in the negotiations at Florence. When, however, the beginning of the war drew near, Moltke found it desirable to confer with Italy about certain strategic combinations; and he decided at the end of May, for want of an active military officer, to send for that purpose to Florence that eminent historian of wars, already famous beyond the limits of Germany, Theodor von Bernhardi.

The questions to be discussed were the following. Venetia, as is well known, was bounded on the north by the Alps, on the south for the most part by the Po, and on the west by a tributary of the same, the Mincio.





To the north of these two rivers flows the Adige, which rises in the Tyrol, then takes its course at first to the south, nine miles or so from the Mincio and parallel with the latter, then turns to the south-east, and finally to the east, running parallel with the Po and at about the same distance from it. Guarding the province in the north are the cities of Peschiera on the Mincio, and Verona on the Adige; in the south, Mantua on the Mincio, and, further to the east, Legnano on the Adige.

Now, inasmuch as Italy at that time bounded the province on the west and on the south, the question arose, from which side it would be best to make the chief attack, whether from Milan towards the east or from Bologna and Ferrara towards the north.<sup>1</sup> The passage over the Mincio would unquestionably be easier than that over the Po or the Adige; but in that case the defenders would be supported on all sides by the four fortresses, and even if worst came to worst, they would have a sure line of retreat to the east, where the courses of several large rivers would offer them fresh protection. It would be quite different if the attacking army should succeed in crossing the Po and the Adige. The army on the defensive would then be cut off from Venice and Triest, from Laibach and Vienna, and in the event of a defeat in the field would have only the choice of shutting itself up hope-

<sup>1</sup> This question gave rise at the time to whole volumes of polemics in Italy. It is not our duty to pass judgment upon the merits of the case; the authority of Moltke and Cialdini seems to us to be sufficient. Compare further, Rüstow, *Krieg von 1866*, p. 117.

lessly in the four fortresses or of trying to secure connection with Vienna by a circuitous route through the Tyrol.

It is very clear, by which method the more speedy and more far-reaching advantage was to be gained; and therefore Moltke had instructed his representative to recommend urgently the passage over the Po, by which it might be possible to fall upon the Austrian position in the rear, to beat them and force them from the Quadrilateral, then to drive them into the Tyrol, there to keep at their heels with the whole military force, and finally at Linz on the Danube to join hands with the Prussian army. If, at the same time, two or three Divisions should make lively demonstrations on the Mincio, then there might be employed in the main operations a force amounting to more than double that of the enemy.

Closely connected with this was a second question. We have seen how Belcredi's Ministry had at first, by the overthrow of the Austrian Central Parliament, aroused great enthusiasm among the Magyars and southern Slavs, but had afterwards, in discussing the future provincial constitutions, come to an open rupture with the Hungarian and Croatian Diets. When now the probability of war was greatly increased, the old hopes of the Hungarian emigration-leaders of 1848 revived, — of Kossuth, Klapka, Türr, and Czaki. They believed, in view of the fresh hatred of both nations against the Austrian Government, that it needed only the appearance of a small Italian army to effect a



general uprising of the people and a throwing off of the Austrian yoke anew in all lands belonging to St. Stephan's crown.

Now, the Prussian ambassador, Count Usedom, had stood for some time in intimate relations with those revolutionary leaders — of course, without instructions from his Government, but following so much the more his personal inclination. Count Usedom was a man of good presence, lively, well-informed, and versatile, an active Free Mason, of large experience in many social circles, an unwearied story-teller, ready to take an interest in any suggestion, even if not thorough in carrying it out. Although eminently an aristocrat, he nevertheless believed that account must be taken of the liberal progress and spirit of the times; and he applied this doctrine to himself in his own office by acting upon the principle that the true diplomat should not only associate with members of the Government to which he is accredited, but also with the people, with the Opposition, and with the leaders of public opinion.

Accordingly, he had fraternized with those political refugees, and had filled his easily excitable mind with all their fancies and their dreams. Since March he had sent one announcement after another to Berlin, telling what grand news he had received from Hungary, how the enterprise looked more and more hopeful, and that nevertheless a speedy decision and especially the raising of money were imperatively necessary. From La Marmora he received at first

but little attention; but when, on the 21st of April, Austria decreed the mobilization of her Army of the South, Usedom reported on the 27th that La Marmora was penetrated with the importance of the Hungarian enterprise, on the 28th that the Minister was now about to take up the Hungarian question, and on the 29th that everything was ready for the consideration of the same by Prussia and Italy in common. Up to this point his persistence had produced but little impression in Berlin. The King was never inclined to make use of revolutionary agencies. No one placed much confidence in the hopes and plans of emigrants; and what was learned directly from Hungary did not everywhere agree with Usedom's representations. It is true that the bitterness of feeling was keen in Pesth and in Agram, and that there was a party in Hungary which in return for strong guaranties might have consented to an uprising. But this party formed in the Diet only a small minority; and so far as Franz Deák was concerned, and with him the majority in the parliament and among the people, it was believed beyond the chance of a doubt that, although he would refuse, until his constitutional measures were adopted, any assistance whatever to the Government, even for purposes of war, he would nevertheless hesitate to advocate the separation of Hungary from Austria or even the withdrawal of Austria from the German Confederation. His opposition to both of these changes was based upon the fear of their resulting in a preponderance of Slavs in all countries both east and

west of the Leitha. He was consequently the enemy of Austria in the Hungarian, but the enemy of Prussia in the German Question; and how his decision would finally fall was in no way to be foreseen. But if he should not be willing to co-operate, the project of a Hungarian revolution would end in air, especially as the Croats and Magyars hated each other quite as heartily as they both hated the Minister Belcredi.

Nevertheless, these opinions entertained in Berlin were modified, as, during the month of May, war seemed to grow unavoidable, Napoleon's attitude became more uncertain, La Marmora repeatedly talked with Usedom about granting to France the boundaries of 1814, and at the same time rumors about the voluntary cession of Venetia to Italy grew more reliable. Usedom reported on the 13th and 16th of May that there were stories afloat in Florence about a peaceful conciliation with Austria, who could then employ her Army of the South against Prussia; that it was hinted that Austria would not let any great struggle take place in Venetia; but that all this business could be stopped by persuading Italy to support a Hungarian revolution.

There was nothing to be said against this. Prussia was in a position to fight for her very existence, and the fate of the Monarchy might depend upon the quickness of the decision. "Austria," wrote Moltke at that time, "is very tenacious of life, and can endure two or three battles without danger; but a revolution in Hungary would settle the matter." So, without

placing any definite hopes upon the project, he gave Bernhardt instructions to try to bring it about that Garibaldi should be sent with 35,000 volunteers by way of Dalmatia and Triest to Hungary, to serve as a nucleus and support to the friends of freedom there. Moltke further added that Prussia would be ready (as Usedom had proposed) to join Italy in raising a million *lire* to assist the revolutionary movement in Hungary.

It is easy to believe that these instructions did not accord well with La Marmora's latest views. When Bernhardt's arrival was announced to him, he was still further vexed that Moltke, if he could not come himself, should not have sent some general instead of a doctor of philosophy to discuss important strategic questions. Yet, willingly or unwillingly, he could not refuse to receive the civilian. On the 6th of June he held his first conference with Usedom and the savant so skilled in the tactics of war. La Marmora begged the latter to inform him of Prussia's equipments and plans.

When Bernhardt gave him the figures of the Prussian troops, he cried: "Why! that is a tremendous force!" Bernhardt observed to him also that Prussia would consider everything else secondary in order to throw her whole strength into the decisive field of action. What he further said about possible operations in Bohemia and the object of such on the Danube appeared to have only a moderate interest for the Minister. La Marmora was satisfied with the fact

that Prussia was strong enough to engage almost all of Austria's forces in the north, and thus leave an easy task to the Italians. This was very true; but his appreciation of it did not reflect much credit upon the leader of the Italian army that was already thrice as numerous as the enemy they were to contend with.

When, then, Bernhardi asked him in turn about the Italian preparations, La Marmora said that Cialdini was at that time with five Divisions near Bologna, and that the main army, eleven Divisions strong, was at Piacenza; that to each another Division was on the way, and that a 19th and 20th Division were in the process of formation; and further, that the volunteers had been all ordered to Como and Varese. "What? To Como?" interrupted Bernhardi. "I thought the plan was to send them over to Dalmatia under the protection of your fleet." "There is no use in entertaining such an idea!" cried La Marmora. "No! The volunteers are to go into South Tyrol, to cut off the Austrians' retreat in that direction. An expedition over the Adriatic cannot possibly come into consideration." "But," observed Bernhardi, "it is clear that Austria is gathering her troops for the most part in the north to strike decisive blows against Prussia, and that she will preserve a strict defensive towards Italy, until Prussia has been beaten." "Very true!" replied La Marmora. "Then the thing to do," continued Bernhardi, "is to give to Italian operations such a turn as will force Austria to employ a greater proportion of her forces there, and will render it impossible

for her to hold her own against the enemy on this side with only the fortresses in the Quadrilateral and a few troops in the field." "Oh, no!" said La Marmora; "that will not happen. We shall plunge into the Quadrilateral. We shall plunge into the midst of it!" "But we believed," remarked Bernhardt further, "that you would be able entirely to surround the Quadrilateral, if you made the base of your operations, not Alexandria, but Bologna, and then advanced over the Lower Po to Padua and Vicenza." La Marmora answered that that was impossible, since all the supplies were in Alexandria. To Bernhardt's question why they had been heaped up there the Minister paid no attention, but went on to say that in the first place the natural situation of things made a passage over the Lower Po impracticable. "And secondly," he said, "that is just the place where the Austrians are expecting us." (Any one else would have drawn the conclusion that it was therefore evident that Austria recognized this to be her weak point.) "My plan is, therefore," explained La Marmora, "to have Cialdini with his five Divisions make an attempt to cross the Po. He demands eight Divisions for this; but that is exaggerated; I shall not give him so many. So soon as his demonstration is in progress, the main army is to cross the Mincio; and then if Cialdini does not get across the Po, and it is not likely that he will, he shall join the former by way of Cremona. Further movements will depend upon circumstances. Perhaps it would be a good thing to lay siege at once

to Peschiera; for the taking of that place would make communications very much easier."

All this was just what Austria might wish for, and at any rate it was exactly contrary to Moltke's propositions. Not to force the Austrian army into the Tyrol, and keep it thus away from Hungary and Vienna, so that the road to Hungary would be left open for Garibaldi: but, instead of this, to drive the Austrians gently, step by step, back to the East, and to send away Garibaldi into the Tyrolese Alps, where he could not be of much use to the great cause—these were the doctrines in which La Marmora persisted with unreasoning obstinacy.

Bernhardi finally tried to follow him upon his own ground, and asked him, whither he intended to go from Udine, after the occupation of the whole of Venetia. "We shall march into the Alps," he replied, "either into the valley of Ampezzo or towards Ponteba." "Never mind by what route," said Bernhardi; "if you only get *over* the Alps!" With a wave of his hand and shaking his head, La Marmora answered: "That will depend on circumstances; we shall see. But first *into* the Alps." When Bernhardi explained to him once more the advantages that must follow an energetic advance on the part of Italy, so as to act in concert with the Prussian army on the Danube, the General, with all the condescension and conscious superiority of a professional expert, treated the scheme as a sort of immense but romantic pleasantry. "There is no need of all that," said he, "to induce Austria to make peace."

Bernhardi concluded his report to Moltke with the remark: "I am convinced that he will stop at the old Venetian boundary and then make only feints, even if the Austrians send against him only a company of scouts. His plans and combinations extend only into the Quadrilateral, and his horizon is bounded by Udine."

On the 8th of June a second discussion took place, at which the King of Italy presided. The deliberations turned upon these same points. The King declared himself fully ready to send a considerable force under Garibaldi across to Dalmatia; and Bernhardi had also learned that Cialdini, who was acknowledged by common consent to be the cleverest of the Italian generals at that time, shared Moltke's views entirely. But all that did no good. La Marmora's determination remained fixed and immovable.

Nor did the King venture to resist the will of his Minister, especially since La Marmora had a double backing diplomatically. Napoleon had, it is true, in March, when he was setting great hopes upon Prussia's generosity, advocated an advance into Hungary; but now things had changed, and nothing was heard from Paris but warnings to be prudent and calm, and to carry on the war very cautiously. The English ambassador was even more decided in his advice against undertaking any revolutionary enterprises on the other side of the Adriatic. He declared that Austria was a necessary member of the European system of states, and her utter destruction could not



be permitted. "If a Hungarian revolution broke out," said he, "who could calculate the consequences? Would not the Revolution get a foothold in Servia and in Roumania? and would not the whole Eastern Question be again brought up?" The influence of a charming woman lent its support to these arguments in La Marmora's mind; and so it was settled that Garibaldi should march to the Tyrol, and the main army should cross the Mincio.

This decision once effected, La Marmora no longer hesitated to give up his ministerial office in order to take his place at the head of the army. He had wished to have Baron Ricasoli take the place he had himself held in the Ministry as it was; but Ricasoli had very good reasons for insisting upon the formation of an entirely new Cabinet. For his own ideas in politics and in war were thoroughly different from those of La Marmora. The latter was most desirous of the acquisition of Venetia, by peaceful means if possible, and of the continuation of French patronage; whereas the former rejoiced in the prospect of war, and wished to conduct it in an energetic and creditable fashion, because he hoped to gain by it, not only the liberation of Venetia from Austria, but also freedom for Italy from the control of France.

When, a few days later, it was announced that another great council of war concerning the plan of campaign was to be held in headquarters, Usedom (without Bismarck's knowledge of it beforehand) handed to the Minister on the 17th of June a lengthy

note, in which he explained that Prussia was intending to wage a thorough-going war (*une guerre à fond*), and expected a similar spirit on the part of Italy, which he characterized as a willingness to undertake a campaign that should begin at the Po and end on the Danube, that should send Garibaldi to the support of the Hungarians, and thus strike at the heart of Austrian Monarchy. Ricasoli agreed with this most fully, and sent at once a copy of the note to La Marmora. As nothing was heard from the latter concerning it, the message was sent again three days later.

La Marmora had read the note with the greatest vexation, and then, without saying a word to any one about it, had put it into his pocket. Afterwards, in his anger against Prussia, he had the note printed, and raised by means of its contents a storm of indignation in the hearts of sympathetic Legitimists, who for a long time kept up the taunts of "*guerre à fond*" and "*frapper au cœur*" against Prussia. It needs, however, scarcely any proof, that a plan of campaign that is not thorough-going, and which does not aim at the heart of the enemy, is very inane. Nothing is implied by this about the conditions of peace that are to be granted to the adversary once defeated.

How much better it would have been for General La Marmora a week later, if he had risen to the doctrines of an effective policy!

Meanwhile, the politician-soldier went on his way undaunted. We have heard him say that he con-

sidered Cialdini's operations on the Lower Po to be only a feint, and would send there no more than five Divisions, so that he might keep all the rest of the troops in his own charge on the Mincio. But Cialdini, who was ambitious and bold, and therefore was popular with the army and among the people, persisted emphatically in his purpose of crossing the Po. Inasmuch as the King did not dare to decide in the difference between the two Generals, the evil result was, that both plans were approved: Cialdini received his desired eight Divisions for crossing the Po, and the remaining twelve were given to La Marmora for his march across the Mincio.

Each consoled himself with the thought that the other would not be able to accomplish much and would only make his own task easier by occupying the attention of a portion of the enemy's forces: the fact that they were both, by dividing the troops in this way, playing into the hands of their common opponent, was forgotten in the personal quarrel. But, as we know, La Marmora had no thought of serious fighting; he expected that he might be obliged, perhaps, while crossing the Mincio, to overcome some little resistance, but that the Austrians would then gradually retreat into their fortresses or perhaps farther. On the 20th of June he sent the declaration of war to the Austrian commander, the Archduke Albrecht, and with it the information that hostilities would commence in three days, unless the latter wished to begin them earlier. No reply was received to this message.

The Archduke, who had assumed the command on the 9th of May, had at the start, after the Italian preparations were made, awaited an attack across the Lower Po. Since the first of June, however, he had no longer any doubt but that, although he might also be annoyed at this point, the main attack would come from across the Mincio and under the leadership of the King. Whether he knew anything about the time-serving arrangements of June 12th or not, we have no conclusive evidence. Certain it is, however, that without paying the least attention to such sordid business, he proved himself from the first to the last to have acted only as a soldier, and to have planned, written, and operated only in the most praiseworthy manner. He knew that his task was to defend the province against a force thrice as numerous as his own. Yet he was very far from entertaining any thought of evacuating it without a struggle: on the contrary, he intended to conduct the defence in such a way that, if it were at all possible, he might be victorious in spite of the enemy's superior force.

But in every defensive position the indispensable condition of victory is the ability to make some offensive blows; and the Archduke had been making preparations with this in view since the middle of June. After taking out the garrisons that were necessary for the preservation of internal order, he arranged an army for the field of over 82,000 men (the 5th, 7th, and 9th army-corps, each consisting of three brigades, besides a newly-formed Division of reserves). This force he

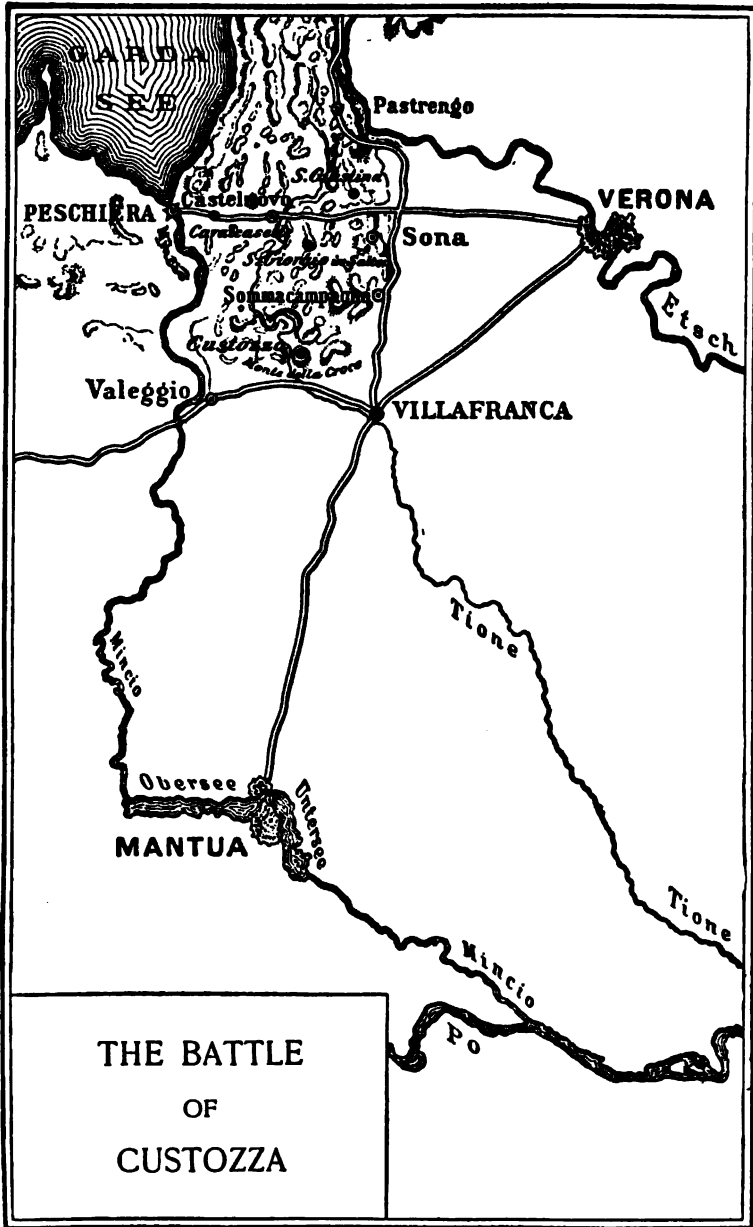
drew up in the middle of June on the left bank of the Adige at Montagnana, Cologne, and Verona in close position, at about equal distances from the points where the enemy would probably cross the Po and the Mincio; so that he would be able in two long marches to fall with his whole force upon that division of the enemy that first appeared, and to win the victory, he hoped, before the other division could come up. At the same time, the two water-courses of the frontier, the Mincio and the Po, were occupied by a continuous chain of small military posts; all boats were carried over to the Austrian shore; and every means of communication with the other side of the river was effectually cut off.

The result of this was that in the Italian Headquarters only very isolated and belated information was received about the position of the enemy, although it was correctly learned that in the whole region between the Mincio and the Adige no enemy was to be found further than those military posts along the banks. We can easily imagine how this news must have increased La Marmora's confident hopes that there would be no bloodshed, if he should "plunge into the Quadrilateral." Accordingly, on the 23d of June the plunge was to be risked—or, as it was officially expressed, the army was to cross the Mincio and take up a position in the midst of the four fortresses so that they should thus be rendered isolated. What was to happen then was for the time La Marmora's own secret—perhaps the siege of Peschiera or something else, according to circumstances.

In order better to understand the events which follow from this point, it will be necessary to examine the scene where they took place.

The Mincio issues from Lake Garda at Peschiera, and runs southerly to Mantua, finally emptying into the Po. From its source to the little town of Valeggio, a distance of five and a half miles, the river flows through a hilly region, which stretches out about the same distance towards the east, and which, especially on its southern border, rises into steep and majestic isolated crests. Of these latter may be mentioned (starting from the Mincio somewhat to the north of Valeggio) Monte Vento; then, east of this and jutting far out into the plain, a height bearing the village of Custozza, where Radetzky in 1848 defeated the Sardinians; and again still farther to the east, a long mountain ridge towering above all the others, called Monte della Croce. From this point there stretches eastwards to the Adige and southwards to the Po a magnificent fruitful plain. In this, two and a half miles from the foot of the Monte della Croce, is situated the town of Villafranca, where the Peace of 1859 was signed. About five miles north of this town, on the eastern border of the hills, lies Somma Compagna, quite close to the railway from Verona to Peschiera, a three hours' march from the former, and two hours from the latter.

Thus the land lay into which La Marmora made ready to penetrate. He had his twelve Divisions with him, amounting in round numbers to 140,000







men; so that even without Cialdini's presence his force amounted to nearly twice that of the enemy. It was divided into three army-corps, under Generals Durando, Cucchiari, and Della Rocca. Early on the morning of the 23d of June the larger portion of the 1st and the whole of the 3d corps crossed the Mincio at four different points. On the other side they met only mounted patrols, who slowly withdrew in the direction of Verona. The reports of the inhabitants, moreover, were unanimous, that further than this no Austrians had been seen on that side of the Adige.

La Marmora thus found his opinion confirmed, that the enemy were waiting quietly beyond the Adige, and that there was no chance of any encounter before reaching that river. He accordingly told his troops, so to speak, to make themselves at home in the district between the two streams. As a safeguard, two of Cucchiari's Divisions were to remain behind in the vicinity of Mantua, in order to keep watch of this fortress. For a similar purpose Pianell's Division of the 1st corps was left before Peschiera on the right bank of the Mincio, and Cerale's Division of the same corps was also to take up its station on the morning of the 24th at Castelnuovo, five miles or so to the east of Peschiera.

Protected in this way against the fortresses in its rear, the main body of the army was to stretch itself out in a long line on the plain, with the hilly district in the rear and with its van facing Verona. The four Divisions of the 3d corps (under Crown Prince Hum-

bert, Bixio, Cugia, and Govone) with the cavalry Division under Sonnaz were to march into the region between Villafranca and Somma Compagna, while, joining their northern extremity, Brignone's Division of the 1st corps was to take its position at Sona, and Sirtori's Division of the same corps at S. Giustina. All these movements were to be executed on the morning of June 24th. Cerale and Sirtori would be obliged to pass over the mountainous district.

Inasmuch as no one thought of meeting any enemy, all the Divisions marched as in a time of absolute peace, each having its full supply of baggage in the rear, without the least announcement to the troops of the possibility of an engagement on that day.

It is clear that, if these arrangements were carried out and an attack should be made by the enemy unexpectedly, the first troops that would have to suffer from it would be the six Divisions that advanced into the plain; and that they would be 72,000 men against 82,000. To be sure, Cucchiari had orders to let his remaining Divisions, under Angioletti and Longoni, advance to Villafranca during the course of the 24th; but since they had to accomplish a march of eighteen miles to reach that place, their appearing in season to take any active part was entirely uncertain.

To this extent had La Marmora himself planned to disperse the superior numbers of the Italians! But things were to turn out quite differently and much more distressingly.

We have seen that the Archduke Albrecht, after the

Italian forces had been divided, determined to fall with all his might upon the first division of the enemy that should come in his way and try to overpower it. He hoped that this might be the main Italian army under the leadership of the King, since the conquest of that portion of the troops would doubtlessly produce the greatest moral effect upon the adversary. With keen rejoicing he had been receiving since the 20th of June news from all sides that opened this prospect to him with increasing certainty. He learned that that which would be the most dangerous for his plans, the union of La Marmora and Cialdini, had not occurred; but that, on the contrary, Cialdini's van was on the 23d making active preparations for bridging the Po at several points; so that two or three days might be counted upon for fighting against La Marmora without any fears of Cialdini's appearing on the scene.

Accordingly, while he left behind at the Po to confront Cialdini's army only a post of observation, consisting of a *jäger* battalion and a hussar regiment, he crossed over on the 22d of June with his whole army to the right bank of the Adige. His plan was, first to advance his troops to the line of Somma Compagna, Sona, S. Giustina, and Pastrengo, then to wheel them around to the south about Somma Compagna as a pivot, and then pressing forward among the hills to let the enemy make the attack where they might find him.

These movements began on the afternoon of June 23d. The Division of the reserves reached Pastrengo

and vicinity. The 5th army-corps arrived at S. Giustina and Sona, and from there took possession at once of Castelnuovo. On the morning of the 24th at three o'clock the 9th corps under General Hartung marched from Verona to Somma Compagna, took up a strong position there, and sent a company forward to the heights of Berettara. The 5th corps, under General Rodich, assembled then at S. Giorgo, and the Division of reserves went to Castelnuovo. The 7th corps, under General Maroicic, finally took up its station at Sona as a general reserve for the whole army.

All this marching had been accomplished by seven o'clock in the morning; and without losing a minute the troops made ready to advance over the hills still farther against the enemy: the Division of reserves close by the Mincio in the direction towards Monte Vento, the 5th corps towards Custozza, and the 9th corps towards the Monte della Croce. To protect the left flank of the army, Colonel Pulz marched along in the plain with four regiments of cavalry on the road to Villafranca.

Meanwhile, the Italian Divisions had begun their journey-like march to the towns specified to them by La Marmora, without any suspicion that the northern half of this district was already occupied by masses of hostile troops. King Victor Emmanuel took a short ride for pleasure in the fresh morning air; and La Marmora, accompanied by a single adjutant, rode to Villafranca, where beside and in front of the town

the Crown Prince Humbert and General Bixio had stationed their Divisions. The Crown Prince asked La Marmora whether he should let the soldiers cook their breakfasts or have the surrounded territory reconnoitred.<sup>1</sup> "That is entirely unnecessary!" answered La Marmora. "There isn't a single Austrian on this side of the Adige. Let them get their breakfasts." From the north was heard the thundering of cannon. "Ah!" said La Marmora. "That is a good beginning of our siege of Peschiera."

Immediately afterwards, however, appeared Colonel Pulz with his brigades, who opened a rapid fire from a mounted battery upon the battalions of the Crown Prince, and then led on two regiments of cavalry in a furious attack upon the enemy. Yet, however much the Italians were surprised, 500 lancers and as many hussars could not annihilate the eighteen battalions of the Prince. On the contrary, they suffered, themselves, excessive and bloody losses, though they kept the enemy a full hour on their mettle; and what was most important, the violence and persistence of their attacks aroused in La Marmora the idea that an Austrian assault threatened from that side, from the plains on the east. Accordingly, he took from Govone's Division, which was just coming up, half of its men for the immediate support of Bixio and the Crown Prince; and as Brignone's Division happened at the same time to be passing on their way to Somma

<sup>1</sup> Bernhard's report to Moltke, in accordance with La Marmora's own narration.

Compagna in accordance with the orders of the day before, he stopped them and led them personally up the Monte della Croce and stationed them there, facing the south in a way to cover the plain.

Now, we know that this conception of the Austrian plan of battle was just as false as the former one of the enemy's remaining quietly beyond the Adige. The attack did not come from the east, from the plain, but from the north, from the mountains. The thunder of the cannon on the Mincio was not the beginning of the siege of Peschiera, but Cerale's fighting against the Division of Austrian reserves, which came pressing to the south from Castelnovo. Cerale, an old soldier who had served his way up from a drummer, maintained a resistance in the village of Oliosi, until Piret's brigade of the 5th army-corps, which had at the same time advanced from S. Giorgo to the south, fell upon his left flank. In spite of brave fighting, his Division was attacked from two sides and driven asunder.

Its destruction would have been complete, had not his colleague Pianell, upon hearing the noise of the firing, in spite of the commands which would have kept him on the right bank, crossed the river on his own authority with twelve battalions, and marched to the rescue of his oppressed comrade. He saved him from total annihilation, but did not venture without superior orders to leave the bank of the river and follow up his advantage further.

In like manner was the Division under Sirtori,

which was marching a mile to the east towards Sona, surprised like Cerales by an attack of the enemy. Two brigades of the 5th Austrian army-corps fell upon them so violently that they were badly damaged, and finally, for want of any support whatever, driven back in disorder.

Thus the left wing of the Italian army was broken and its line of retreat seriously threatened by the enemy. But during the same time the right wing was also engaged with quite as lively fighting. Brignone's battalions had hardly taken their station upon the Monte della Croce, with the front, as we have said, towards Villafranca, when they received from the batteries of the 9th Austrian corps a tremendous fire in the rear, which caused no little terror and for the moment a general panic of disorder. But Brignone held his men under firm control and with a quick command turned his troops about; and as he now from his position on the heights could overlook the movements of the enemy in the different valleys, and saw them marching, not only up against himself, but towards the important crest of Custozza, he hastened to send one of his brigades thither and with the other to prepare for himself as strong a defensive position as possible.

It was well that he did so; for very soon the battalions of the 9th corps stormed up the side of the mountain with death-despising valor, chased away the outposts, and climbed the summit. Brignone held out and repulsed one assault after another and

drove the enemy back into the valley; but his troops suffered murderous losses and were exhausted by the burning rays of the sun. At last they lay panting on the ground on the shadeless mountain-top. Just then there came at the last moment the longed-for succor. Cugia's Division of the 3d corps, though often stopped on their march, finally reached a position next to Bixio; and having noticed the raging of the battle upon the heights, General Cugia sent one battalion after another up to Brignone's support, which then energetically drove back a fresh attack of the enemy.

Things took a similar course at Custozza. For scarcely had Brignone's brigade taken up a strong position here, before they were forcibly attacked by the 7th Austrian corps. Two of the advanced battalions of the Italians were utterly overthrown, and the remainder were driven out of Custozza with severe loss. Then, just as General Cugia had rendered timely aid on the Monte della Croce, so here General Govone appeared at the critical moment. He took possession of the nearest heights, poured upon Custozza a shower of grenades, and then, by means of a superior force, snatched the place again away from the enemy's grasp. The strength of Brignone's troops was, however, exhausted. The greatest part of the Division withdrew into the plain to Valeggio, while Cugia and Govone undertook the final occupation of the Monte della Croce and the heights of Custozza respectively.

It was now nearly noon, and the general weariness



of the soldiers caused a long pause in the operations. The Italians had suffered badly; nearly two-thirds of the troops of the Divisions under Cerale, Sirtori, and Brignone had been put *hors de combat*. But evidently the fate of the day had by no means been decided. The Austrians, too, had on many sides been made to appreciate the valor of their enemies. Their troops, although possessed of somewhat more physical power of endurance than the Italians, felt also their strength fail. The Archduke had no troops that were still unimpaired, save two brigades of the 7th corps; whereas, on the Italian side the Divisions of Pianell, Bixio, and the Crown Prince had 'hardly been disturbed and were ready to fight at any minute; and of the 2d Italian corps, Angioletti's was only four or five miles distant from Villafranca, and Longoni's only about nine miles.

Thus the Italian Commander-in-chief by good management might have had at his disposal at a moment's notice more than 30,000, by two o'clock, 40,000, and by four o'clock, 50,000 fresh troops; and by bringing them into action, he might have made impregnable the positions of Monte Vento, Custozza, and Monte della Croce. This, then, would certainly have won the day for Italy. For, in view of Cialdini's operations, there were only the two alternatives for the Archduke, of forcing his way through or of speedily retreating. For Italy, however, there was still another, bolder, move conceivable. It would have been possible to send orders to Pianell, Govone, and

Cugia to maintain the three mountains to the last breath, and to have set out immediately with 25,000 men (under the Crown Prince, Bixio, and Sonnaz), and after three hours with 40,000 men from Villafranca towards Somma Compagna, meeting on the way only the 2,500 cavalry of Colonel Pulz. Thus the Austrians might have been cut off from their connections and from their line of retreat, and their army might have been ruinously attacked in the flank and in the rear.<sup>1</sup>

The Crown Prince also considered this plan. But, as we have seen, he had been ordered to stand against the attack of the Austrians, which La Marmora believed was threatening them from the plain. The Prince sent adjutants and orderlies flying in all directions to find La Marmora, and to obtain from him the permission to advance.

But where was La Marmora? It is almost incredible: no one knew where the Commander-in-chief was keeping himself!

Bernhardi gives the following report, with the positive assurance, that he learned the facts partly from La Marmora himself and partly from General Cucchiari.

La Marmora, after finding that the course of events had proved his suppositions to be false and his arrangements wrong, very soon gave up the battle for lost, and therefore persuaded the King at once to retire to his former position on the right bank of the Mincio. When La Marmora, a little later,

<sup>1</sup> Found in the publications of the Austrian Staff.

ascended a hill, to overlook the situation, he believed that he saw in the rear of the Division of the Crown Prince a cloud of dust moving towards the west. This was probably caused by a train of baggage on the retreat; but he took it to be a hostile column and was then certain of total defeat.

He lost his presence of mind entirely, and considered the only hope of salvation to be the speedy summoning of the whole of the 2d corps. Now, instead of sending the necessary orders to the Divisions of Angioletti and Longoni, and then to General Cucchiari, he galloped away himself from the battlefield in the greatest haste, without saying the least word to any one about it, and rode full speed many miles away to Cucchiari's headquarters. Upon arriving there he requested the General to lead the two Divisions standing before Mantua with all despatch to Villafranca. "But consider your last orders," observed the General. "My brigades are stationed round about Mantua. It will be evening before these commands reach the most distant." Thereupon La Marmora cried aloud: "Woe is me, unhappy man!" and broke out into long, hysterical sobbing. Several times he threatened to shoot himself. But that was all he did.

So, then, the adjutants chased about the battlefield, seeking him in vain. Pianell, Bixio, and the Crown Prince remained inactive, bound to their position. There was no longer any trace of unity or of mutual connection in the army. "Each brigade," says Bern-

hardi, "scuffled until it had had enough of it and then fell back." First, the Austrian Division of reserves, assisted by troops of the 5th army-corps, renewed the movement against Monte Vento.

By reason of Pianell's forced inactivity, they had to face only the remnants of Cerale's Division. Between three and four o'clock they were masters of the hill, whence the road to Valeggio, the most important point of crossing the Mincio, stood open to them. Thereupon, Cerale's nearest neighbor on the right, General Sirtori, after making a fresh advance for a moment, becoming anxious about his line of retreat, abandoned almost without a struggle his position by the chapel of S. Lucia, and hastened to lead his troops back across the Mincio at Valeggio. From S. Lucia the Austrian artillery were able to capture the crest and village of Custozza with an effective flank fire. At this moment the Archduke threw his last reserves, the two brigades of the 7th corps, upon the critical point; and after a fearful resistance, Govone was forced to yield and retreat to Valeggio.

After that, it was impossible for Cugia to remain any longer upon the Monte della Croce, from which he was driven by the united forces of the 9th corps. The retreat of the Italians became general. It was covered, so far as possible, by Bixio and Sonnaz, who nevertheless, on account of the serious disorganization of several sections of the troops, were unable to prevent the enemy's cavalry, who now advanced again toward the close of the day, from making very many prisoners.

The victors could not think of pursuing the flying troops over the Mincio. Their own men had been on the march since three o'clock in the morning, and had then been fighting severely for ten long hours under the June sun of Italy. Men and steeds were utterly exhausted.

The course of the battle had borne witness brilliantly to the merits of the Austrian leadership, but overwhelmingly against the Italian; for on the day before the battle the victors had had only 82,000 men that they could employ in the struggle, and the side that was vanquished had more than 140,000.

But immeasurably more favorable to the Italians must be the criticism of the behavior of the troops. Inasmuch as the whole of the 2d corps took no part in the battle, and neither the Crown Prince, Bixio, nor Sonnaz, after that first short skirmish with the squadrons of Pulz, fired another shot after eight o'clock in the morning, and since Pianell engaged in the combat with only one-half of his Division, and only a few hours with these: it is evident that the whole brunt of the ten hours' battle fell upon five Divisions, that is, upon 60,000 men, at the most, against 82,000 Austrians. It must also be taken into account that the advance of the latter took place in conformity with well-laid plans and under excellent generalship, which continually incited the troops to valiant deeds and heroic courage: whereas the Italians were the prey of a sudden attack, which broke in upon them from an unexpected quarter, and then were left

without any concentrated command whatever. To the army that had at that time been only recently constituted, and yet under such circumstances offered such resistance to the superior numbers of a force that formed a part of one of the most famous military organizations in Europe, all paths are open to a glorious future!

The losses on both sides were nearly the same. The Austrians, who had been always on the offensive, had lost more killed and wounded: the Italians, who at last were obliged to retire, more prisoners. The former suffered a loss of 7,956 men, including 1,500 prisoners: the latter 8,185 men, including 4,350 prisoners, besides 14 cannon and 5,000 guns. The loss of the Italians fell, of course, very unequally upon the different Divisions: Pianell lost, killed and wounded, 186, Bixio 15, the Crown Prince 55, and Sonnaz 17, making altogether 273 men, while the five Divisions that had been constantly fighting had to count 3,580 killed and wounded.

In Vienna the news of victory caused great rejoicing, and counterbalanced the chagrin occasioned by the quick conquest of North Germany by the Prussians. On the same day, June 23d, on which one adversary crossed the Mincio, the other entered Bohemia. So the brilliant success of the 24th seemed to be a propitious omen for the result in both directions.

But in the same proportion was the effect of the disaster painful and vexatious to the Italian people.

Nothing was more earnestly and ardently desired than that La Marmora with the half of his army which remained intact, and in concert with Cialdini, should wipe out the disgraceful stain as quickly as possible.

But the sentiments of La Marmora, who had not shot himself, were very different. When Bernhardt asked what was now to be done, he replied: "We will withdraw the army for a little while behind the Po, and then we will see." Cialdini also, after hearing of the misfortune, naturally remained upon the south side of the river. And now, day after day passed in endless consultations and discussions between the two military chiefs.

But meanwhile French whisperings were heard about to the effect that Austria was ready to cede Venetia; but that she had first been compelled to assert the honor of her arms by gaining a victory upon Italian soil; that this had now been accomplished, and so, after one defeat of the Prussians, the presentation of Venetia would be certain. Only, Italy was advised to be careful about annoying Archduke Albrecht any further, and in any case not to bring up by an Italian victory the question of Austria's military honor again. La Marmora had not much to say against this possible turn of things, which would avert the necessity of laying siege to the Quadrilateral and of fighting Heaven knows how many dangerous battles; and it is no wonder that, as the news gradually spread of these projects, his conduct in the battle and his inactivity after it gave rise

in many circles to the feeling that he had with conscious purpose allowed his army to be conquered, in order to acquire Venetia in the above-mentioned way without any worse bloodshed. Unfortunately many facts can be so interpreted as to point to this; yet it does not seem right to raise against a commander so utterly beaten, no matter how disgracefully, the reproach of treason without most conclusive proofs.

Bernhardi, who was a clear observer and certainly cannot be counted among La Marmora's admirers, declared then and later his firmest conviction that La Marmora had brought about the loss of the battle not through evil intentions, but by his consummate incapacity. So much did the Italian General know of the purposes of his high and mighty patron in Paris that he went into the war with neither the ambition of a leader nor the spirit of a soldier, but with the certain hope before the battle of not being obliged to fight, and after the defeat with the piercing consciousness of his own inefficiency. Without being a traitor himself, he allowed himself to be drawn by an arch-tempter half involuntarily into a current, where it was fated for him to be wrecked upon unsuspected rocks.

If we now sum up the results of the war so far as they have been narrated, consisting of events that have not been played upon the main stage of the great theatre, we shall find that confirmed which seemed to us probable, when we examined the military preparations made by the states that were to play a part:



neither of the two chief actors was justified in expecting any efficient aid from her allies. Austria and Prussia were each to depend in the great struggle upon her own powers: and however the decision might fall, it involved the answer, beyond remonstrance and beyond a doubt, to the question which of the two Powers was to be the leader in the future of Germany.



BOOK XVIII.

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*THE BOHEMIAN WAR.*



## CHAPTER I.

### PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES IN BOHEMIA.

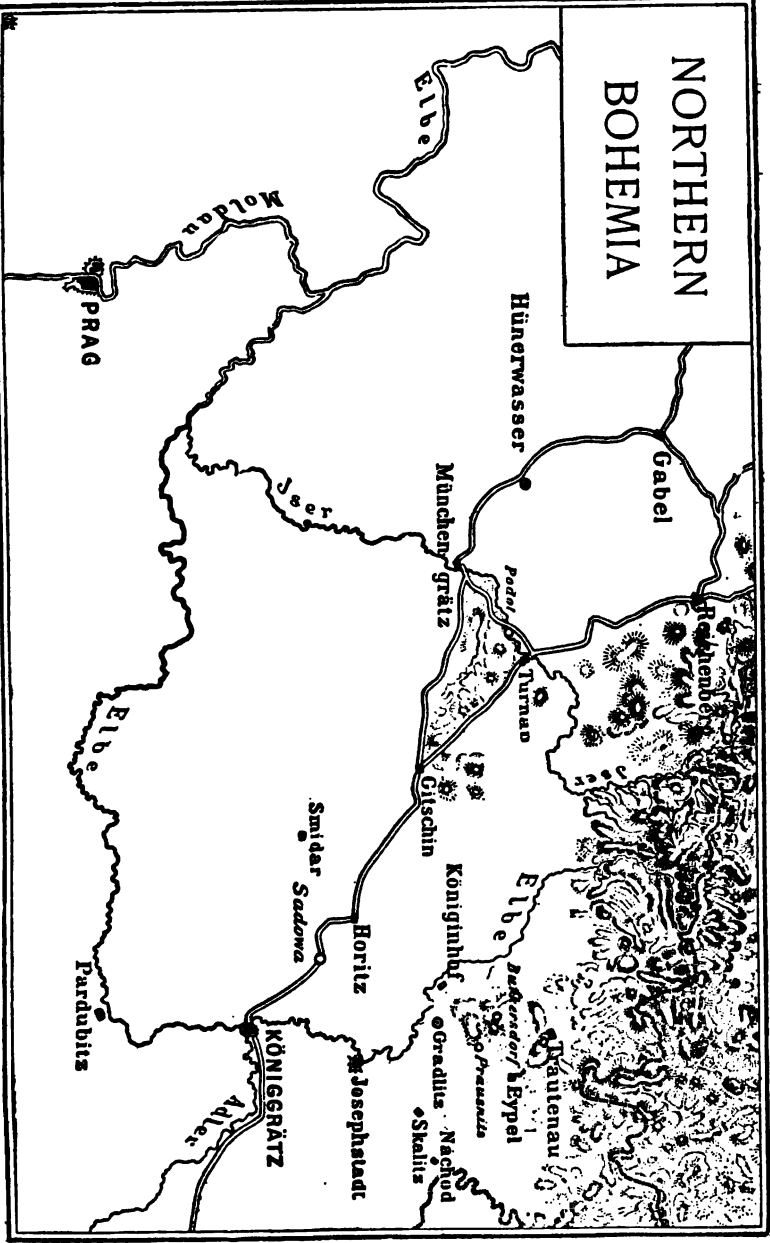
IN Berlin, as we know, the determination remained fixed to open a general attack upon Bohemia immediately after the occupation of Saxony. Information complete and satisfactory in every respect concerning the movements of the enemy was not at hand; but it was known that the main army of the Austrians was on the march from Olmütz to the Upper Elbe, that is to say, into north-eastern Bohemia. If he succeeded in completely uniting all his forces in that region, Benedek would then be able with greatly superior numbers either to turn toward the east, through the passes of the County of Glatz, against the Prussian Crown Prince, in order to get possession of Silesia, or toward the North, to take up the offensive in the direction of Berlin by way of Dresden.

For Prussia, therefore, everything depended on her preventing such a union of the enemy's forces by a rapid concentration of her own troops. Nor did this seem by any means impossible, since Benedek had only begun his advance from Olmütz on June 17th, and ten or twelve days must elapse before his whole army could reach the Elbe, while it was practicable for the Crown Prince and Frederick Charles

within that time to join their forces not far from the Elbe, and then to strike decisive blows with their united power.

The following description will present in a general way the scene of the great events now about to be recounted. The north-eastern boundary of Bohemia, where it borders on Silesia, is formed by the widely-extended Sudeten Mountains, which, breaking off abruptly for the most part toward Silesia, offer only a few narrow passes for the ascent of an army. On the Bohemian side, however, they descend much less steeply; and on their slopes and declivities, amidst ravines and watercourses, there is much room for broad roads and connecting passages. There, in the most majestic region of the Sudeten, at the southern end of the Riesengebirge, lie, near together, the sources of two rivers, the Iser and the Elbe. Both streams flow down at first into the Bohemian lowlands. They then separate from each other, the Iser turning toward the southwest, and the Elbe toward the southeast. The latter changes its course sharply at Pardubitz, making a right angle toward the west; then, forty-six miles farther on, it makes another sharp bend in a north-westerly direction, and from this point, after receiving the Iser not far from Brandeis, hastens toward the North Sea. It will be seen that the Sudeten, the Iser, and the Elbe form an irregular quadrilateral; and it was on the space thus marked out that the destiny of Germany was then to be fulfilled. For the courses of the two rivers were of great

# NORTHERN BOHEMIA







importance in connection with the position of the armies as they were at that time.

If Prince Frederick Charles advanced from Lusatia along the southern base of the Riesengebirge, in order to effect a union with the army of Silesia, he would very soon arrive at the western bank of the Iser, and would there find an obstacle in his path that might easily be defended. On the other side, the passes of the Sudeten (through which the Crown Prince could reach Bohemia from the County of Glatz) opened upon the eastern bank of the Upper Elbe; so that before he could unite with Frederick Charles he would run the risk of meeting with resistance, not only in the difficult passes of the mountains, but again also at the turbulent stream rushing headlong from its source. The junction of the two armies would therefore mean the victorious passing of both rivers.

The more dangerous share of this undertaking undoubtedly fell to the Silesian army. The Iser could at that time be defended only by the Saxon troops and the Austrian corps of Clam-Gallas; that is, by 60,000 men, while Frederick Charles had at his disposal over 93,000, and Herwarth over 46,000, in addition to which a reserve corps of 12,000 followed upon their rear. The line of the Elbe, on the other hand, lay about thirty-six miles nearer than the Iser to the army of Benedek which was advancing from Olmütz, an army amounting in all to over 200,000 men; and how large a part of this superior force would

be encountered by the Crown Prince, either in the mountains or at the Elbe, it was impossible for the Prussians in any degree to judge.

After all these circumstances had been carefully considered, the following telegram was sent on June 22d to both Prussian Generals: "His Majesty orders that both armies shall advance into Bohemia, and shall seek to effect a union in the vicinity of Gitschin." Gitschin, well known from its connection with the history of Wallenstein, lies nearly midway between the Iser and the Elbe. In more detailed instructions Moltke added as a comment on this order, that of course it was not meant that this point must be reached at all events, but that, on the contrary, the junction of the armies would depend entirely upon circumstances. "It is highly improbable," he said, "that the main army of the Austrians can be concentrated in Northern Bohemia within the next few days. If the initiative is taken on our part, an occasion may easily arise for attacking the enemy in separate bodies with superior numbers, and for following up the victory in another direction from that assigned. But the uniting of all the forces for the decisive blow must always be kept in view. The Commanders-in-chief must therefore, from the moment they come face to face with the enemy, act according to their own judgment and the requirements of circumstances; but at the same time they must always consider their relations with the other army associated with them."

To the Commander-in-chief of the First Army the following order was added:—

“As the difficult task of debouching from the mountains falls to the Second Army, which is weaker in numbers, it will be all the more incumbent upon the First Army, so soon as a junction shall have been effected with the corps of General von Herwarth, to shorten the critical period by a rapid advance.”

In these instructions Moltke held his subordinate commanders very strictly to the clearly-defined main object of their action; but he left them to their own discretion as to the particular measures that might be required by circumstances. We shall see that Benedek adopted exactly the opposite plan. His generals always received very particular orders to occupy this or that place, to hold or to abandon it; but they did not always understand the systematic plan of which their actions formed a part, nor what was the object they were to accomplish.

It is not necessary even to point to the result in this case, in order to see which method was the superior. Moltke recognized the impossibility of managing details from a distance in the midst of the rapid course of events; Benedek, on the other hand, saw in the attempt to do this in defiance of difficulty an assertion of his own iron will-power. And what was still more important, Benedek stifled the intellectual independence of his subordinates, while Moltke aroused it; and the impulse thus communicated on either side made itself felt down through all the grades of the army.

Moltke often said that in great armies of more than

a hundred thousand men there is inherent by the nature of things a considerable amount of independence. Therefore neither in 1866 nor in 1870 did he arrange a detailed plan of campaign for the destruction of the enemy as did Napoleon I. before Marengo, before Ulm, and before Jena. The latter, in those campaigns, assigned to each division of the army, to each wheel in the machine, its exact task, at the same time, however, presupposing to a considerable extent incapacity on the part of the enemy: then the great work of art rolled on its course, following the master's word in every point, to dazzling and astounding results. Moltke, for his part, was contented to lay out for his armies at the beginning of the war, with an insight no less a mark of genius, the general course leading to the point where the enemy was mortal. After this, everything did not indeed always follow in detail as he expected. In 1866 the union of the armies did not take place at Gitschin, and only rarely did Prussian generals encounter an Austrian corps less in number than their own. But the final result was in this case, as in 1870, the overpowering of the opponents with a rapidity and completeness hardly once equalled by Napoleon.

Prince Frederick Charles had already stationed the troops of the First Army close to the Bohemian boundary at Marklissa, Seidenberg, Zittau, and Herrnhut; and immediately on the 23d of June he ordered them to advance from all sides into the hos-

tile territory. They were met only by Austrian cavalry-posts of the light Division of Edelsheim. With the exception of insignificant hussar skirmishes no opposition was encountered to the occupation of the important manufacturing town of Reichenberg. It was certain that the enemy did not intend to take up the struggle before the Prussians reached the Iser.

According to the (incorrect) information the Prince had received, there was at that stream, in addition to Clam-Gallas and the Saxons, the 2d Austrian army-corps, that is, in all, between 80,000 and 90,000 men. This made him all the more determined, before taking any further step, to wait at Reichenberg for the Army of the Elbe. That army had on leaving Dresden at least fifty-five miles to march, part of it on very difficult mountain roads; and its advanced-guard did not arrive at Gabel, fourteen miles west of Reichenberg, until the evening of the 25th of June. Consequently, the Prince employed that day in drawing his divisions closer about Reichenberg; and then on the 26th he gave orders for a general advance toward the Iser. In this advance the First Army was to proceed towards a more northerly point for crossing, at the town of Turnau, twelve miles from Reichenberg, while the army of the Elbe was to direct its course toward the town of Münchengrätz, which lies farther down the stream, twenty miles from Gabel. In both armies there was a determination to exchange on this day the first serious shots with the enemy. Nor was this

expectation, hailed by the troops with enthusiasm, to be disappointed.

Master of the Ordnance Benedek, after the prospect of Saxon and perhaps of Bavarian co-operation had aroused him from his defensive position at Olmütz, had adopted on good grounds the resolution of directing his offensive action at the forces of Prince Frederick Charles. At that time he knew of only two Prussian army-corps in Silesia, which, in case he pursued that course, might possibly threaten his flank. If he left two of his own behind to watch these, he could lead forward four corps to unite with Clam-Gallas and the Saxons, and could then, as he thought, attack the Prince with the overwhelming superiority of 180,000 men to 130,000, and conquer him. In that event, the two hostile corps in Silesia would cause him no more serious anxiety. If these hypotheses were correct, the plan was clearly an excellent one, for the simple reason that it would have opened to the Austrian army the shortest road from Vienna to Berlin.

In keeping with this determination he wrote on June 23d to the Crown Prince of Saxony, under whose command he had placed Count Clam, that the troops assembled on the Iser had received orders to oppose a hostile advance from Reichenberg or Gabel; support would then be given by the divisions of the main army as they arrived, or the troops on the Iser might retire upon the main army, if the attacking force was greatly superior in numbers.

The meaning of this order was open to no doubt. The advance of the enemy was to be checked, so far as was possible without risk; in case of danger, however, a well-ordered retreat was to be made till a junction was effected with the reinforcements coming up. The Crown Prince therefore brought his Saxons nearer to Münchengrätz, where Count Clam had stationed the first corps, and proposed to the Count to occupy with a sufficient force the region from there to Turnau. The Count, however, opposed this on account of the unfavorable situation of Turnau, and the Crown Prince yielded. Beyond Turnau, on the western side of the Iser, there was now only Edelsheim's cavalry Division, stationed at Sichrow; but this had received Clam's instructions to retire across the river on the approach of superior numbers of the enemy, and then to take up its position with the rest at Münchengrätz. At this point, moreover, Count Clam had not neglected to occupy the right bank of the Iser also, and had extended his chain of advanced posts for five miles or so to Hühnerwasser and Weiswasser.

It was these troops, therefore, that Herwarth's van under General Schöler encountered at Hühnerwasser. First the Austrian hussars and then a battalion of infantry were driven by superior numbers out of the town and out of a neighboring wood; and in the evening an attempt made by Imperial *jägers* to recover the position was vigorously repelled. Münchengrätz was now only four or five miles distant.

Meanwhile from the First Army General Fransecky

with the 7th, and General Horn with the 8th Division, advanced from Reichenberg on the Turnau road toward Liebenau. Just before arriving at this place the advanced-guard of Horn's Division came upon Edelsheim's dragoons, who, on foot, made an attempt in a little wood to defend the road which was blockaded by an abatis. The Prussian foot-soldiers soon broke through this, and then received the fire of Edelsheim's mounted batteries; but the swarm of infantry pressing irresistibly onward forced these to retreat. Edelsheim gave up further opposition, crossed the Iser, in accordance with Clam's orders, at Turnau, and from there turned southwards toward Münchengrätz. General Fransecky could then occupy Turnau without molestation from the enemy and at once attend to the reparation of the half-destroyed bridge over the Iser. Horn, meantime, directed his march somewhat farther south towards a second point of crossing, the little village of Podol, where two bridges near together, one connected with the high road and one with the railway, offered the means for a farther advance.

Such was the state of things when about three o'clock in the afternoon a telegraphic despatch from Benedek arrived at Münchengrätz with orders to hold that place and Turnau at any cost. The progress made by the Austrian main army up to the 26th of June had been such that Benedek hoped to arrive within forty-eight hours at the Iser with two corps, and then to be strong enough to check the advance of Frederick



Charles till the arrival of further reinforcements, especially as the Prussian Second Army had up to that time given no signs of interfering.

After the receipt of this telegram the Crown Prince of Saxony had reason to regret not having persisted on the preceding day in his purpose with regard to Turnau in spite of Clam's opposition. Now, however, the damage was already done, and the question was, whether the mistake could be retrieved, and in what way. It was known that of the troops of Frederick Charles only the 4th army-corps was on the spot: the others were far behind. Edelsheim had also reported that Turnau was occupied by the enemy only in small force. The Crown Prince therefore seized the idea of defending the Iser by a bold offensive movement, of retaking Turnau by a night attack, of then crossing the river the next morning with his whole force at Turnau and Podol, and of falling upon the 4th corps of the enemy with superior numbers before the other corps could come up. Only two brigades were to be left to protect Münchengrätz against Herwarth while this was going on. The plan was at once communicated to Benedek and the troops put in motion. The attempt might have turned out badly for them if the 4th corps had held out till the others came to its assistance, and if at the same time Herwarth, instead of attacking Münchengrätz, had fallen on the flank of the enemy's army. But the quickness of the Prussian movements drew beforehand a bloody line through the whole calculation.

At six in the evening there appeared at Podol, where the main Austrian column was to sally forth to the attack on the following morning, two Prussian companies of the vanguard of the 8th Division. These drove the occupying force, half their own in number, out of the village and over the bridge, and established themselves in the position. Reinforcements soon arrived from both sides, at first in greater strength from the Austrian. The brigade of Poschacher, known as the "Iron Brigade" since its battles in 1864 before the Dannevirke, retook the bridge and the village by storm; but when General Bose brought up two fresh regiments, an extremely obstinate contest for the possession of the place was carried on in the twilight. The Austrians had massed their main body in the narrow village street and the houses bordering upon it. The Prussians brought against them there only small detachments, the rapid fire of which, however, was sufficient to keep the streets clear. The reserves then advanced on the right and left behind the buildings, seized the enemy in the flank and rear, wherever a passage-way appeared, and made prisoners of those that were found in front, in the houses. Soon after midnight victory was decided for the Prussians, and the passage over the Iser at this point also was won. The Prussian loss in killed and wounded amounted to 130 men; that of the enemy, owing to the superiority of the Prussian needle-guns and the more flexible Prussian tactics, was nearly 500, besides 550 taken prisoners.

This blow was all the more serious for the Saxon Crown Prince, since it not only interfered with his plan of offensive action, but rendered his position on the Iser untenable. For Turnau was four miles nearer than Münchengrätz to Gitschin, and Prince Frederick Charles could therefore, starting from the former place, reach Gitschin before the Austrians. Moreover, it was possible for him from Podol to cut off entirely the Austrians' retreat towards Gitschin, and so to prevent their junction with Benedek at all. It was therefore decidedly incumbent upon the Crown Prince to abandon the threatened position on the Iser as soon as possible and to withdraw to Gitschin before the Prussians could follow up the advantage they had gained. Moreover, a fresh despatch received from Benedek on the morning of June 27th advised that there should be no more fighting on the Iser, inasmuch as the Prussian Second Army had just crossed the boundary between Silesia and Bohemia, and a speedy concentration of all the Austrian forces therefore appeared doubly desirable. The forenoon of the 27th was gone, however, before the Crown Prince arrived at an understanding with Count Clam as to the measures next to be adopted. It was at last decided to set a small portion of the troops on the march toward Gitschin on that same day, but not to have the remainder start till the following morning.

Fortunately for this arrangement, neither did any troops on the Prussian side move forward beyond the Iser on the 27th of June. Prince Frederick Charles

spent the day in bringing up the 2d and 3d army-corps, with the view of attacking the enemy on the 28th from two sides in their exposed position at Münchengrätz, and of utterly annihilating them. His plan was, that Herwarth from the west and the greater part of the First Army from the north, from Podol, should march on Münchengrätz, while one Division of the latter should advance from Turnau on the Gitschin road as near to that place as possible.

Had the enemy been found on the 28th still in the position they had occupied hitherto, a complete surrounding of them would have been by no means impossible. As, however, the Austrians and Saxons began to withdraw from Münchengrätz on the same morning on which the Prussians began to advance towards that town, the only event of the day was a sharp encounter with the Austrian rear-guard. The latter, indeed, suffered severe losses (300 killed or wounded, and 1,300 taken prisoner or missing). The main body was able to proceed in its march towards Gitschin undisturbed. Each side had therefore reason to regret having postponed its movements for a day.

On June 29th Prince Frederick Charles made haste to follow up the enemy vigorously, and this all the more, as on the preceding day he had received telegraphic news of the serious conflicts sustained with only partial success on the 27th by his Silesian associates, and as on the morning of the 29th the weighty words came to him from Berlin: "His Majesty expects

that the First Army will by hastening its advance extricate the Second Army, which in spite of a succession of victorious engagements finds itself just now in a dangerous situation." These were the same instructions, in a more emphatic form, with which the First Army had begun the campaign; and it must be confessed that that army had aimed hitherto rather at a complete overthrow of the enemy immediately before it, than at a speedy junction with the Army of Silesia. Its action had been methodical and prudent: four days had been consumed in making the twenty-five or thirty miles from Seidenberg and Zittau to Turnau, and no further steps had been taken at Turnau on the fifth day—all this in pursuance of the rule never to let an army be found in separate detachments in the presence of the enemy. Certainly any deviation from this rule would have been a risk; but Moltke's feeling was that the temper of the soldiers and the position of the enemy being what they were, something might be risked, and that in view of the danger of the Second Army something must be risked.

Now that the telegram had freed Prince Frederick Charles from the burden of responsibility, he was ready to proceed with all boldness. Two hours after the receipt of the despatch, at nine o'clock, his arrangements were communicated to the army, and without doubt they gave evidence of adventurous courage. The strip of country between the Iser and Gitschin is full of woods, valleys, and defiles. The hills rise directly behind Münchengrätz, and then

again about an hour's march from Gitschin, to steep and rocky summits. There were only two roads for the advance: that from Turnau and that from Münchengrätz. The territory between these was unsuitable for the movements of large bodies of troops. Two Divisions were therefore obliged to go one behind the other on each road. The first of these on either side would bear the burden of the conflict for some hours alone, while the nature of the ground would render mutual support very difficult. The two rear Divisions of the army could not get a clear passage till towards evening, so that they had to halt half-way between Münchengrätz and Gitschin. Any co-operation with the Army of the Elbe on that day was wholly out of the question. Nevertheless, confidence was placed in the superiority of the troops hitherto evinced, in the tactics and in the leadership; and Generals von Tümpling with the 5th and von Werder with the 3d Divisions, the former on the Turnau and the latter on the Münchengrätz road, hastened to the combat, confident of victory.

The enemy were not less determined to await the Prussian attack before Gitschin. General Benedek had up to that time held firmly to his intention of leaving behind only two army-corps to watch the Silesian Army on the Elbe, and of throwing himself with the four others upon Prince Frederick Charles. He therefore telegraphed on the night of June 27th to the Crown Prince of Saxony that the central Headquarters would be at Gitschin on the 30th. On the morning

of the 28th a telegraphic order followed, to the effect that the Crown Prince should lead his troops up to the main army, and then, in connection with that, drive back the Prussians across the Iser again and then pursue them farther.

This made the Crown Prince certain that the retreat from the Iser towards Gitschin, which had just been commenced, did not interfere with the plans of the Commander-in-chief. On the evening of the 28th, soon after five o'clock, Benedek sent to him from Josephstadt detailed arrangements for the march of four army-corps toward Gitschin: the advanced-guard of the 3d corps could reach Gitschin as early as the evening of the 29th, and the main body of that corps, together with the 6th and 8th, would so soon as the 30th pass by Gitschin and advance toward the Iser.

The despatch containing this communication did not reach the hands of the Crown Prince till two o'clock on the afternoon of the 29th. By it, his determination was fixed to defend Gitschin, the possession of which was indispensable for all these movements, to the very last gasp. The troops, some of whom had been aroused from their bivouac at one o'clock in the morning, had in the course of the day arrived at Gitschin greatly fatigued; but as up to this time complete quiet had prevailed far and wide over the country, no hostile attack was any longer expected on that day. Half of the Saxon troops were drawn up somewhat nearer to the town than was originally intended, and the place was thus protected by five

Austrian and two Saxon brigades, besides two Divisions of cavalry, making in all more than 50,000 men.

For repelling the enemy Count Clam had picked out an extraordinarily strong position to the north of the town. As has been said, there lies between the Turnau and Münchengrätz roads a group of mountains. On the side of the Turnau road these take the form of a high ridge stretching out for a considerable distance, called the Privysin, in front of the northern slope of which lies a swampy meadow, while at its western end it is bounded by the Prachow cliffs, very high and steep and overgrown with woods. Close to the foot of these, on the south side, along by the villages of Lochow and Wohawetsch, runs the Münchengrätz road, cut into a plateau which gradually slopes towards the town. The Turnau road also crosses a plateau to the east of the Privysin by the villages Podulsch and Brada, and then, not far from the village of Diletz, enters a valley bordered on both sides by isolated domes.

The Austrians had crowned all these summits with strong batteries; they had occupied the slopes and the villages between with their masses of infantry; and had placed a short distance before Diletz their artillery-reserve of fifty-six cannon and the cavalry Division of Edelsheim. To the east of the Turnau road was stationed the Austrian brigade of Piret. The real key of the position, Diletz, was to be defended by two Saxon brigades. Two other Austrian brigades, those of Poschacher and Leiningen, covered



Podulsch and the slopes of the Privysin; a third, under General Abele, was stationed at the Prachow cliffs, ready to give support on either side; while finally, the fourth held Lochow and Wohawetsch on the Münchengrätz road. With these dispositions, the Austrians thought they had reason for confidence, and that they could remain immovable till the arrival of the main army.

At about four o'clock the Austrian troops were quietly occupied in preparing their supper, when pickets rushing in brought news of the approach of the enemy on the Turnau road. General von Tümping had, after receiving the orders of his Commander-in-chief, soon after midday set his Division in motion from its bivouac at Rowensko. When from the elevated plain he perceived Gitschin in the distance, and on the right and left the position of the enemy, he saw at a quick glance that Diletz was the decisive point, and sent fully one-half of his forces forward in that direction. At once the fire of the Austrian cannon thundered from all sides, and against it the Prussian artillery engaged in a very unequal combat. Most of all was it the enemy's batteries at Podulsch that annoyed the columns despatched toward Diletz. Tümping therefore opened an attack on that village, and took half of it, but could not drive the Austrians from the other half; on the contrary, a continuous fight was kept up in that place, attended with great loss to both sides.

Tümping then thought of outflanking the enemy,

and with that object sent a battalion to occupy the Privysin. No way was found, however, for passing the swamp lying in front, from the other side of which the enemy kept up a sharp fire. The leader of the battalion therefore continued his flanking movement still farther toward the west, and sought to wrest the Prachow cliffs from the adversary. Here, among precipices and masses of rock, there arose a wild hand-to-hand contest, in which the Prussians slowly gained ground, but were finally obliged to retire before the weight of the Austrian reinforcements.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the battlefield, Colonel von Gaudy, constantly fighting with the enemy's cavalry and artillery, had reached Diletz; and as the Saxon brigades had not yet arrived at that place, he had taken the village from the Austrian dragoons without any trouble. Yet in spite of this the situation of the assailants was at this time, a little after six o'clock, by no means free from danger. Those efforts to outflank at a considerable distance, which were being made by the right wing, had extended the line of battle over a distance of 6,000 paces, thus spreading the Prussian forces over a large tract of ground; and Tümping had only a single battalion still in reserve, while the enemy had nineteen not yet called upon and ready for action at any moment. Half an hour more, and the 1st Saxon brigade appeared at Diletz and drove out the Prussian companies there, before the remainder of Gaudy's forces could come to their assistance. A general and

vigorous advance of the Austrian and Saxon masses at this moment (nearly 35,000 men against 13,000) might have inflicted a severe disaster on the Prussian Division.

But a decisive turn of affairs was at hand. Soon after seven o'clock the lines at the head of the 4th Prussian Division approached the field of battle; and on the Münchengrätz road also General Fransecky was no longer at a great distance. There was therefore no further occasion for the Prussians to fear a complete overthrow. But the question still was, whether General Tümping, in the event of a simultaneous attack by the Saxons, Piret, and Leiningen, would be able to prevent his weak centre from being broken through before those co-operating with him could interfere.

But it was not destined to come to this. For at about this time an officer from Benedek's headquarters came to the Saxon Crown Prince with instructions to avoid any contest with an enemy of superior numbers, and to move as rapidly as possible toward the main army, inasmuch as the four army-corps concerning which he had received word before had now been disposed of differently. Benedek, as we shall see, had, in consequence of the victory of the Army of Silesia, abandoned, during the night of the 28th, his intention to advance to the Iser; yet for unknown reasons he had not given at once on the following morning the orders rendered necessary by this change, but had deferred sending them to Gitschin till afternoon.

Nothing could have been worse for his cause than this delay. If the messenger had arrived at the proper time the Crown Prince and Count Clam would have pursued their march toward Miletin without stopping, and would have joined their brigades in perfect condition with the main army. As it was, the order to retreat found them in the midst of a fierce struggle, and they were so much surprised and overcome by it, that without any further consideration they sent orders on the spot to all their troops to break off the fight and begin the march to and through Gitschin. Benedek's orders had forbidden them to enter into a contest with a superior force. They were, however, in the midst of a battle with an enemy against whom they could bring more than double his numbers; and no idea would have more naturally occurred to them than to rid themselves of him at once by vigorous action on the offensive, and to begin their retreat unharassed. Instead of this, by the order for immediate withdrawal they weakened the energy of the troops then engaged, raised the courage of the enemy, and so brought down upon themselves a truly fatal catastrophe.

In the tumult of a battle continued for three hours upon such a widely-extended tract of country the troops had become much mixed up, and consequently the order to retreat failed to reach many companies at all. Those who did receive it were placed under the severe necessity of breaking off in the bloody agony of battle and of withdrawing as

safely as possible from the presence of the enemy. This was an easier order to give than to execute, since the Prussians, in spite of, or rather because of, their inferior numbers, were unceasing in their attack on all points: the combination of audacity and obstinacy so peculiar to the Brandenburg soldiers came signally into play on this occasion. At the moment when the Saxons began to leave Diletz, a fresh attack made by the Prussians with greater force than ever burst upon them. They retired in good order, but with severe loss.

General Piret saw the retreat of his brigade and that of several batteries endangered by the Prussian advance. He attempted to help himself by an offensive attack upon the enemy's flank with six battalions; but his troops, half of them Italians, advanced with only lukewarm zeal, and the rapid fire of six Prussian companies was sufficient to repel with great slaughter the fourfold superior force of the Austrians.

Some time after this, General von Tümpling completed the capture of Podulsch and Brada, as well as of the cliffs of the Privysin. Divisions of the enemy were everywhere found remaining behind, and these were in part overthrown, in part taken prisoners. Tümpling himself was wounded here, but left strict orders with his successor in command to take Gitschin that day. The same watchword however was sounded at the same time in another place, on the Münchengrätz road, by the Division of General von Werder.

These troops, strong Pomeranians, had been obliged

to make a much longer march than Tümping, so that it was not till six o'clock that, at the foot of the Prachow cliffs, they came in sight of the enemy at Lochow. Here were stationed two Austrian cavalry-regiments and the brigade of Ringelsheim, from whom the village was wrested at the first assault. But afterwards two battalions and a battery of the brigade of Abele came up to their assistance from Prachow, so that then 10,000 allies were fighting in an advantageous position against 13,000 Prussians, and repelled all further attacks. Finally, General Werder sent a column by a long *détour* to the south of the road, to outflank the Austrian position. The column, however, on account of the difficulties of the ground advanced only slowly, although in a severe struggle it forced back some Austrian battalions. But before it reached again the road in the rear of Wohawetsch the generals of the other side had already received the order for a retreat, and had begun to execute the same.

Werder at once, in spite of the extreme fatigue of his soldiers, ordered a vigorous pursuit and advance into the town of Gitschin. The troops readily spent their last energies in carrying out this order without suspecting what weighty consequences their cheerful endurance would bring about. The advance was made amid constant fighting with scattered detachments of the enemy, until at half past ten o'clock the head of the column reached the entrance of the town, and one battalion pressed on into the first street, which was entirely empty.

At this time the state of things here was as follows. The Saxon Division, under the personal command of the Crown Prince, had withdrawn around the northern side of the town, and had then retired into bivouac in the rear of it. All the Austrian troops had, however, fallen back from all sides into the town, where they found the narrow streets already filled with the great baggage-trains of the army, supply and ammunition columns, ambulances, etc.

Among the troops themselves, all idea of order had been lost by reason of the fighting during the day and the retreat. The confusion was completed by the frightful crowding and the darkness of the streets. The command had been given to pass through the town as quickly as possible, then to bivouac behind the same, and at three in the morning to march on toward Miletin. Each individual pressed forward wherever and however he could, and a confused stream of men on foot and on horseback, and vehicles of all kinds, pressed its way slowly and stumblingly toward the eastern and southern gates of the town. The efforts of the officers were sufficient to get the troops out of the town by ten o'clock. Count Clam still kept his headquarters at the city-hall, occupied with the arrangements for the following day. A Saxon brigade had received orders to advance into the town for the protection of this spot.

Suddenly a number of officers rushed into Clam's apartment with the cry of horror: "The Prussians are in the town." The general would not believe it; but

he did not have to wait long for the confirmation of the report. The Count and his suite were obliged to take horse in haste to escape capture. The Saxons, who arrived immediately after, did, indeed, drive the Prussian battalion again out of the town; but soon stronger detachments of the 5th Division arrived from the north, and the Saxons were obliged to withdraw in their turn.

Gitschin was in the hands of the victors. This hot day of hard fighting had cost them 329 killed, and over 1,200 wounded. The Saxons had lost 530 men; the Austrians 490 killed, and 1,900 wounded, of whom over 1,100 were made prisoners. There were, besides, 2,500 not wounded made prisoners and missing. These numbers show clearly what a part better equipment and better leading had in the superiority of the Prussians.

The unexpected capture of Gitschin involved still further injurious consequences for the Austrian troops. It rendered so difficult the communication of orders that they did not reach most of the brigades at all; and it increased the confusion which had arisen from the assembling together of so many troops in the darkness of night.<sup>1</sup> When the noise of the battle between the Prussians and Saxons was heard from the town, it was no longer possible to maintain the bivouac: the soldiers, all in confusion and nearly exhausted by the fatigues which they had endured, retired, some to the southeast toward Miletin

<sup>1</sup> *Oesterreichs Kämpfe*, III., p. 211 et seqq.



and Horschitz, some to the south towards Smidar. Very soon they were overtaken on both roads by Prussian cavalry and harassed without cessation, so that any thought of repose or of marshalling the troops in their proper companies was out of the question. The Saxons alone kept together, and preserved for the most part order in their divisions.

When, in the course of the forenoon, two Austrian brigades arrived at Miletin, where the Archduke Ernest was encamped with the 3d army-corps, the Archduke sent word to General Benedek: "Divisions of the 1st corps are already arriving; they are unfit for fighting, the ammunition is exhausted; the corps is without supplies; it will for the present bivouac in our rear."

An order from Count Clam for the men in Miletin and in Horschitz to be assembled and arranged by brigades could not be carried out on account of the appearance of strong bodies of the enemy's cavalry; and with the wretched misery of the troops constantly on the increase, the forlorn retreat was continued in the afternoon to Sadowa, and on the following day in still greater demoralization, till shelter was finally reached under the cannon of Königgrätz.

There was no longer any obstacle to prevent Prince Frederick Charles from marching to the Elbe and effecting a union with the Second Army.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE CROWN PRINCE FREDERICK WILLIAM IN BOHEMIA.

WHEN the Second Army received orders on June 22d to enter Bohemia, its main body, which had been thrown forward far to the south, stood in a position behind the Neisse, whither it had advanced, in order to be able, thus protected by river and fortress, to meet as quickly and as vigorously as possible any attack that Benedek might make from Olmütz upon Silesia. Military critics have blamed this arrangement, since by it the army, in view of Benedek's doubly superior numbers, was unnecessarily exposed to the danger of destruction. We will not discuss this point, as it is well known that Benedek did not make the attempt.

When the order was received on the 22d, the Crown Prince commanded that the 6th (Silesian) army-corps, under General von Mutius, should with two brigades make a demonstration against Austrian Silesia, to mislead the enemy, and should not join the main body till after a few days had elapsed. The latter, however, at once directing its course to the right towards the west, was to cross the Bohemian boundary and the mountains, and then advance in the direction of the Elbe. Two main roads crossed the mountains

in this region: one, the southern, from Glatz by Reinerz, Lewin, and the pass of Nachod, to Skalitz; the other, the northern, from Brieg by Waldenberg, Liebau, and Schömberg to Trautenau. On the former, General von Steinmetz was to advance with the 5th corps (Lower-Silesians, Brandenburgers, Westphalians, and troops from Posen <sup>1</sup>), followed at once by one brigade of the 6th corps and later by the others; and on the latter, General von Bonin with the 1st (East Prussian) corps, followed by Von Hartmann's cavalry Division.

The distance between the two roads on the Silesian side was about thirty miles. About in the middle of this space there was another pass, little travelled, from Braunau to Eipel. This latter place is about nine miles from Trautenau, and about as far from Skalitz. The corps of Guards was to take this road in order to be able, after the mountains had been passed, to render assistance either on the left or on the right.

It was well understood, when this unavoidable division of forces was made, that a stubborn resistance must be counted upon, possibly from a superior force. The position of the enemy at that moment was not exactly known. Word had been received that the Austrian army was in movement from Olmütz toward Josephstadt and Königgrätz, that several of his divisions had reached the Upper Elbe, but that others were considerably farther away. At any rate, it seemed

<sup>1</sup> Only one regiment of Poles.

certain that in or in front of the defiles large bodies of the enemy would be encountered, and that especially the southern column, that of Steinmetz, might be hard pressed.

But the enthusiastic courage of the soldiers was not dampened for an instant by such considerations. "If we are beaten at one point," said Steinmetz, "we will break through at another." The feeling was general that success was possible, and that the attempt should be made. "If things go wrong," they said, "we can hold out till the First Army extricates us." The Chief of the Staff, General von Blumenthal, was a brilliant strategist and at the same time a fiery spirit that pressed on impatiently to the contest. Above all, the Commander-in-chief, the Crown Prince, though of a more quiet disposition, was absolutely fearless.

He, like his royal father, had no notion of what others understand by the word danger. It aroused in him neither paralyzing terror nor intoxicating nervous excitement. With confidence in God and in himself, he always met it with the same firm courage and the same clear head.

On the 26th of June the 1st army-corps reached the boundary near Liebau and Schömberg, and the Guards crossed it and encamped in the evening at Braunau. The 5th corps reached Reinerz, and pushed forward eight companies and two squadrons under Colonel Below through the defile to Nachod, where the feeble Austrian posts evacuated the place after a brief resistance.

When these proceedings were reported, Master of the Ordnance Benedek, who was at Josephstadt, ordered that the 6th corps under General Baron Ramming should march from Opotschno to Skalitz, and the 10th under General Baron Gablenz from Jaromir to Trautenau. Each of these on its own side was to send forward an advanced guard toward the opening of the passes, and to repel the enemy with vigor, but not to carry the pursuit farther than would be necessary in order to protect the main army against a flank attack.

Benedek still gave little thought to the enemy who were to appear from this direction, although he had now learned that the army of the Prussian Crown Prince had been increased from two to four army-corps. This only strengthened his hope of conquering with vastly superior numbers, at the Iser, Prince Frederick Charles, who had received no such increase; and he was therefore anxious to employ only the smallest possible portion of his forces in repelling for the time the army of the Crown Prince. At that time, June 26th, one Austrian corps, the 4th, had already passed the Elbe on its march toward the Iser, the 3d and 10th had just reached the Elbe; but three corps were still in the rear, three cavalry divisions, and the artillery-reserve of the army. Benedek, therefore, even if he had wished, would not have been in a position to meet the Army of Silesia with superior numbers. On the evening of the 26th he wrote to the Emperor that the detaching of the 6th and 10th

corps meant only a temporary postponement of the proposed offensive action, to which he would proceed so soon as the army should be collected at Josephstadt, and he should have further information as to the position of the enemy.

He was to have this soon enough.

General Steinmetz had his van (comprising, besides the troops that had pushed on to Nachod on the 26th, five battalions, three squadrons, and two batteries, under General von Löwenfeld) decamp early on the morning of the 27th from Reinerz, in order to proceed as rapidly as possible over the heights of the pass to Nachod, and then spreading themselves out before that place, to gain room for the debouching of the main body as it came after. Nachod lies in the narrow and deep valley of the Mettau, which flows south-easterly towards the Elbe. The road from there to Skalitz runs westerly by the villages of Wysokow and Kleny. To the right of it stretch wooded hills; to the left, that is, towards the south, is a high plateau bordering the road with a steep bluff, covered here and there with wood, and pierced in various places by deep water-courses.

About half past seven in the morning Colonel Below received information from his advanced posts that to the south of the plateau large bodies of the enemy were visible. At the same time General Löwenwald with the main body of the van arrived and at once disposed his forces in a great curve from Wysokow to the village of Wenzelsberg, the infantry

being divided into half-battalions, placing them wherever a position suitable for defence, a group of buildings, a little wood, or a ditch full of water, happened to present itself. Everything depended on maintaining this position against the enemy's superior numbers until the main body of the army-corps should have made its way through the narrow pass and be able to unfold itself in turn for battle. A hard morning's work and a bloody day of honor awaited the little band.

While Steinmetz commanded in all 21 battalions and 13 squadrons, General Ramming, supported by a division of heavy cavalry, led against him 28 battalions and 30 squadrons, that is to say, a force superior by almost 10,000 men. Ramming had despatched one of his four brigades of foot, that of Waldstätten, on a side-road leading farther west directly to Skalitz. The three others marched behind one another on the high road from Opotschno, and the foremost, that of Hartweck, was to advance directly to Wysokow, while the two others, those of Jonak and Rosenzweig, bearing somewhat to the left, were to proceed towards Kleny. So it happened that soon after eight o'clock General Hartweck came in contact with the southern end of the Prussian line. He decided to wheel to the right and make an attack on the spot.

Now the defensive capacities of the Prussian breech-loaders, and the firm discipline of the soldiers that wielded them, were manifested with overwhelming

effect. No matter how boldly and fearlessly the hostile battalions rushed on till they were within sight of their foe, the fire of the latter, always well-directed in spite of its rapidity, stretched a quarter, aye, a full third, of their men dead or wounded on the field. Before an hour had passed both regiments of the brigade were half-annihilated and obliged to retreat.

Hartweck had, however, summoned General Jonak to his assistance, and the latter, as well as General Rosenzweig, was pressing eagerly to the field. Then General Ramming himself appeared on the scene, approved Hartweck's action, and ordered the troops thus reinforced to advance at the same time against all the points occupied by Löwenfeld.

The Prussian half-battalions showed wonderful firmness in resisting this attack from superior numbers. Once more the Austrians suffered frightful losses; but at length the weight of their masses broke through in many places the thin girdle of Prussian posts. About eleven o'clock the hard-pressed companies received their first assistance from the main body, the cavalry brigade of General von Wnuck with a mounted battery. Between these and the imperial cuirassiers of Prince Solms there arose a fierce contest, in which the victory, and with it two of the enemy's standards, remained in the hands of the Prussians.

This cavalry battle, however, could not in the end check the advance of the Austrian infantry. Löwenfeld's half-battalions were gradually pushed to the



extreme edge of the plateau; but they clung to this last position with desperate courage, keeping up an incessant fire and making frequent charges, while the Austrians, who had been on the march since three o'clock, and fighting since ten, were every moment more and more overcome with fatigue. Then at midday came the turn of affairs. The first regiments of the 10th brigade, after making a difficult march of fourteen miles among the mountains, had got by the pass and Nachod, and now pressed forward upon the plateau and without delay took part in the battle. Löwenfeld could now draw a long breath. He had gloriously accomplished his task; and by a conflict of three hours, sustained by six battalions against twenty-one, he had kept open for his leader the road to victory.

For even at that moment it could be said that the day was won for Prussia. The brigades of the enemy that had been hitherto engaged had already so far spent their energy and blood that a solid resistance against the Prussian power, which was now hourly increasing, was no longer to be thought of. Ramming's artillery-reserve, which was then just arriving, did indeed, by the fire of forty guns, for a while delay the Prussian advance. Moreover, the brigade of Waldstätten, which had been so uselessly despatched to Skalitz, now also came up to an attack upon Wysokow. But with masterly energy Steinmetz at this juncture let the weight of his columns burst upon the enemy at all points and settle the matter

irrevocably. After four o'clock Ramming ordered his troops to fall back upon Skalitz. No pursuit took place. The physical strength of the victors was also on the wane. The day had cost them 300 dead and 800 wounded. Fivefold greater, however, was the loss of the Austrians: 1,100 dead, 2,400 wounded, of whom 1,300 were prisoners, and 2,000 not wounded, taken prisoners and missing, — in all 5,500 men.

In the evening General Ramming reported to Benedek: "In consequence of renewed attacks by the enemy, maintained with greatly superior forces, I was obliged to withdraw to Skalitz. My troops were all engaged and fought very bravely; but they have suffered heavy losses and are entirely exhausted. It is my duty to report that without assistance I should not be in a condition to withstand an attack early in the morning. I therefore request that I may to-day be relieved by the 8th corps. My cavalry is so exhausted that it can do nothing more."

The first results obtained by the Prussian left wing were thus most glorious and full of promise. The task was not yet accomplished; but an effective beginning had been made. The corps of Guards in the centre had at the same time passed the mountains, so that Steinmetz, in the event of being hard pressed in point of numbers, could count on their support. Things were, however, more unfavorable on the right wing, where General Bonin with the 1st corps had found a superior enemy in Gablenz.

Bonin, at three o'clock in the morning on the 27th

of June, had got his troops into order (the Division of Clausewitz at Liebau, and the Division of Grossmann at Schömberg), and at four had had them begin their march toward the mountains, with instructions, after traversing the pass, to unite at Parschnitz, a half-hour's journey from Trautenau, to rest there two hours, and in the meantime to occupy the town with the advanced guard to be despatched by Grossmann. Clausewitz arrived at Parschnitz about eight o'clock; but Grossmann's march was delayed for nearly two hours, during which time his colleague, holding to the letter of his orders, remained wholly inactive, without a suspicion that this conduct would critically affect the fate of the day.

Like Nachod, Trautenau lies in a deep valley, through which the little river Aupa flows, first toward the east, and then with a sharp turn toward the south. Close behind the town rise several ridges with steep slopes accessible only by a narrow ravine. The highest of these, the Kapellenberg, is crowned by an abrupt rocky cliff. Toward the south, the descent takes the form of a rolling plateau, the eastern border of which sinks nearly vertically and pathless to the Aupa, while the western side falls away gradually to the upper Elbe. If any resistance was to be encountered, it could come only from this side: nothing, therefore, was more important than to take possession of the plateau as soon as possible before the Austrians could reach it. This, however, was not done; and when finally about ten o'clock the

advanced guard arrived at Parschnitz, and then proceeded through the town towards Trautenau, their front at the southern extremity of the town suddenly received the enemy's fire from the neighboring heights. This time the Austrians had reached the decisive point before their opponents, who were usually so alert.

The fire came from the brigade of Mondel of the 10th corps, consisting of seven battalions with eight guns. They had arrived the evening before at Prausnitz, about five miles south of Trautenau, and had gained the plateau about eight o'clock. When Colonel Mondel here learned from the dragoons of Prince Windischgrätz, that had retired from the frontier before the Prussian advance, that the enemy was near at hand, he, trusting in the difficulty of the ground, decided to make an attack at once, although he was in no way certain when he should receive support from the three remaining brigades of his corps. He therefore speedily ordered the Kapellenberg and the neighboring heights to be occupied, and some companies to descend from there and begin the contest with the Prussian *jäger*, while Prince Windischgrätz with five squadrons drove back into the town after a stubborn resistance the Lithuanian dragoons of the Prussian vanguard, consisting of three squadrons.

The Prussian leaders were entirely taken by surprise. The advanced guard of seven battalions received orders to storm the Kapellenberg; but one attack after

another was repelled by the Austrians from their favorable position. General Bonin then despatched six battalions of his main body, which were soon followed by two others, under General Buddenbrock, to seek a way to outflank the enemy, and for this purpose, starting from the valley of the Aupa, to scale the steep east border of the plateau. The two regiments allotted to this duty, regiments Nos. 44 and 45, had been for the last twenty-four hours engaged in picket-duty and reconnoitering, and had then marched across the mountains without any night's rest. Their present task was arduous to a high degree. Scattered in small companies, often only one man behind another, they struggled pantingly up the pathless mountain wall. More than an hour passed before they reached the plateau.

Meanwhile the advanced guard had in a last vigorous attack gained the Kapellenberg from the south, repelled the enemy, and made numerous prisoners. General Gablenz, who had reached the battlefield at eleven o'clock, then ordered the brigade of Mondel to retire, fighting slowly and in good order, and to take a new position half an hour's march in the rear, on a woody chain of hills near the villages of Hohenbruck and Altrognitz. Of the Prussian advanced guard only one-half followed them to this point: the rest were so exhausted by their terrible exertions that they were obliged to withdraw to Trautenau.

The struggle thus came to a stand-still for a while,

until about one o'clock Buddenbrock's troops arrived. They were, to be sure, in considerable disorder, the battalions broken up, the companies mixed up, and the men oppressed to the utmost by heat and thirst. The sight of the enemy, however, refreshed their tired nerves, and in spite of the fire from the Austrian guns, which had been much increased in number, Mondel was again obliged to retreat. But even now he held his brave troops firmly in hand. In spite of heavy losses all the ranks were closed, and they withdrew in the best of order to a third position, another half-hour's march to the south, near the village of Neurognitz.

General Buddenbrock did not continue pursuit. After his men had driven back the enemy, they gave out in utter exhaustion, and fell, each man where he stood. The members of each company were brought together, so far as possible: but nothing more than that could be done. The rest of the advanced guard now likewise withdrew into the town.

Colonel Mondel had therefore by his rapid advance to the plateau and the Kapellenberg, as well as by the obstinacy and ability of his resistance to more than double his own numbers, done his army a service in every respect similar to that by which Löwenfeld had at the same time at Nachod with his brave fellows saved the victory for the Prussians. Mondel had fought with his seven battalions against fifteen of the other side. Of these latter, seven now lay *hors de combat* at Trautenau, not so much owing to the balls

of the enemy as to the failure of their own physical strength; and the eight others, though they still faced the Austrians, were likewise fatigued to the last degree. Bonin had left for further fighting only three infantry battalions of his main army<sup>1</sup> and four and a half battalions of the reserve.

The General was, however, in very good spirits, not suspecting that more disagreeable business might still be in store for him on that day. Soon after one o'clock there appeared at his headquarters an officer of the Guards with the announcement that the 1st division of these was at Qualisch, four and a half miles east of Trautenau; they had heard the cannonading during the battle and were ready at his desire to take part. Bonin answered there was no need of this; he had only one brigade of the enemy in his front and had just repelled that one. The Division of the Guards then continued its march as ordered to Eipel, four or five miles to the southeast of Trautenau. Immediately after, however, Bonin received message after message announcing that the opponents were being reinforced and seemed to be preparing for a new attack, — information calculated to transform at a blow the former assurance of victory into serious solicitude.

The reports were only too correct. General Gablenz was in no way disposed to end the day's work with the retreat of Mondel's brigade. On the contrary, he had sent one messenger after another urging

<sup>1</sup> From the 4th and 5th regiments.

the three brigades that were in his rear to hasten their march as much as possible. Accordingly, by twelve o'clock a mounted battery arrived at full speed at Neurognitz, and at one o'clock two others and a regiment of lancers. Finally, about three o'clock, Colonel Grivicitz appeared with the seven battalions of his brigade; and half an hour later he drew them up for an attack on the Prussian position near Altrognitz, while Mondel's brigade took up a post of observation opposite Hohenbruck.

The eight Prussian battalions that had occupied the woody heights between the two villages were, according to Bonin's intention, to have been reinforced by a new movement of the advanced guard; but these instructions, by some mistake, were not delivered,<sup>1</sup> so that two battalions of the 45th regiment had to sustain without any support the onset of Grivicitz's brigade. The men had somewhat refreshed themselves by a rest of nearly two hours; so that when Grivicitz advanced with the close masses of his battalions to charge with the bayonet, he was received with such destructive volleys and a fire so rapid, that whole lines of his men fell, and the survivors turned at fifty paces from the enemy. Grivicitz then paused for a time, brought forward his second division of troops, and sent a battalion of lancers to pass around the enemy to their left flank. Thus threatened on

<sup>1</sup> *Preussisches Generalstabswerk*, p. 124. We should accordingly, on p. 125 of that book, read, instead of "Regiments Nr. 41," "Regiments Nr. 44."



two sides the Prussian regiment, receiving no assistance whatever, made up its mind to retreat.

At the same time another Austrian brigade, that of Wimpffen, had appeared on the field of battle and had directed its attack against Hohenbruck, and the 44th regiment encamped there, while forty guns covered the whole Prussian position with their fire. Under these circumstances the 44th regiment joined in the retreat of the 45th before Wimpffen's attack was carried out.

General Bonin had meanwhile sent his reserves under General Barnekow to the support of the wavering troops on the Kapellenberg and its slopes; and to this point the assault of Wimpffen's brigade was now directed. Two battalions of the 43d regiment had occupied the peak of the mountain and had thrown forward detachments upon the southern slope. General Wimpffen with five battalions arranged in three columns and with the bands playing advanced from different sides against the heights. The small advanced detachments of Prussians were overthrown, and the Austrians rushed enthusiastically after them. Then the Austrians met the rapid fire from the 43d, which was so overwhelming that the music ceased and the troops fled pell-mell down the slope.

But Barnekow was not to enjoy this triumph long. The last brigade of the enemy, that of Knebel, had now arrived and had been appointed by Gablenz as a reserve to cover his flank. But when General Knebel perceived the misfortune of his comrade,

he could not endure to look on and remain inactive. Without asking the permission of Gablenz, he put his seven battalions in motion and had them ascend the Kapellenberg from three sides. Barnekow's troops defended themselves desperately, and poured down in all directions a murderous rain of bullets upon the new enemy, who were three times their number; so that Knebel's men also suffered terrible losses. But finally the brave defenders, attacked on the flank and rear, and decimated by the Austrian fire, recognized the impossibility of further resistance. Their neighbors, two and a half battalions of the 3d regiment, covered their retreat. The day was decided, the victory was won for Austria; but it was dearly enough paid for by the sacrifice of nearly 4,800 killed, wounded, and prisoners. The lateness of the hour and the fatigue of the troops on the Austrian side also, made pursuit out of the question.

General Bonin is said to have intended to continue the retreat only as far as Goldenöls, on the Bohemian side of the narrow pass. But he must have completely lost control of the troops, for they had marched on beyond this point, so far as is known, without definite orders, and still farther, in utter exhaustion, over the two passes in the high mountains, until about two o'clock in the morning they arrived in a far from satisfactory condition at Liebau and Schömberg, whence they had started twenty-four hours before on a day of almost uninterrupted toil and arduous effort.

Their losses in the battle came to something over 1,300 men; and it is interesting to observe the ratio in which the different bodies of troops were affected. Of the artillery, of which Bonin had made little use, there were 7 wounded; and of the seven battalions of the advanced guard, which, owing to uncertain orders, had remained inactive during the afternoon, 160 killed and wounded. On the other hand, there were 530 killed and wounded from the eight battalions of Buddenbrock that had been engaged at Altrognitz, and 350 of Barnekow's heroic defenders of the Kapellenberg. The history and the criticism of this day's battles are made clear enough by these facts. The inequality in the losses was not occasioned by any difference in the merits of the various troops, but by an uncertain and inefficient method of employing them.

When at length, about nine in the evening, the last shots echoed in the Aupa valley, Gablenz, in spite of the joy of victory, was a prey to serious anxiety. Of his fine corps every seventh man was wounded or dead; a still larger proportion among the officers, especially among those of high rank, was rendered *hors de combat*; and all the troops were greatly in need of complete rest. And he had news, for the time indeed wholly indefinite, of the advance of the Prussian Guard upon Eipel, and hence of the threatening of his right flank and perhaps of his line of retreat toward Josephstadt. Moreover, he had no report about the enemy he had defeated on that day;

he did not know whether they had been thoroughly beaten and rendered for the time incapable of fighting, or whether they had only been driven back, and were preparing to make the attack anew. Gablenz accordingly reported to his Commander-in-chief the victory he had gained; but he pointed out the danger that threatened him from the right, and urgently requested that his position might be secured by the occupation of Prausnitz<sup>1</sup> with a sufficient force. For just in front of this place the road from Eipel meets that from Trautenau to Josephstadt; and Gablenz thought that the attack by the Guards upon his lines of connection would be made at that point.

Benedek, however, regarded the state of affairs in a much more favorable light than did his subordinate officers. So far as the conflict at Nachod was concerned, he considered that Ramming, whom he had despatched to Skalitz, had, in spite of the enemy's advance, properly fulfilled his orders, and if the troops were weary in the evening in consequence of a long march and a battle, they would after a thorough night's rest be fresh and ready for fighting on the following day. Nevertheless, on that same evening of June 27th, in accordance with Ramming's wishes, he ordered that that officer should be relieved by the 8th corps under Archduke Leopold, purposing himself on the following morning at Skalitz to look after the right one and come to a final decision.

<sup>1</sup> As already mentioned, this place is about five miles south of Trautenau.

To General Gablenz, on first reading the latter's despatch, he sent word that several battalions would advance to Prausnitz. But on further consideration he decided that Gablenz could very easily avoid the danger of a flank attack by taking position himself with his whole army-corps at the critical point of Prausnitz with his front toward the east, and there settling matters as thoroughly with the Prussian Guard as he had done the day before with General Bonin. Three hours after his first despatch, therefore, at five o'clock in the morning, he sent instructions to Gablenz to evacuate Trautenau and station his corps in Prausnitz and the neighboring village of Kaile in readiness for any attack from the Guards.

Benedek did not suspect how important it would have been for the safety of the 10th corps, had he sent this order immediately after receiving Gablenz's report. In his eager desire to arrive as strong as possible at the Iser, he continually saw his position with regard to the Army of Silesia in too rosy a light. Since he regarded Bonin's withdrawal as a complete overthrow, and as he knew that Mutius with the Silesian corps was still at a considerable distance, he thought that for the time he had on that side only two Prussian corps, the Guards and that of Steinmetz, to deal with, and that consequently he would be doing enough if he opposed these with equal numbers, until with the great body of his forces he should have overcome Prince Frederick Charles. He was confirmed in this view, when, on the forenoon of the 28th, he

arrived at Skalitz and found the 8th corps already in position before the town and the 6th encamped behind it. Weak detachments of Prussians showed themselves on the heights to the northeast of the town. Isolated cannon-shots were heard, which were answered by an Austrian battery; but on neither side did any definite results appear to be gained.

Benedek continued to think that nothing of importance was to be looked for in that quarter. He had other plans, he said, in which he should persist. He had now appointed the 4th corps, that of Count Festetics, together with that of Gablenz, to repel the Army of Silesia, and therefore withdrawn the former across the Elbe, stationing it at Dolan, a few miles behind Skalitz, while he had sent further orders to Gablenz, also to withdraw to that place on the 29th—clearly with the object of checking the enemy's advance by this flank demonstration, or at any rate of turning it from its intended course.

Benedek accordingly rejected unconditionally Ramming's proposal to let the 4th and 8th corps attack Steinmetz at once. On the contrary, he gave the Archduke and General Ramming explicit orders at once to proceed across the Elbe and join the march to the Iser.

Thereupon the Master of the Ordnance withdrew once more to Josephstadt, and sent word from there, as we have seen, to the Crown Prince of Saxony, that on the 29th or 30th he should reach Gitschin with four army-corps.

Meanwhile, however, decisions had been arrived at on the Prussian side, which were likely to disturb seriously the plans of Benedek.

The Crown Prince had promised General Steinmetz on the 27th of June that on the following day he would send the 2d Division of the Guards to support him, while the 1st should act in concert with General Bonin. Soon after midnight, however, an officer that had been despatched from headquarters brought back word that Bonin had been obliged to retire from Trautenau, but that details concerning his misfortune and his actual position were not to be obtained. News so serious and at the same time so incomplete would have made many generals act with increased caution, at any rate till receiving further information. The Crown Prince, however, was only led to decide on the spot that he must advance with speed and redoubled energy. Without losing an instant, he ordered the Guards to open as quickly as possible in full force an attack upon Gablenz, and at the same time he informed Steinmetz that, owing to what had happened at Trautenau, it had become impossible to send him the 2d Division of the Guards; only one brigade of cavalry could be spared for his assistance.

Steinmetz on his part was filled with the same enthusiasm as his Commander-in-chief. After his victory on the 27th, he no longer feared meeting even a superior force, since he had not only the defiles near Nachod to fall back upon, but more than one road to the north by which he could unite with the corps of the Guards.

It seemed to him certain, however, that every delay increased the dangers of his path and would give the enemy the opportunity of bringing up additional forces. He therefore decided to set his corps in motion at once on the morning of June 28th for an attack upon Skalitz.

The road from Wysokow to Skalitz leads over the plateau before described, which in this region slopes down to the Aupa and is entirely open. Parallel with the highway runs a local railroad from the little bathing-resort of Schwadowitz. Near to Skalitz, upon a high embankment, this makes an extensive curve to the south and then runs in an easterly direction into the station, which lies outside of the town. To the north of the highway rise various mountain summits. The country between them is much broken up by ravines and valleys; and a considerable part of it not far from Skalitz is covered with a dense forest of oaks.

As the highway and the plateau were everywhere exposed to the enemy's fire, Steinmetz sent General von Löwenfeld and Colonel von Voigts-Rhetz with nine battalions northward into the higher ground that they might first occupy the oak woods, and then, wheeling to the left, press forward against the town. Two brigades of the 5th and one which had just arrived of the 6th corps remained for the time under arms at Wysokow. Before beginning the battle, Steinmetz still awaited the promised Division of the Guards; but when finally at eleven o'clock the news arrived that they were not coming, he decided without hesitation to



attack Skalitz alone with his own forces, and at once gave the order to advance, almost at the very moment when Benedek directed his two army-corps at that place to withdraw, and left the threatened town.

Archduke Leopold had early in the morning drawn up his troops immediately in front of Skalitz in such a way that the brigade of Fragnern to the north of the town formed the left wing, the brigade of Kreyssern behind the railway-station the centre, and the brigade of Schultz to the south, the right wing. The artillery-reserve of the corps, 40 guns, had been stationed to the right and left of the railway-station, ready to take the plateau and the oak wood bordering on it under its destructive fire. But after Benedek had commanded the retreat, the Archduke began by setting the 6th corps in motion toward Dolan and beyond, then ordered the baggage-trains of the 8th to follow, and intended to commence the withdrawal of his troops from the southern end of the line, that is, with the brigade of Schultz. He had not, however, yet informed the brigade-commanders of Benedek's orders.

While these preparations were going on, the Prussian van began at about half-past eleven o'clock its attack upon the oak woods, into which General von Fragnern had thrown forward a detachment that had arrived to his support from the garrison of Josephstadt. Although attacked from three sides by fresh battalions of the enemy, the little troop made such a heroic resistance that General von Fragnern first sent a *jäger* battalion to its aid and then, aroused by the wild en-

thusiasm of these, half an hour later, without instructions from his superior or any consultation with him, led the whole brigade into the battle. But after advancing a little distance he was assailed on the front and on both flanks by such a fire from the Prussian half-battalions that in a few minutes he himself, a great part of his officers, and long lines of his men lay stretched upon the ground, and the remainder fled hastily back to Skalitz.

The Prussians pressing on after them were about to climb over the railway embankment just before its last curve, when Colonel Wöler of the brigade of Kreyssern, noticing this, rushed forward with his regiment against the pursuers on his own responsibility. There arose a bloody contest for the possession of the dam, into which Colonel von Kreyssern, acting also entirely without orders, threw himself likewise with two other battalions of his brigade. In the first attack the brave officer himself fell, and his troops suffered the same fate as Fragnern's brigade before them, though only three Prussian battalions were engaged. After losing nearly a third of their men in repeated onslaughts the Austrians retreated in tolerable order to Skalitz.

Thus, at about one o'clock, a pause ensued in the battle which had blazed up so violently, since on the Prussian side, before the town could be assaulted, it was necessary to wait for the co-operation of the 10th Division, which was advancing from Wysokow under General von Kirchbach. These troops had advanced from Wysokow to Kleny on the highway; but in face

of the fire of the enemy's artillery-reserve they also had made a bend to the north, and were now forming their columns behind Löwenfeld's detachments for the final attack.

On the Austrian side, the Archduke Leopold had been entirely surprised by the starting up of the battle, and had so far not been able to put a stop to it. He was now doing what he could to follow out Benedek's orders and remove his troops, who had suffered so severely, from the reach of the enemy. After endless trouble he succeeded in getting the largest part of the corps out of Skalitz and into the line of retreat, before Kirchbach's attacking columns reached the town. To cover the rear, five battalions remained in the town and in the railway-station, and were there joined by some straggling remnants of Fragnern's brigade.

With the object of overpowering this last effort at resistance, General von Wittich brought up at about two o'clock the 47th regiment in imposing array and with drums beating. Several of the detachments which had before been fighting in that vicinity joined him; and they all rushed with a resounding shout of victory upon the east front of the railway-station. The Austrians fought with desperate obstinacy. One building after another had to be wrested from them by storm. It was three o'clock before the station was in the hands of the Prussians. Even then the fighting continued for an hour with increased fierceness in the streets and houses of the little village, until the growing superiority of the Prussian numbers finally obliged the last survivors of the enemy to retreat.

The strength of the victors was unequal to further pursuit. Moreover, they would have found, as we know, an obstacle so near as Dolan in a new and fresh force of the enemy. The 6th corps was therefore able to reach Salney in the evening unassailed, and the 8th to gain Lanzau in the course of the night on the other side of the Elbe. The sacrifice which this entirely unsystematic battle had cost the Austrians was extraordinarily great: nearly 5,600 men, of whom over 2,500 were prisoners; while the Prussian corps had lost only 1,365 men.

At the same time, the corps of Guards obtained a no less signal advantage over General Gablenz.

The brigades of the 10th corps bivouacked during the night of June 27th in part at Trautenau, in part on the plateau near Neurognitz and Hohenbruck. In spite of all the anxiety with which Gablenz viewed the position of the Prussian Guard at Eipel, we do not find that he made the smallest preparations on his own responsibility in that quarter. He contented himself with informing his superior officer of the danger and awaiting instructions from him. These instructions were, as we have seen, that he should withdraw his whole corps from Trautenau and station it at the threatened point, Prausnitz, with the front towards Eipel.

This order came into the General's hands at about half-past seven in the morning; and in accordance with it he issued his directions, which, if they had been given three or four hours earlier, would have

answered the purpose exactly. He seems to have considered it out of the question that the Prussian Guard, which the day before had made a forced march of almost thirty miles, should be able to reach his troops in the forenoon. He first started his baggage-train, with orders to retire as quickly as possible beyond Prausnitz, to Rettendorf nine miles farther to the south. The artillery-reserve and the brigades of Knebel and Wimpffen were then to follow on the main road to Prausnitz, and to take up their position on the heights of Burkersdorf, to the southwest of Neurognitz. Colonel Mondel was to remain at Neurognitz until the departure of all these troops was completed, as a guard against any fresh advance of Bonin; while Colonel Grivicitz was to lead his brigade along the eastern border of the plateau past Altrognitz to Rudersdorf, in order, in the event of an attack from the Prussian Guards, either to act at that place as an advanced guard or to take the enemy in the flank. In all this, Gablenz acted on the supposition that Benedek, in accordance with his communication of the preceding day, had sent sufficient reinforcements to secure his position, and that he could therefore count on more than six battalions.

Meanwhile, however, the Prussians had already been in motion for some hours. The 2d Division of the Guards, which was about five miles in the rear, had begun its march before five o'clock, and arrived three hours later at Eipel. At about eight o'clock, just as Gablenz had given his orders to the troops, the

1st Division of the Guards under Colonel von Kessel, in spite of the efforts of the day before, was already in full march on Prausnitz, and the two brigades were in readiness to follow, while Kessel's hussars spread over the ground in front, nearly up to the highway from Trautenau to Prausnitz.

The Austrian baggage-trains, consequently, had hardly passed Burkersdorf when the enemy's cavalry were observed close at their side; and the alarm was given at headquarters as quickly as possible. Gablenz at once ordered the hindmost detachments of the baggage to bend westward from the road, in order to reach the Elbe by way of Pilnikau, and the batteries of the artillery-reserve, which were just at hand, to be parked at Burkersdorf and open fire. Then five battalions of Knebel's brigade also came up slowly and were stationed partly on the heights and partly in the patches of wood lying in front.

On the Prussian side, the advance had been for a time interrupted by erroneous reports made by the hussars. But soon a clearer insight into the state of things was gained, and at about half-past nine the officer in command of the 1st Division, General Hiller von Gärtringen, ordered first the advanced guard and then the main body of his troops to attack Burkersdorf. With the exception of the thickets occupied by the enemy's infantry, the land lay clear and open to the terrific fire of the Austrian artillery-reserve. It was thus necessary to rush across the exposed space quickly; and in eager rivalry the different companies

dashed to the edge of the nearest woods, to dislodge the hostile musketeers from their cover. After half an hour's fight the patches of wood were in the hands of the Prussians. While they were keeping up from here a continuous exchange of shots with the Austrians now collected before Burkersdorf, the main body of the Division appeared, at about eleven o'clock, and at once got ready for an attack on the heights and the village.

At this moment Gablenz received definite information that the expected six battalions had not arrived at Prausnitz, but that, on the contrary, Prussian troops were to be seen there. Thus, in the first place, he lost the hope of the reinforcements he had longed for so ardently; and more than that, his connection with Josephstadt, with Benedek, and the main army was cut off. Without hesitation he decided to abandon the struggle and to begin his retreat toward the west by way of Altenbuch to Pilnikau and thence to the Elbe.

Orders to this effect were at once communicated to the brigades. General Wimpffen, who at this moment arrived at Hohenbruck, was ordered to avoid Burkersdorf and go directly to Altenbuch, which place he reached without being molested. Knebel, however, left to depend on his own feeble resources, was vigorously attacked by Hiller, before he could collect his men for a retreat, and driven out of Burkersdorf with severe loss. Colonel Mondel was not disturbed at Neurognitz, save by small detachments of Prussians, and retained his position till towards one

o'clock, in order to cover the retreat of the artillery and the baggage; after which he withdrew unhindered to Altenbuch. That General Hiller did not undertake a further pursuit of the Austrians is very easy to understand, in view of the fearful fatigues of the two preceding days.

The worst fate in this contest, however, overtook the brigade of Grivicitz. The first order of Gablenz for an advance to Rudersdorf did not reach the brigade until half-past nine. They therefore arrived about eleven o'clock at Altrognitz and Rudersdorf, just as Gablenz had decided upon a general retreat. He did indeed send the proper instructions to Grivicitz; but the messenger was captured by the enemy. Grivicitz therefore found himself completely isolated in the midst of hostile squadrons.

The 2d Division of the Guards under General von Plonski was at that time on its way from Eipel to Prausnitz. On hearing that enemies were seen at Rudersdorf, Plonski sent a battalion of the *Kaiser-Franz* regiment thither to secure his right flank. This battalion proceeded at once to attack without hesitation a force more than five times its own size, gained some success, then suffered heavy losses and retired, then recovered itself; in short, made an obstinate and unyielding resistance, until gradually reinforcements and support arrived.

Meanwhile Plonski had received orders from the Prince of Würtemberg to bend to the north and march by Neurognitz upon Trautenau. By taking this road



he found himself, after Mondel's retreat, on the flank, and soon in the rear, of the hopelessly isolated Grivicitz. The whole brigade of the latter was annihilated, he himself was wounded and taken prisoner, and only insignificant fragments of his battalions were able to escape by way of Trautenau to Gablenz.

Thus had the Guards with signal success wiped off the stain of the preceding day and opened the Trautenau defile afresh for the 1st corps. The resistance had not been nearly so violent as at Nachod. Even sooner than at Skalitz had the enemy, already disposed to retreat, broken off the contest. Nevertheless, the Austrian loss was also in this case very great, being close on 4,000 men. Among these were 200 killed, 900 wounded, of whom 600 were taken prisoner, besides 2,600, also prisoners, not wounded. The Guards sustained a loss of 150 killed, 550 wounded.

That same evening communications were re-opened at Trautenau with Bonin, and with the cavalry Division; and on the following morning the march was begun without delay toward the Elbe at Königinhof, while from the other side Steinmetz was expected to approach the same point. On the right bank of the Elbe, Gablenz was at the same time withdrawing with his corps from Neuschloss, past Königinhof, on his way to Josephstadt, after leaving ten companies behind in the town to cover his march. These companies were attacked about noon from all sides by the van of the 1st Division of the Guards. After a

brave resistance they were overpowered, and a great part of them taken.

On the forenoon of June 29th, Steinmetz allowed his troops the repose they had so hardly earned; and he did not leave Skalitz and its vicinity until about two o'clock in the afternoon, to march westward toward the Elbe at Gradlitz. It has been mentioned before that about five miles south of Skalitz, at Dolan, the 4th Austrian corps under Count Festetics was stationed. This corps had extended its position somewhat toward the northwest, as far as the village of Schweinschädel; so that the Prussian column must pass by them on its march, and must expose to the enemy the whole length of its flank.

Festetics had, however, received orders to enter into no important contest at this point, but to avoid an attack from the enemy by retiring to Josephstadt. Steinmetz also was anxious not to enter into a third battle before effecting a junction with the Guards; so that, if each of the leaders had known the intentions of the other, no shot would have been fired there on that day. But the brigade of Wittich, which Steinmetz had charged with the protection of his threatened flank, came so near the Austrian posts that a lively artillery skirmish arose between them; and Count Festetics, thinking that he should demoralize his troops by withdrawing too quickly, drew up two brigades of infantry in a first line and another in a second, in order first to repulse the enemy, before beginning his retreat.

Thereupon General Kirchbach, who was then leading the Prussian vanguard, considered it indispensable for the safety of the corps to force back these masses, and for this purpose ordered the brigade of Tiedemann to advance against Schweinschädel.

This resulted in an extremely fierce and bloody fight, in which once more the superiority of the Prussian tactics and the murderous effectiveness of the repeating rifles were triumphantly proved, in spite of the greater numbers of the Austrians. Schweinschädel was taken; but the fight was then broken off by the orders of Steinmetz, and the march toward Gradlitz continued. Festetics had been roughly handled: while the Prussians had lost only 400 men, he had not less than 1,450 killed, wounded, and taken prisoner. In the evening he withdrew southward towards the Elbe in the direction of Jaromir. Steinmetz reached Gradlitz at about midnight. His communication with the Crown Prince was thus restored; and at the same time the 6th corps also arrived at Skalitz.

On the other wing of the Crown Prince, Bonin had meanwhile, on June 29th, brought his troops once more into order. Thereupon, on the 30th, the 1st corps marched by way of Trautenau and Pilnikau toward the Elbe, which the van reached at Arnau. Here there appeared soon afterwards a dragoon regiment of the First Army (the army under Prince Frederick Charles), which was advancing from Gitschin, an ocular proof that the dangerous task of uniting all the Prussian forces had been gloriously accomplished.

While all this was taking place, Benedek was forced to experience more and more severely trying hours.

After he had arrived at his headquarters in Josephstadt, at midday on the 28th, he had the necessary dispositions arranged for the great advance against Prince Frederick Charles. He certainly could not have begun it any earlier; for though the 3d corps and a division of cavalry were already on the right bank of the Elbe, and the 6th and 8th, in accordance with Benedek's orders, were expected there every instant, yet the 2d corps with three divisions of cavalry and the artillery-reserve could not arrive at the river from the east before evening. So much the more rapid, however, were to be the proceedings on the following day.

The plan was already drawn up, when the news of the battle at Skalitz arrived. How bitterly Benedek felt the losses in this is shown by the fact that he at once had Archduke Leopold urgently advised to ask leave of absence on account of ill-health. The Commander-in-chief did not, however, allow himself to be disturbed in his arrangements for the campaign. After the experiences of the 27th, he hoped that Gablenz, to whom he intended to intrust the 4th corps, in addition to the 10th, would do the work more successfully at Dolan and Josephstadt than it had been done at Skalitz. The dispositions for the march were therefore communicated the same evening to all sections of the army.

But in the night the sad news arrived of the serious defeat of the 10th corps as well; and further details were learned concerning the wretched condition of both of the beaten corps. It was clear that under these circumstances the advance of the army to the Iser was no longer practicable. It was accordingly now decided to place five army-corps on the right bank of the Elbe, in face of the approaching troops of the Crown Prince of Prussia, while the Saxons and Clam-Gallas should be joined to the left wing of the army, and there, together with the 3d corps, be charged with providing a defence against Frederick Charles.

The troops had already, early in the morning on the 29th of June, got under way in accordance with the arrangements of the preceding day, when they received hasty counter-orders. They were, indeed, obliged to devote a considerable amount of time and strength to reaching the new position. Nor were they destined there to enjoy long repose. On the morning of the 30th came the crushing news of the events at Gitschin, and soon the remnants of the army coming from there appeared, in complete demoralization and disorder. It was now out of the question to remain a day longer in the position which had just been chosen, with the army of the Crown Prince in front and the victorious host of Frederick Charles in the flank and rear. Benedek telegraphed to the Emperor that by reason of the complete defeat of the 1st corps and of the Saxons he was compelled to lead the army back to Königgrätz.

In Vienna this despatch fell like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, bringing with it stupefaction and bewilderment. Up to that time people had been lulling themselves in the serenest consciousness of victory. In regard to Nachod, Benedek had reported that Ramming had successfully accomplished the march to Skalitz, as he had been ordered, and repulsed all attacks. Then the news had come of the victory of Gablenz at Trautenau, and again a brief telegram of Benedek's from Skalitz, saying that nothing serious was to be expected there and that the artillery continued to prove its signal accuracy. The newspapers worked up this joyful news and their telegrams spread it through all Europe: victory, victory along the whole line! Suddenly — for on the 29th no official report had arrived — there came this crash of thunder: complete defeat, retreat toward Königgrätz. The loftiness of the exaltation during the past few months was now equalled by its reverse. Dismay, indignation, and demoralization manifested themselves far and wide.

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## CHAPTER III.

## KING WILLIAM IN BOHEMIA.

AT this point the two contending Monarchs took part personally in directing the course of events.

After King William had received the victorious news from Burkersdorf and Skalitz, and thus felt sure that his armies would be united, he set out from his capital on the morning of the 30th of June, accompanied by Bismarck, Roon, and Moltke, with the intention of henceforth assuming the immediate control of his forces on the field of action. He had as yet heard nothing of the triumph of the First Army at Gitschin. From this quarter no danger of failure had been supposed to exist; and therefore orders were sent by telegraph from Kohlfurt, during the journey, to the leaders of both armies to the following effect. The Second Army was to maintain its position on the left bank of the Upper Elbe, with its right wing ready to join the left of the First Army by way of Königinhof. The First Army was to advance without stopping in the direction of Königgrätz; and General von Herwarth was to attack any hostile troops that might appear on the right flank of this advance, and separate them from the enemy's main army.

The despatches marked out beforehand the lines upon

which four days later the great decision was to be reached. Their contents corresponded well with what both leaders had arranged in their own judgment early in the morning: Prince Frederick Charles to advance the First Army and the Army of the Elbe in a southeasterly direction, and the Crown Prince to establish his Divisions near or quite close to the Elbe and secure suitable places for crossing.

Prince Frederick Charles on that day fell in with no enemy. General Steinmetz exchanged in the forenoon and at evening a few cannon-shots with the 2d Austrian corps across the Elbe; but in the evening everything on the other side became still. As we know, Benedek withdrew his whole army in the night southward to Königgrätz. The Prussians received no news of this retreat, still less of its direction and destination. On the morning of the 1st of July the enemy had simply disappeared. General Bonin led the 1st corps over the Elbe to Ober-Prausnitz. Likewise, detached portions of the Guards and of the 5th corps crossed to the right bank at Schurz and Daubrawitz. At the same time the 6th corps united with the 5th at Gradlitz. Toward evening the First Army reached the towns of Miletin and Horschitz; and on the 2d of July the van of the Army of the Elbe reached Smidar.

Thus the vans of the two hostile armies were only about five miles distant from each other, although neither had a suspicion of the nearness of the other. At the royal Headquarters, which had now reached Gitschin, it was surmised that Benedek had taken up a



position beyond the Elbe, between Josephstadt and Königgrätz, where he would be protected in front by the river and on the right and left by the two fortresses. Therefore Moltke prepared the following orders to be sent to the two Army-commanders: the Crown Prince was to reconnoitre the vicinity of Josephstadt and ascertain the strength of the supposed position of the enemy; if this proved to be such as might be attacked, the Crown Prince should transport all his troops again to the left bank, and marching down the stream, seize the enemy in the flank, while Frederick Charles should press upon them in the front from the right bank; if, on the other hand, such an attack seemed impracticable, then all of the armies should try to pass around the enemy by a march towards the south, cross the Elbe at Pardubitz, and thus threaten all the enemy's connections and lines of retreat.

But when these instructions had been drawn up, the supposition upon which they were based, namely, that Benedek was behind the Elbe, was found to be false. Fresh deliberations were necessary.

Indeed, the first impulse of the Master of the Ordnance, after the defeats of Burkersdorf and Gitschin, had been to withdraw, not only beyond the Elbe, but into his defensive position originally chosen, to the well-fortified camp at Olmütz. He had utterly lost his confidence in his power and in that of his army, which had never been great. Of his eight army-corps only two were still unharmed, four

were most seriously damaged, and the remaining two not inconsiderably injured. The losses which the army had suffered since the 26th of June amounted already to more than 30,000 men, before any decisive battle had been fought.

Thus Benedek, filled with most gloomy thoughts, arrived at Königgrätz on the morning of July 1st. There met him there a telegram from his Sovereign, which, in spite of the misfortunes hitherto, assured him of the latter's fullest confidence in his energetic command. An adjutant of the Emperor, Lieutenant Colonel von Beck, also presented himself, who was to ascertain by his own observations the condition of the army. Now, just at this moment the troops of the 1st corps were coming into Königgrätz. The last march, covering the whole distance from Miletin in one stretch and attended with extreme need of provisions and supplies, had reduced to the lowest degree the strength of the soldiers and the appearance of the ranks. At the sight of them Benedek lost his last hope, and shortly before noon he telegraphed to the Emperor: "I urgently implore Your Majesty to conclude peace at any price. Disaster for the army unavoidable. Lieutenant-Colonel Beck will return at once."

It is easy to imagine the impression that these words necessarily produced in the Imperial Residence. Such imminence of danger and of so great danger was considered inconceivable. Every vein of national consciousness resisted the idea of begging

for peace, eight days after the declaration of war and without the trial of a great battle, at the hands of an enemy so long despised. To be sure, it seemed indispensable, in view of the losses suffered and Benedek's disconcertion, to strengthen the army considerably and to make a change in the supreme command. But the sentiments of the last few months still prevailed in Vienna: the excited hatred against Prussia outweighed the old bitterness against Italy; and it was decided not to seek peace from Prussia, but from Italy, through Napoleon's mediation, and then to send the victorious Archduke with his 120,000 men to the support and leadership of the Army of the North.

Consistently with this plan, it would have been by all means best to avoid, until the arrival of these, any serious engagement with the Prussians, and accordingly to give orders for the present for the retreat to Olmütz. But when the passions are excited logic does not always assert its authority. The feeling again gained ground, that Austria's double-eagle did not need to hide in fear; and so two telegrams were sent simultaneously: one to Napoleon with the declaration that Austria was now ready to make the cession of Venetia, if the Emperor would then guarantee the neutrality of Italy,—although it was affirmed that the fortune of war was first to be tried once more in a great battle;<sup>1</sup> the other to Benedek

<sup>1</sup> Goltz, July 5th; *Bernstorff* (according to information given by Clarendon), July 7th.

with the words: "to conclude a peace is impossible. My commands are to begin the retreat, if unavoidable, in the most careful order. Has there been any battle?"<sup>1</sup>

Benedek very properly understood this question of the Emperor to mean that the latter approved of the retreat in case of necessity, but that he was anxious for a battle beforehand if possible. Benedek therefore began to make the necessary preparations for such action; and gradually, too, the situation seemed to present itself to him in a more favorable light. The day of rest and an abundance of provisions had refreshed the troops, and made it possible to restore order among them. The enemy was not troublesome. The next day also could be counted upon as a day of repose. So Benedek in the course of the night telegraphed to the Emperor a detailed account of the situation, which closed with the sentences: "I shall let the army rest to-morrow, but cannot remain any longer here, because before day after to-morrow the supply of drinking-water will give out. Shall continue the retreat to Pardubitz on the 3d. If I can count upon the troops again, and an opportunity to make an offensive sally offers itself, then I shall make one, but intend otherwise to bring the army in as good condition as possible back to Olmütz."

He had not, accordingly, taken the final resolution; but his purpose was already fixed, in case he gave

<sup>1</sup> *Oesterreichs Kämpfe*, III. p. 228.

battle, to conduct the same in his present position, with the Elbe and Königgrätz in his rear. During his ride thither, in the midst of his dismal fears, he had examined the situation of the land and found it to be most suitable for a battle in the defensive; and on the evening of July 1st he had a few redoubts erected on the north border of this chosen position.

On the forenoon of the 2d, General Henikstein sent word to Vienna of the improvement in the state of affairs. But this letter crossed with an imperial order relieving himself, Krismanitz, and Clam-Gallas from their positions, and summoning them to Vienna to account for their conduct. At the suggestion of Benedek, General Baumgarten of the 3d corps was appointed Chief of the Staff, while General Gondrecourt was placed at the head of the 1st. Both officers were to enter upon their new duties the next morning, when the first cannon-shots were being fired; so that during the battle Benedek was actually left without any Chief of his Staff, inasmuch as his former officer might not serve and the new one did not yet know how.

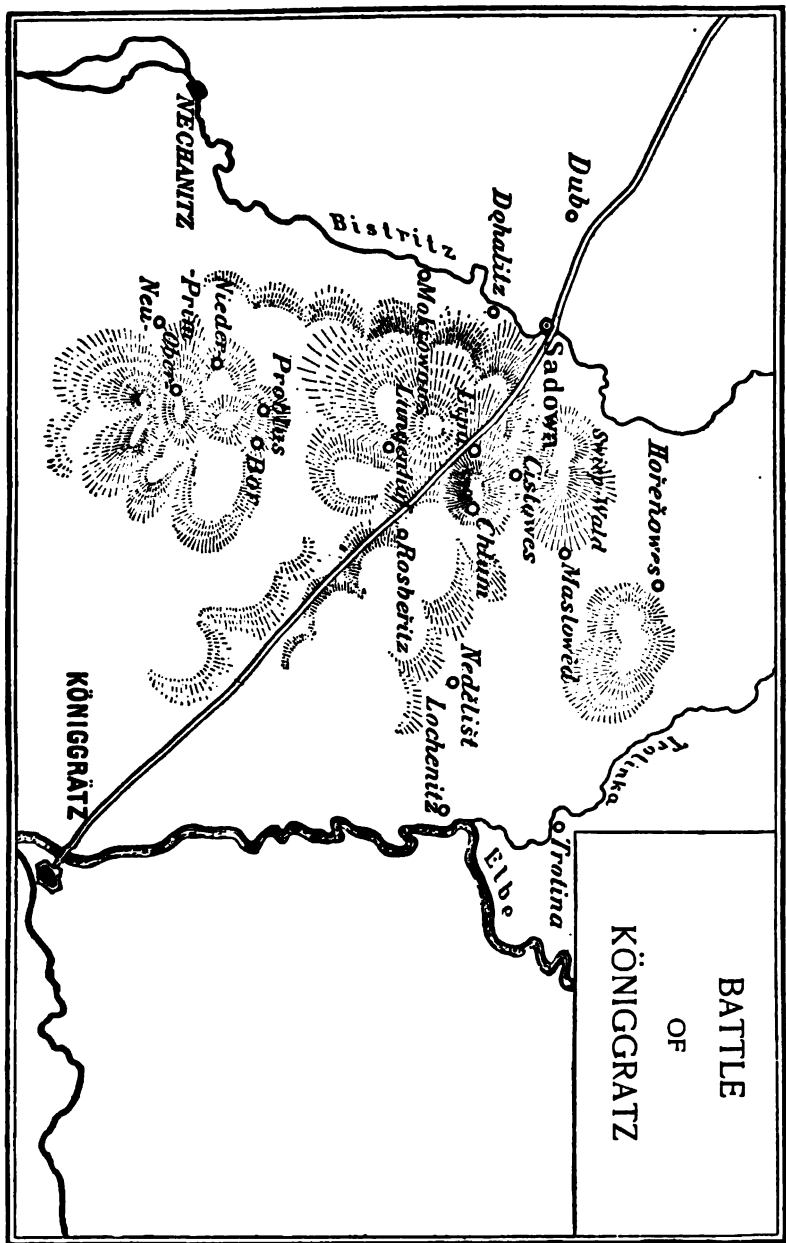
Nevertheless, Benedek had concluded his deliberations in conformity with the wishes of the Emperor, and telegraphed to His Majesty on the afternoon of July 2d: "The army will remain to-morrow in its position at Königgrätz. Rest and care have had a good effect. Trust a further retreat will not be necessary."

He planned, then, to fight the decisive battle in

his present position. He was not to wait long. In the course of the evening, news came from all directions, from civil authorities of the towns and from patrols, concerning the approach of the enemy. A critical day in the history of the world was at hand.

As we may call to mind, the Elbe in this part of its course, past Josephstadt and Königgrätz, flows almost exactly towards the south. About seven miles to the west of the Elbe and parallel with it runs a stream of considerable size, the Bistritz, which at the time was swollen by recent heavy rains, and which can usually be passed, except by a bridge, only at certain places. Across this, near the small village of Sadowa, runs the highway from Gitschin, and about five miles to the south, at Nechanitz, the highway from Smidar to Königgrätz. It was between these two points that Benedek thought of selecting the place to begin the battle, although not in such a way that the enemy should be prevented from crossing the stream.

The Bistritz winds about through a narrow strip of marshy low-land, on the border of which, gently rising to the east, stretches a well-cultivated slope. There, immediately below Sadowa, is situated a dense thicket called the Holawald; and from there down to Nechanitz are to be found half a dozen villages varying in size. At about the distance of three-quarters of an hour's march from the Bistritz, however, the character of the region changes. From the level slope rises a chain of hills, the summits of



BATTLE  
OF  
KÖNIGGRÄTZ





which in some spots are three hundred feet above the level of the valley. These hills, beginning at Nechanitz and extending far beyond Sadowa, run parallel with the line of the Bistritz. Their western sides are for the most part precipitous, while towards the east the descent is gradual, until in the vicinity of Königgrätz the ground becomes perfectly level.

These hills had been chosen by Benedek as the place where he should offer his first resistance; and we must therefore, for the better understanding of what follows, describe certain ones of them more specifically. A half-hour's march below Nechanitz stands the castle of Hradek, and an hour's march to the north of this rises an imposing hill, upon the sides of which rest the villages of Nieder-Prim, Ober-Prim, and Probus. Still farther to the north stands a low ridge with the village of Langenhof; and finally, opposite Sadowa and the Holawald, towers the highest and most important of these hills, with the village of Lipa upon the centre of its western slope, and in a basin upon the eastern edge of the summit the poverty-stricken, but since the 3d of July, 1866, famous, village of Chlum.

From this point the view embraces the whole region upon all sides. Here, too, the chain gradually descends to the east. Nestled among the rolling hills on that side lies the village of Nedielscht; and from there the flat plain stretches out to the Elbe. Another picture

[NOTE.—The maps in this volume seem to be inexact as well as incomplete; at least, they are not always quite consistent with the text. But no means are at hand for determining satisfactorily the precise situation of many of the small places. — TRANS.]

meets the gaze towards the north. Separated from the hill upon which Chlum stands only by a narrow valley, rises a broad dome, covered with an immense growth of trees, crossed by numerous abysses, and crowned at its western extremity by a mighty bastion of rocks. This is the Swiepwald, which, like Chlum, won on this eventful day a lasting fame. To the right of this, and about half an hour's march farther to the north, is situated a long high ridge with the village of Maslowied upon its brow. Still farther northward, the distance of another half-hour's march, rises a majestic height, having upon its west side the village of Horscheniowes; and upon its otherwise bare summit it bore at that time two very old lindens visible from a great distance in all directions. At its foot flows the small stream of the Trotinka, through marshy meadows southwards to the Elbe. On the other side of this rivulet the steep Horschizkaberg closes in the picture.

It was, then, upon this ground that Benedek, by a disposition completed late on the evening of July 2d, ordered his forces to take up a position early the next morning, if, as expected, a hostile attack should ensue. Upon the left wing, below Nechanitz, the Saxon corps, supported by the Austrian 8th, now commanded by General Weber, making together 39,200 men with 116 cannon, were to occupy the heights of Prim and Probus.<sup>1</sup> Next to them, the

<sup>1</sup> Benedek at first wished to station the Saxons upon one of the hills lying in front of Probus, and in this way somewhat nearer to the Bistritz,

10th corps under Gablenz was to be stationed upon the hill of Langenhof, and to the north of them Archduke Ernest with the 3d corps upon the crest of Lipa and Chlum: so that the centre of the army numbered 46,600 men and 134 cannon. The right wing was to be composed of 55,600 men and 160 cannon, and formed by the 4th corps under Count Festetics upon the line from Chlum to Nedielischt, and by the 2d under Count Thun from Nedielischt to the Elbe, where it might be necessary to throw bridges over the river near by the villages of Loch-enitz and Predmeritz. Lastly, Benedek retained for his own personal use a very large reserve: the 1st corps under Count Gondrecourt, the 6th under Baron Ramming, the 5th Division of cavalry, the artillery-reserve of the army, making a total of 73,000 men and 360 cannon. Added to this were 4,000 men appointed to headquarters, and 3,000 technical troops; so that the whole made up an imposing army, massed together in a narrow space, of 222,000 men and 770 cannon,—a force such as no state since the birth of Modern Europe had up to this time placed upon one battle-field.

The troops, refreshed by their two days' rest, took hold with zeal, convinced that under Father Benedek's personal leadership they would meet better fortune than they had as yet experienced under the corps-

but agreed to the proposal of the Saxon Crown Prince, that only one brigade should be advanced to that point, while the main body of them should be stationed as described.

commanders of noble birth. Whether this feeling, besides inspiring them with enthusiasm for entering the struggle would also endure them with tenacious persistence to hold out in the same, had to be left for the sequel to decide. As to the officers, it is reported that they unanimously received the orders to prepare for the contest upon this battle-field with misgivings and bitter disappointment: they all wished to defer the struggle until after crossing the Elbe, and Benedek's decision made them feel a serious lack of confidence in their Commander-in-chief. Yet they were all ready, were the orders right or wrong, to offer their lives and all upon the altar of Austria's cause. The state of things was the worst among the highest ranks of the army. A great portion of the generals had never from the start counted themselves among the admirers or even the friends of Benedek. It was only natural that the leaders of the corps that had so far been beaten should not attribute the blame for their misfortune to themselves, but rather to the incapacity of the Master of the Ordnance Benedek; and more than one of them were inclined, should they receive unwise orders again on that day, to correct the same according to their own judgment and conscience to the best advantage of the Fatherland.

These sentiments were not improved by the fact that Benedek, although giving to the corps-commanders in his abrupt way directions for taking their positions, told them not a syllable about his plans or purposes on this day of expected fighting, and

thus left them utterly without the power to judge of what it might be best to do if anything unexpected should take place. So the Austrian army approached the most critical moments of the war, strong in numbers and in the courage of the troops, but inspired by contradictory feelings and unsettled in its most important internal relations.

What Benedek's ideas may have been concerning the conduct and the aim of the battle we have from later negotiations no certain means of judging; but the way in which he stationed his army seems itself to throw some light back upon the intentions which he must have had in mind in so doing.

The line of battle thus formed made almost a right angle, the vertex of which was situated upon the heights of Lipa and Chlum, and was occupied by the strong and wholly unimpaired 3d army-corps. From this point, the 10th corps and left wing stretched to the south with its front towards the west or south-west, while the right wing extended eastward and faced the north. It is easy to see against what attacks Benedek defended himself: against that of the Army of the Elbe on the left, and that of the Crown Prince on the right wing. He seems not to have credited the Army of the Elbe with the power of making a very strong attack, — and he certainly expected one from that quarter, — for he opposed to it scarcely 40,000 men. Yet even this was more than the Army of the Elbe numbered.

On the other hand, though an early arrival of the

Prussian Second Army did not appear to him probable, on account of its being at so great a distance, it was nevertheless regarded by him with great apprehension, if it should actually take place; consequently he brought over to his right wing two of his least damaged corps, so that the number of these troops exceeded that of the left wing by 16,000. And since in the event of danger threatening from the north, at least one-half of the 3d corps upon the hill of Chlum would naturally be called into action, there were upon this side no less than 70,000 men ready to resist the Silesian army, — to say nothing of the enormous masses of the great army-reserves, from which Benedek had, indeed, already sent a cavalry Division to the vicinity of Problus and one towards Nedielscht.

As a help in understanding the measures adopted by him in the centre, in view of the attack of Prince Frederick Charles, one special order which he had given at this time seems to be instructive. After the experiences of the battles up to this point, he had admonished his troops not to advance to a general attack upon the enemy until the latter had been demoralized by the fire of the artillery. Now, the whole disposition of his centre was an application of this doctrine on a large scale. The crossings over the Bistritz and the level slope by its side were to remain unoccupied, so that the infantry might not then be prematurely decimated. They were therefore placed farther back upon the steep hills, the

brows of which, — from Langenhof to Lipa and Chlum were adorned with a continuous crown of fearful batteries of more than 200 rifled cannon. The enemy were evidently invited to march along in the valley, and then to shed their blood under this unprecedented cannonade in trying to storm the heights. Then, when they were demoralized by this means, the general attack was to ensue with overwhelming force. For this purpose the greater part of the reserves, the 1st and 6th corps, together with two large divisions of cavalry, were stationed just behind Langenhof, facing the west; and, what is especially significant, in the first line in front of the infantry-corps were the cavalry-men, who certainly could not do much in the way of defending the position on the heights, but would be all the more useful in an offensive attack upon the exhausted enemy.

Thus it seems that Benedek still held firmly to his original idea, the conquest of Frederick Charles. This will explain the order, with which he has since been constantly reproached, that he gave to the right wing, namely, to take up a position in the hollow by Nedielscht rather than farther forward, upon the heights of Horscheniowes and Maslowied. He wished to have this wing in his immediate vicinity, in order perhaps to make use of it in the decisive attack upon Frederick Charles, provided the Crown Prince did not appear too soon to allow of this. In the latter event, both corps were to carry out their original tasks; and if their advanced posts

should discover the approach of the enemy in time, there would still be a possibility of occupying the heights in front for a firm repulse of the enemy's attack.

Now, no one will assert that such a plan was confused or unreasonable. It needs, however, hardly to be explained, that an angular position, such as he here chose, is, generally speaking, very hazardous; because the enemy in breaking through one wing are brought immediately in the rear of the other. But Benedek might very well on that day look with complacency upon the army of 70,000 men which he had massed as a reserve between the two wings, and which in the worst extremity might be used in preventing any rupture of these wings, or if things turned favorably, in falling upon the enemy with utterly overwhelming force. To bring about this latter result everything evidently depended upon the proper execution of the plan in every particular, and it was also necessary that the right moment for a great offensive movement should be seized with decision and with vigor: not too hastily, lest the army of Frederick Charles should be found still in its full strength, and not too tardily, lest the Crown Prince should have time to come up and interfere. Yet there could be no assurance of the realization of either of these vital conditions: of the first, on account of the feelings of the subordinate generals towards their leader, nor of the second, by reason of the personality of the Commander-in-chief, who



was able to work out any momentous decision only slowly and hesitatingly.

That such preparations were being made in the Austrian camp, and that at any rate the imperial army had not yet withdrawn beyond the Elbe, was learned in Kamenetz, the headquarters of Prince Frederick Charles, in the course of the afternoon and evening of July 2d. Bold cavalry officers had ventured forward at several points into the Austrian position, and although they obtained no general survey of the same, they ascertained the presence of several army-corps between the Bistritz and the Elbe. Whereas in Königgratz all were estimating the danger that might be threatening their position, in Kamenetz there rose from everybody's lips the joyful shout that the enemy might be caught before they got away.

The intention had been to grant to the troops a day of rest after their toils and battles of the preceding week; but now such delay seemed out of the question. At nine o'clock the Prince gave orders to all Divisions of the First Army and the Army of the Elbe to be on hand soon after midnight, and to begin the march to the Bistritz, the former in the direction of Sadowa and the latter towards Nechanitz. At the same time he sent a letter to the Crown Prince at Königinhof, informing him of his intention to attack the enemy in the morning, and begging him to advance to his support with the Guards, or with more, along the Elbe upon the flank of the enemy.

His Chief of the Staff, General von Voigts-Rhetz, then hastened away to Gitschin to secure the approval of the Supreme Commander to all these arrangements. Upon his arrival, at eleven o'clock in the evening, the King, who was just about to retire, received the General at once, and with the map before him, listened to his report. On account of the lack of information concerning the strength and plans of the enemy, the Monarch still considered it very doubtful whether Benedek would engage in battle on that side of the Elbe, and certain that he would not himself make any offensive attack. Nevertheless, he commanded the Generals Moltke, Roon, Treskow, and Alvensleben to be summoned. After a short and hurried discussion the opinion prevailed that at any rate a large portion, if not even all, of the hostile army could be found between the Bistritz and the Elbe; and thereupon the King expressed his sentiments that such a possibility of bringing about a decisive crisis ought not to remain untried.

With such a great object as this in view, however, he was not willing to be content with the preparations made by Frederick Charles, but declared his determination that the whole army of the Crown Prince should be summoned, in order to make the very most of the situation. At midnight all the orders were ready. Lieutenant-Colonel Count Finckenstein galloped away into the unknown country under a heavily clouded sky and attended by one orderly to Königshof, twenty miles away, to place the important docu-

ment in the hands of the Crown Prince. On the way, he was also to deliver to the advanced posts of the 1st corps a corresponding order for General Bonin, requesting him to collect his corps at once and to hold it ready at the disposal of the Crown Prince, or according to circumstance to engage on his own responsibility in the probable battle in the vicinity of Sadowa.

To the Crown Prince Moltke wrote: "According to the information obtained by the First Army, the enemy, about three corps in number, which may, however, be further increased, have advanced to beyond the section of the Bistritz at Sadowa, where in all probability an encounter will take place with the First Army to-morrow morning early. [Here follows a description of the position of the First Army.] Your Royal Highness will immediately make the necessary arrangements, so that you may be able to support the First Army with all your forces by proceeding against the right flank of the enemy's probable advance, and then by engaging in the battle so soon as possible. The dispositions that were made this afternoon under other circumstances are no longer in force."

These instructions, which were so momentous for Germany's future, were again drawn up quite in Moltke's own fashion: definite statement of the great end to be gained, and full freedom left with regard to the choice of the means. Here, again, was the contrast between Moltke's conduct and that of Benedek in this regard as complete as possible.

There is in no report mention made that any one in the course of these deliberations spoke at all of the dangers of the undertaking. And truly, these dangers were not inconsiderable. The whole force was not stronger, but rather weaker, than that of the enemy. The First Army numbered 85,000, the Army of the Elbe 39,000, the Second Army 97,000: in all 221,000 men against 222,000 Austrians and Saxons, the latter massed together within a narrow compass, the former miles distant from each other and hoping to be united only on the battle-field. The Divisions of the Crown Prince were obliged to march from four to seven hours upon different and everywhere wretched roads before they reached the enemy. How easily might under such circumstances some delay intervene! And if one should occur, who could tell what might be the result of an attack upon Frederick Charles by a force almost double his own in size?

In fact, all that could be brought to bear against this superiority in numbers was merely an imponderable and indeterminate quantity: the moral strength of the Prussian army. Yet if this ever could be counted upon, it was then, at that moment when the victories already gained had raised the military virtues of these excellent troops to the highest pitch. Here, among the Prussian troops, there was in no quarter any distrust of themselves nor of each other. Among the leaders there was to be found neither arbitrariness nor weakness; and with the utmost de-

votion everyone looked up to the military genius and vigorous resolution of the Supreme Commander. Discipline, honor, and patriotism inspired all, high and low, with irresistible enthusiasm and invincible power of endurance. Many thousands of the men united here had year after year opposed most violently Bismarck's internal policy. But now, when Prussia's honor was pledged for the establishment of German Unity, all thoughts and all passions flowed in one stream together, the irresistibility of which all obstructing dams were soon to learn.

The troops of Frederick Charles were in expectation of the promised day of rest. In their bivouacs around the smouldering fires, and in spite of a heavy mist, they lay sunk in deep slumber, when suddenly, at two o'clock in the morning, still in the midst of pitchy darkness, the alarum sounded the call to arms. Heavy with sleep, hungry, and shivering, they began the march, in the midst of frequent pouring showers, along the roads deep with mud, or across the fields through tall wet grain, — a terribly toilsome struggle it was to get ahead; until at last at six o'clock the positions assigned to them were reached at Sadowa, and a short stop afforded time for the preparation of a warm cup of coffee, their only refreshment for a long and bloody day of battle.

King William, then seventy years of age, drove off from Gitschin in an open carriage at five o'clock in the morning, after a night's rest of three hours, and arrived at half past seven amid the shouts and

hurrahs of his troops, at a point opposite Sadowa on the hill of Dub. Hardly had he mounted his horse before he was saluted with several bombs hurled over by the enemy from Lipa, which exploded close behind him, but fortunately without doing any damage.

He found the battle already raging along the whole line from Nechanitz to Sadowa and thence to the north in the neighborhood of the Swiepwald. The Army of the Elbe had likewise arrived soon after six o'clock in the vicinity of the Bistritz, and its advanced guard had at once begun the attack upon Nechanitz, had driven back the Saxons, and restored the half-demolished bridge. At its side the 4th Division had been exchanging a lively cannonade with the batteries of Gablenz across the stream, as had also Horn's Division near Sadowa with the powerful artillery on the heights of Lipa, while its vanguard stood already in close combat with the Austrian garrison of Sadowa on the other side of the Bistritz. The 7th Division, under Fransecky, had come up from the north, already on the east side of the Bistritz, and its van had chased a company of Austrian troops out of the village of Benatek close to the edge of the Swiepwald.

Although the rain and the nature of the ground prevented an exact observation of the enemy's position, yet the wide range and the heaviness of the cannonading seemed to indicate the presence of a large and carefully arranged force. Accordingly, Prince Fred-

erick Charles had issued commands to continue the fight at Sadowa only with moderation for the time, and nowhere to engage in conflict beyond the Bistritz.<sup>1</sup> Evidently he did not wish, with such an obstacle as a boggy brook in his rear, to become too much entangled in a great battle before the appearance of the Crown Prince.

But now the King appeared and assumed the command in person. Even during his journey he had become again convinced of the correctness of his former opinion, that Benedek did not intend to make any serious resistance here.<sup>2</sup> Consequently it was necessary to seize upon him as quickly and as vigorously as possible, so that he could not escape, and to hold him to the spot to await the annihilating blow from the Crown Prince. Accordingly, the King ordered that the 5th and 6th Divisions and the cavalry corps should be placed behind as a reserve, but that otherwise an advance to the attack should be made from all sides with the First Army, and the line of the Bistritz be secured.<sup>3</sup> The Monarch had no more knowledge of the plans of the enemy than had the Prince. For both of them everything finally depended upon the question whether, if worst came to worst, the troops of the First Army would be able to hold out against a superior force until the Crown Prince should appear. The King had confidence that they would; and the troops were to confirm his belief in spite of fearful losses.

<sup>1</sup> *Preussisches Generalstabswerk*, p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> King's letter to the Queen.

<sup>3</sup> *Preussisches Generalstabswerk*, p. 269.

Over on the other side, in the Austrian camp, critical events were taking place. Inasmuch as Benedek had not given orders for the new disposition of the army until late in the evening, and then only for the event of an attack, it was nearly eight o'clock in the morning before the separate corps began to advance from their previous bivouacs into their new positions. The result of this was that many of the divisions of the troops did not reach their proper stations until late in the course of the forenoon, and that others stood already in conflict with the enemy, when the new instructions summoned them back to the hills.

Moreover, not all the corps-leaders took Benedek's orders literally, as meaning actually to occupy the heights and to abandon the plain without a struggle to the enemy. On the contrary, General Gablenz left only one of his brigades as a reserve upon the hill of Langenhof, and with the remainder occupied the villages of Dohalitz, Dohalitzka, and Mokrowous, which lie along the Bistritz. At his side Archduke Ernest had stationed two brigades of his troops the day before at Chlum and Lipa, but had, on the other hand, commissioned Prohaska's brigade with the defence of the bridge at Sadowa, and Appiano's with the occupation of Benatek and the Swiepwald. Both of them, as we have seen, became at the very beginning entangled in a skirmish with Prussians; and it cost both of them much pains and severe loss to break off the fight now, in accordance with Benedek's orders, and to withdraw again to the heights of Lipa.



But the worst of all took place on the right wing. When Counts Festetics and Thun examined the position which they were expected to take upon the low hills behind Nedielscht and in the valley of the Elbe, they found that these were overlooked and commanded by the heights opposite, and that these heights cut off from them every chance of a view into the plain beyond, a defect which clearly the stationing of a squadron of cavalry near Horscheniowes would at once have made good. Furthermore, Brandenstein's brigade of the 4th corps had in the night abandoned the outposts as far as the Swiepwald, and had now, like Appiano, engaged in a skirmish with Fransecky's vanguard, whereupon Count Festetics believed himself called upon to support them.

In short, the two Counts arrived at the conclusion that in spite of the orders of the Commander-in-chief they had better abandon the position behind Nedielscht, which seemed to them so wretchedly unfitting, lead the 4th corps upon the hill of Maslowied, and the 2d upon the slope of Horscheniowes, and there, with their front towards the west, take part in the battle against the army of Prince Frederick Charles. This was, indeed, turning Benedek's whole plan for the battle upside down, to begin the offensive against Frederick Charles before the proper time, and thus to open the way clear for the intervention of the Crown Prince.

The stupendous battle which was begun under these circumstances has been described and commented upon

countless times in all the languages of Europe. The three Staffs which took part in it have agreed concerning the small details with a unanimity that is rare in such cases; so that only in a very few points does any doubt remain about the actual facts of the matter. We need therefore only present before our eyes in a short outline the general course of the great tragedy.

We shall begin in the south, with the Army of the Elbe. Its march across the Bistritz took place with remarkable slowness, for which the reason is always given that there was only one bridge to be used at Nechanitz, and that it took every Division several hours to pass in this narrow line. To the neighboring corps of the First Army there was the same lack of fixed bridges; but there the pioneers very soon had built several pontoon bridges over the little stream, while many battalions waded without hesitation through the water, which was three or four feet deep. Why neither of these things was done by the Army of the Elbe has never been explained.<sup>1</sup>

So General Schöler with his seven battalions and two batteries of the vanguard remained several hours alone upon the eastern bank of the stream, though this did not prevent him from falling upon the advanced Saxon outposts with his usual vigor in two columns, which took turns, each alternately taking

<sup>1</sup> One battalion of the 17th regiment did wade through the stream at Nechanitz. There was also half an hour's march below this place another bridge at Kuntschitz. *Preussisches Generalstabswerk*, pp. 279, 281.

the adversary of the other in the flank, thus forcing the enemy to retire to the height of Ober-Prim. A bold advance of the little company upon this strongly-fortified position, soon after eleven o'clock, was then sharply repulsed, and the Saxon Crown Prince on his part sent a brigade forward. This met with good success until a Prussian battalion was perceived at its flank, and a speedy retreat from this threatening danger was made again to the position upon the heights.

It was now noon, and Crown Prince Albert determined to make a stronger offensive movement against the small force of the enemy. To cover this advance in the flank he called to his aid two brigades of the 8th Austrian corps. But meanwhile the Prussian Division of Canstein had at last got across the Bistritz, had passed the castle of Hradek, and had taken up its station in a bit of woods southeast of Ober-Prim; and now, as the Saxons began their attack upon Schöler, Canstein's Division fell with a mighty shock directly upon the centre of the Austrian ranks, broke through them, and caused such a panic of terror that the whole mass fled in utter confusion, plunged blindly into the midst of the Saxon battalions which they were to protect, and dragged these with them in their flight, both suffering great losses of killed and prisoners. Canstein followed up his victory, although his cavalry and artillery were far behind, and in spite of an obstinate and bloody resistance on the part of the Saxons, took the village of Ober-

Prim by storm. By this means the line of retreat for the enemy's left wing was threatened and its whole position seriously endangered.

It was very evident in these engagements that the Austrian infantry had by no means thoroughly recovered from its former defeats, but rather that the 8th corps still felt in all its limbs the after-effects of the punishing received at Skalitz.

Not so favorable as here, however, had been the situation of things during this time with the First Army. After the news arrived that Fransecky had taken Benatek and had begun an attack upon the Swiepwald, General Horn, soon after nine o'clock, crossed the Bistritz with the 8th Division a little way above Sadowa, forced Prohaska's brigade after a sharp struggle out of the village, and then turning towards the south, to the foot of the Lipa crest, took possession of the Holawald, as well as of the village of Dohalitz, where a number of Austrians were taken prisoners.

To the south of him, Herwarth's Division soon set itself in motion, crossed the stream, and chased the enemy out of the vilage of Dohalitzka. Still farther down the Bistritz, Werder's Division in a hasty advance waded through the water, surprised the advanced troops of Gablenz in the village of Mokrowous, and drove the enemy, leaving killed and prisoners behind them, back to the heights of Langenhof. Here again the superiority of the Prussian infantry could not fail to be recognized: at about eleven o'clock the whole valley of the Bistritz was in their hands.

And now first appeared the hard kernel of the task to be performed, just as Benedek had prepared it. Hardly had the Austrians withdrawn to the heights, and the Prussians taken up their positions alone on the plain, before there opened upon them from the whole line of batteries from Langenhof to Chlum the furious, uninterrupted, murderous hail of shells, at first from 130, then from 160, and finally from more than 200, mouths of fire. A continuous roll of thunder, a deafening hissing and whizzing of the missiles, a constant rattling rain of masses of iron, against which neither the trees of the forest nor the roofs of the village offered protection! The Prussian guns, whether from a distance on the other side of the stream or from the valley pointing upwards, could effect nothing against the superior numbers and position of the well-protected enemy. Each storm of the infantry up the wholly open and bare slope, in the attempt to get possession of the enemy's batteries, as well as the endeavors of separate detachments of troops executed with the boldness of despair, proved itself every time after the first few paces to be utterly hopeless: not a man would have been left living to reach the mouths of the Austrian cannon.

Yet they could not go back and would not. Thus these troops, composed of Thuringians and Pomeranians, stood the severest trial that can be put upon heroic courage: inactive and defenceless endurance in the face of death striking at the right and left, unflinching steadfastness of the living among comrades

falling by the score. And thus these patient martyrs saw the hours pass one after another of interminable length. "We found our senses finally growing utterly blunted," writes one of these soldiers; "we took out our watches and counted the shells that burst about us in the course of a minute."

But when, towards noon, the brigade of Kirchsberg of the 3d Austrian corps, filled with the conviction that these men must already be sufficiently "demoralized," descended from the ridge with the intention of recapturing the -Holawald, they were met with such a vigorous resistance that soon, after a short encounter and leaving a third of their men behind, they fled in bad disorder up again to the sheltering batteries, and resigned to these once more the further destruction of their foes.

The loss among the Prussians, too, had become fearful; and the anxiety over in the headquarters was something terrible. No news had yet been received of any success of the Army of the Elbe, and no word arrived concerning the march of troops of the Crown Prince. Without ceasing the distances were reckoned over and over again. It was believed that the Crown Prince must already have arrived; and yet once more no trace was to be found of his approach. The questions pressed home: Shall the troops be allowed to continue to sacrifice themselves in this hell of fire? Shall they be recalled? Shall they be reinforced?

The answers to these questions came as they only could come from the hearts of the King and Prince

Frederick Charles: the Crown Prince must come and will come! We will hold the position on the other side of the Bistritz and strengthen the troops for a speedy attack! The only infantry still free, the Brandenburg army-corps, received orders to go forward into the Holawald. Only one cavalry Division and a part of the artillery-reserve of the army remained as a final resource. It was a resolution involving the most venturesome daring: to throw the last reserves into the struggle, while the enemy was still in the position to bring forward any moment 70,000 fresh troops to break through the Prussian centre.

But here again was manifest the fact that sometimes in war the height of boldness may be the height of wisdom.

Meanwhile Fransecky's Division, separated from the main body of the army, was called upon to sustain a struggle which, in its heroic endurance and in its far-reaching consequences, stands almost without a parallel in the annals of modern warfare.

We have seen how Fransecky's van under General von Gordon drove out some companies of Appiano's brigade from the village of Benatek and then advanced against the Swiepwald, where there were also, beside two battalions of Appiano's, some companies of Brandenstein's brigade from the 4th Austrian corps. A little fighting was done for a time among the bushes; but Appiano had meanwhile, as we know, received orders to withdraw to Chlum. By leaving only one battalion behind with Brandenstein, he made it pos-

sible for the Prussians without great danger to occupy, not only the forest, but also the village of Tschistowes, which lies in front of it to the south.

Although General Brandenstein now had all his troops, reinforced by another *jäger*-battalion, penetrate into the woods from several sides, all his efforts were frustrated by the fact that the enemy's forces had now increased to the number of eight battalions. During this fight among the ravines and precipices of the dense forest all arrangement and order among the troops on both sides were lost. Each officer or corporal collected small companies as best he could. At one place Prussians, and close by their side Austrians, were pressing forwards. Then suddenly those that were rejoicing in their supposed victory received in their flank and rear an unexpected and annihilating fire. During the confusion of this fight, the more skilful tactics and more thorough training of the Prussians had the decided advantage. After a bitter strife which lasted for a whole hour, Brandenstein rescued only broken fragments of his brigade out from the woods.

But to the victors this success brought only a slight gain. For hardly was the enemy's infantry driven out of the woods, before an artillery fire of no less fierceness than that at Sadowa broke upon the Prussians from the batteries that had been parked at Maslowied, supported also by the great battery at Chlum, making altogether more than 90, and soon amounting to 128 guns, against which Fransecky could



only oppose 24. In every direction the forest was furrowed by the missiles. Beside the shells, breaking boughs and falling trunks fell down upon the groups of defenders and caused at all points bloody losses.

During this cannonade, Count Festetics, immediately after nine o'clock, led the other three brigades of his corps on to Maslowied, in order to continue with increased vigor the attack upon the forest; but a piece of a bomb-shell crushed his left foot, so that the command had to be assumed by his assistant, General von Mollinary. This officer was, indeed, wholly disinclined to regard Benedek's dispositions, but was filled with the strategic idea that it was necessary to force one's way through with all possible force just here at the Swiepwald, and then wheeling about to the left to annihilate the First Army of the Prussians from the flank. He accordingly, at about ten o'clock, ordered the attack upon the forest to be renewed by seventeen battalions, Fleischhacker's brigade from the south, and Poeckh's brigade from the southeast.

Fleischhacker first drove two Prussian battalions out of Tschistowes; but General Gordon with a third held his ground immovable in the western portion of the village, and kept double his own number of the enemy busy with an unceasing fire. With the other six battalions Fleischhacker then forced his way into the southern part of the forest, where he was opposed only by weak sections of the 27th and 64th regiments. These, however, although gradually retiring from tree

to tree and from bush to bush, poured uninterruptedly their destructive fire into the Austrian ranks, until very unexpectedly a decisive reinforcement came to their assistance.

Poeckh's brigade had, as we mentioned, advanced with nine battalions towards the eastern border of the forest, had broken through the slight chain of Prussian posts, and forced the small companies to disperse quickly to the north and south, while Colonel Poeckh led his own columns directly up to the summit of the dome and then allowed them to wander farther, even to the westernmost edge of the forest. Those Prussian companies that had retired to the south soon came upon Fleischhacker's troops and with quick presence of mind welcomed these out of the dense thickets with such murderous salvos, that their advance came utterly to a stand-still and was very soon converted into a hasty retreat.

Colonel Poeckh, without any suspicion of the defeat of his comrade, was meanwhile rejoicing in the belief that the forest, so hard fought for, had at last been won. But now a far more distressing disaster overtook him. Fransecky, who conducted the fight in the northern part of the forest, so far as any guidance of it was possible there, had still four battalions at Benatek as yet unscathed, which he now brought into the woods, and received also to their support two battalions of the 8th Division. While these latter now were entering the western border of the forest, and kept Poeckh's troops busy in front, Fransecky

threw those four battalions upon the northern flank and the rear of the enemy. The effect of their fire was fearful. Colonel Poeckh and all of the officers of his Staff but two fell, and with them the half of the rank and file. The remainder fought their way through with difficulty and gained the open fields again at Maslowied.

This settled matters for the 4th Austrian corps. But again the deadly fire from 120 guns was renewed upon the forest, and General von Mollinary now urgently besought Count Thun by a vigorous attack of the 2d corps to give to its exhausted defenders the *coup de grâce*. For this Count Thun was ready, as little mindful as his colleague of Benedek's commands. It was now eleven o'clock and past. One brigade, that of Henriquez, had been left at the Trotina. Four battalions of Thorn's brigade stood in the vicinity of Raschitz and Horscheniowes. The three others, together with the fourteen battalions of General von Saffran and the Duke of Würtemberg, were sent forward at half-past eleven to take possession of the forest, although repeated orders to the contrary had arrived from Benedek, and furthermore the news had come, that strong bodies of hostile columns were approaching from the north. General von Mollinary showed only so much the more ardent zeal to execute his great strategic plan.

The irruption of the enemy into the eastern border of the forest was again at first successful, as indeed it could not be otherwise in view of the superior

numbers of the assailants. Again the centre of the Prussian position in the east was broken through, and again the greatest portion of the woods was captured. But the rocky bastion at the northern extremity of the forest could not be taken by the enemy. Fransecky, whose horse had been shot under him twice, and who barely escaped the danger of being taken prisoner by some Austrian *jäger*, held out at this point with the remnants of all his companies. He was a man of slender figure and not tall, of fine and determined features, of unusual talents and education, and possessed, one might almost say, with a fanatical regard for honor and duty. His soldiers, too, were such as their leader. These Altmarkers and Magdeburgers were no giants like the Pomeranians and Westphalians; but their tractableness, versatility, and ready good-will raised them on this day to the highest rank of martial heroism. They had been since two o'clock in the morning on the march, since eight o'clock they had been in battle, fourteen battalions against an enemy that gradually came to number forty-three, and during every pause they were decimated by the fearful cannonade.

Fransecky, rightly presuming that Frederick Charles could not support him, had at the firing of the first shots sent an officer to the van of the Guards imploring aid. The first reply was that no command had yet been received to break camp. In response, however, to a second appeal there came at about eleven o'clock the news that the Guards were advancing in the

direction of the thundering cannon. The cry: "The Crown Prince is coming!" flew through all the ranks, bringing encouragement and new strength. Yet more than a whole weary hour passed before its realization; and the enemy strained every nerve of their more numerous force to drive out the little band from the last corner of the woods so soaked in blood. Then Fransecky shouted to his men: "Comrades, here we must stand or die." A clear and distinct cry of the musketeers responded: "Never fear, Your Excellency, we shall stand or die!" And so, indeed, it was. Salvos of fire, close combats, short sallies in quick variation repulsed the hostile attacks, though it was true that at every moment the hope of a successful issue grew less and less. Then, finally, towards half-past twelve the sallies of the enemy became weaker and less frequent. The firing began to cease; a backward motion among the enemy's battalions was noticeable. Now the cry resounded: "The Crown Prince is coming! The Crown Prince is here!" Summoning their last powers, the brave fellows pushed on to the pursuit. They reached the east border of the forest, and were eager to rush forward and storm Maslowied, when the helmets of the Guards were already seen glittering from the village. Rescue and victory were assured.

But the courageous heroes did not yet know what gain their sacrifice (2,000 men out of 14,000) had brought to the battle and the campaign. It was the smallest part of their glory that they had stood their ground against a force three times as numerous as

their own, and had taken from the enemy 2,000 prisoners and several banners. The chief thing was that they had drawn to themselves the attention of the two Austrian corps, which according to Benedek's orders should have served as a defence against the Crown Prince, had made them almost unfit for further fighting, and had thus opened for the Crown Prince the way to the enemy's heart.

The Austrian Staff says in its report:<sup>1</sup> "Of the fifty-nine battalions, which on the day of the engagement formed the right wing of the army, forty-nine stood together about Maslowied and Horscheniowes; of these there were only thirteen battalions intact, and eight more, although weakened, were reassembled and made serviceable; the remainder, consisting of thirty-eight battalions, were partly still engaged in fighting and partly so weakened by battles already fought that for the time they could hardly be counted upon; forty-nine battalions had their front toward the west, and there remained altogether only nine battalions (the troops that Count Thun had left behind in the morning as a garrison at Trotina) to watch and defend the space of three and a half miles from Horscheniowes to Trotina, the entrance from the north upon the rear of the army." Thus, indeed, the greatest room was left for the approach of the Crown Prince.

The next question that forces itself upon our attention is whether Benedek, who must certainly have been aware of the disobedience of his corps-commanders, had done nothing at all to offset it.

<sup>1</sup> Oesterreichs Kämpfe, III. pp. 303, 304.

The answer to it is simple. Benedek came to the heights at Lipa at about half-past eight, and then rode over to Langenhof, while soon afterwards Colonel Pidoll, Chief of the Engineers, brought the announcement of the disobedient conduct of the 2d and 4th corps in breathless haste to Lipa. So it was nearly ten o'clock before Benedek learned the news. He at once sent an order over to Maslowied to put a stop to the movement that had been begun, and to go back to the hills of Nedielischt. Poeckh and Fleischhacker were already fighting in the woods when the order came into Mollinary's hands, and the latter declared that it was absolutely impossible to break off hurriedly the battle, which was in every way successful, and from which he promised himself the greatest results.

Benedek for a moment thought of bringing forward the 6th corps from the reserves and of stationing it near Nedielischt; but he immediately gave this up, probably considering that it would soon be possible to execute his great attack upon Frederick Charles, and that a victory over Fransecky would give Mollinary and Thun still more self-confidence and make them so much the more powerful opponents of the Crown Prince. But now, as we have seen, the unheard-of occurred. After the 4th corps came out of from the woods totally defeated and ruined, Mollinary not only still would not carry out the orders of his Commander-in-chief, but even caused Count Thun to involve the 2d corps also in the same disaster.

Benedek at the same time received a telegram from

Josephstadt with the news of the advance of a great Prussian body, and immediately sent again an express order to the two refractory Generals to turn about and march to Nedielscht. But even now they were not inclined to yield obedience. Mollinary himself rode over to Benedek at Lipa in order to lay before him personally his fine strategic plan: an act which was all the more reprehensible, since his highly-colored hopes of success must necessarily have aroused in Benedek's mind a false idea of the splendid condition of both of the corps. However this may have been, Benedek sent his obstinate subordinate back with a sharp reproof; for the thunder from the fire of the Crown Prince was already heard from the heights in the north.

Mollinary also found, when he returned to his brigades, that Count Thun had by this time got into trouble, and the retreat of the 2d corps towards Nedielscht had already been begun. *Nolens volens* he was forced to join them. His poor troops were the first to pay for his sins; for an hour earlier they might have reached Nedielscht without hinderance, but now their northern flank had to feel more and more severely the harassing of the new enemy.

It may be questioned whether Benedek, after the commanders of his right wing had ruined his plans for the battle, took the correct steps to remedy the evil and took them quickly enough. But it is certainly incontrovertible, that the responsibility for the defeat does not in the first instance rest upon him,



but upon those Generals, who, stationed in a critical place, frustrated by their conceit the designs of their Commander-in-chief. But however that may be, the retribution now fell most crushingly and overwhelmingly upon both him and them.

The Prussian Crown Prince had received at five o'clock in the morning in Königinhof the royal orders to advance with his whole army. His troops stood scattered to the right and left of this town over a line of almost fourteen miles. With the exception of the 1st corps, the vanguard of the 5th, and the Guards, who had crossed the Elbe the day before, all the others were obliged first to pass the river. With the greatest haste it was not possible for them to begin to march ahead before eight o'clock. Then they were distant from the battle-field fully nine miles, the 1st corps eleven and a half, and Hartmann's cavalry Division nearly fourteen miles: it would be noon before they could take any very active part.

From the previous position of the sections of the army, it was most natural that an advance should be made in three columns: upon the left, next to the Elbe, the 6th army-corps under General von Mutius; in the middle the Guards, behind whom the 5th corps followed; and upon the right, in the vicinity of the Bistritz, the 1st corps, with the cavalry Division in the rear. The dispositions of the Crown Prince for the march were very simple: when a whole hour's march distant from the Austrian lines, three villages were designated as the next destination of the three col-

umns, so near together that the middle column would be separated from the other two by only 3,000 paces; and then the command was for each to advance rapidly upon the enemy wherever they might be found the nearest. We have seen that the van of the Guards, under General Alvensleben, had already broken camp before the receipt of these orders, but quite consistently with them; while, on the other hand, General von Bonin, although expressly authorized by Moltke to proceed in accordance with his own judgment, waited for the proper order from the Crown Prince, and consequently did not get into motion before ten o'clock.

The enthusiasm of the troops was everywhere magnificent. In spite of the pouring rain and the muddy ground, the soldiers pushed forward so energetically that they far exceeded all the anticipations of their commanders. Though many a one sank fainting and exhausted, though many a horse fell dead in the harness before the guns, the only thought was *Onwards! Onwards!* which inspired all the ranks to press ahead the faster as they heard the thunder from the battle roll nearer and nearer.

The farthest ahead was on the left, the 12th Division of the 6th corps under Prondzinsky, and in the middle the advance-guard and 1st Division of the Guards. When half the march had been accomplished, the latter had before them, directly across their path, the broad mount of Horscheniowes with its steep northern slope, and to right of them the view into the lower Bistritz valley, where they might see how large was the extent

covered by the battle that was raging. Upon the summit of the mount they saw under the group of lindens an Austrian battery, which soon poured its fire out upon the Guards. The question was whether further hostile forces would be encountered at this spot. *Forwards!* was again the cry. The Division descended into the valley that lay before it, and then rushed in haste up the precipitous incline. In the village of Horscheniowes two hostile battalions were found and driven out; whereupon the battery upon the summit, having thus lost its defence, withdrew hastily from the crest, which soon was in the possession of the Prussians.

Alvensleben, meanwhile, had been leading the advance-guard somewhat farther to the right to the immediate assistance of Fransecky. We know, however, that this was no longer necessary: their foes, recalled to Nedielsicht, were seen below in the valley marching in long columns to the east, and were saluted by a heavy fire from the guns, which did much damage, as did also several sallies by the infantry. The Austrians then stationed themselves in accordance with Benedek's orders upon the hills (which gradually grow less in height from Chlum to the Elbe) protected by 64 guns that Benedek had sent forward from the great reserve as a guard against the approach of the Crown Prince.

The Guards had during this time taken possession of the village and the ridge of Maslowied. Word came that within half an hour their 2d Division, and half an hour later the 1st and 5th corps, would be at hand.

At the same time General von Mutius announced that besides the 12th, the 11th Division had already opened fire. So that, if there had been hitherto any doubts, they seemed now to have vanished in the full assurance of victory. Accordingly, the cry again was *Forwards!* and without delay General Hiller von Gärtlingen led his Division on to storm the point that controlled the whole battle-field, the heights of Chlum.

Viewed from a distance, this undertaking might seem rash, or, if perhaps better, mad. The heights were occupied by the brigade of Appiano with six battalions and a strong battery. In close proximity to them on the west, in the forest in front of Lipa, stood the unimpaired brigade of Benedek, and to the east, the whole 4th corps with its powerful batteries; while besides these was the stupendous row of the guns of the army-reserve, which swept the whole valley before them with their fearful fire, and apparently must prevent the approach of any enemy.

But in the meantime Prussian cannon-balls, too, were falling with such good effect into the village of Chlum, that General Appiano, convinced from the considerations above that an attack would be simply impossible, and therefore leaving only one battalion as a watch upon the heights, withdrew the remainder of his troops, not wishing to expose them longer to the enemy's fire, and stationed them farther below in a place of safety behind the mountain.

Now, the road from Maslowied to Nedielischt forms a deep, hollow pass. Many other such narrow gullies

and ravines also run along the slope up to the top. Moreover, the atmosphere, so full of moisture and of rain, retained the thick clouds of smoke from the artillery quite close to the surface of the ground. Suffice it to say, the Prussian battalions succeeded in getting into those narrow defiles along the brow of the mountain without being observed, and in climbing half-way up the height, where they suddenly fell upon the nearest batteries and brigades of the 4th corps.

Then it was evident how thoroughly these troops had been demoralized and decimated by their encounters in the Swiepwald. Almost without offering to make any resistance, they beat a hasty retreat towards the south, abandoned most of their guns, and left the way that led to the critical position of the day open to the enemy. With an eager rush the Guards mounted in a few minutes the last height. Chlum was attacked from all sides, and the Austrian battalion destroyed or taken prisoners. Without stopping then, the advantage so unexpectedly acquired was followed up. A part of the Division threw itself upon the village of Rosberitz, situated at the southern foot of the mountain, and here overcame the bulk of Appiano's brigade, as well as put two cavalry regiments of the enemy into a confused and hasty flight by a murderous cross-fire. Another portion of the Division repulsed the enemy in two attempts to recapture Chlum, made by Benedek's brigade breaking forth from the forest of Lipa; and when, soon afterwards, the van of the 2d Division of the Guards came up, the forest itself and then the

village of Lipa was snatched from the enemy, Archduke Ernest was compelled to retire, and a great share of the batteries that had been pouring their fire so fearfully upon the First Army were seized in the rear and captured.

No less noteworthy was the progress which the 6th army-corps had been making meanwhile. The 12th Division, then only six battalions strong, marching along close by the Elbe, drove the brigade of Henriquez southwards over the Trotina to Lochenitz, which place was obstinately defended by the Austrian rear-guard until the brigade had crossed the bridge over the Elbe and reached the left bank in safety. Somewhat farther to the west the 11th Division marched against Nedielscht and the remaining brigades of the enemy's 2d corps which were stationed there. As the Austrian Staff bears witness,<sup>1</sup> these were "after the battles which they had fought, little able or disposed to offer any well-ordered or effective resistance." Without awaiting the attack of the Prussian infantry, and so soon as the first cannon-balls of the 11th Division reached them, they began their retreat, under the cover of the light cavalry corps of Prince Taxis. Their leader, Count Thun, crowned his sorry day's work by making haste, without regard to the fate of the rest of the army, to cross the nearest bridge over the Elbe and bring himself and his corps into a place of safety.

Thus the right wing of the Austrians was soon after three o'clock in the afternoon completely driven asun-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. III. p. 353.

der, and the rear of the centre in this way most seriously endangered. Moreover, the left wing had during the same time suffered a similar fate, although not in quite such an inglorious manner. Soon after Canstein's Division had, as we saw above, captured the village of Ober-Prim by storm, the 14th Division under General von Münster accomplished its march over the bridge of Nechanitz; and thereupon General von Herwarth ordered the former to make an attack upon Nieder-Prim and the latter to take the commanding heights of Problus.

The Crown Prince of Saxony saw, on his part, how much his Austrian comrades had lost in discipline by reason of the misfortunes of the morning; and from Ober-Prim the enemy might perhaps obstruct his line of retreat. Therefore he decided not to continue a contest that had become hopeless, but rather only to cover his retreat by commissioning a few Saxon battalions with a strong support of artillery to make a short resistance in defence of the two threatened points. The brave troops obeyed the order with heroic courage. But the Rhinelanders and Westphalians, filled with the same brave devotion, stormed onward and were not deterred by the fire of the enemy's batteries. Almost simultaneously both villages fell into the hands of the Prussians.

Without any delay the victors pushed ahead, and after a bloody engagement with severe loss on both sides, the enemy was driven out of the woods of Bor and Brschiza, lying easterly from the summit of Pro-

blus. Two Prussian Divisions, comprising 26,000 men, had gained these successes against 39,000 Austrians and Saxons. When they reached the outermost edge of the forest they stood in the rear of the heights of Langenhof, from which General Gablenz now made haste to withdraw the 10th corps. Only about the distance of three-quarters of an hour's march was this point of the Army of the Elbe now from Rosberitz, the last conquest of the Guards. So nearly had the Prussian troops, pressing forward from the right and left, come to a complete encircling of the Imperial Army.

Benedek's situation had thus been rendered desperate. The first news of the loss of Chlum seemed to him incredible; since according to his dispositions a whole brigade ought to be up there, and the entrance from the east was surely defended by the 4th corps, of whose victories he had been assured by Mollinary. He himself started off to ride to the spot; but sharp Prussian salvos, sending his suite in dismay in all directions, soon enough convinced him of the correctness of the reports. Several attempts to recapture the heights with the nearest troops at hand proved ineffectual. The enemy extended their gains farther. Then the news came of the loss of Probus. The Master of Ordnance resorted to the last means at his disposal, to the great army-reserve — not now, however, as he had intended, for the execution of a brilliant offensive, but to save his own army from the death that threatened them. He sent forward from his 1st corps the brigade of Piret, to join with the Saxons in retaking Probus;



and to the 6th corps under General Ramming he gave the order for one brigade to seize Rosberitz from the enemy and for three others to storm Chlum in a direct attack.

These measures, begun a half-hour earlier, might have brought great danger to the Prussian cause. For in the uninterrupted advance the forces of the first Division of the Guards had become much scattered, part of them going to Rosberitz, and the vanguard to Lipa and Langenhof; so that in Chlum itself only a weak garrison and few batteries had remained. Reinforcements were approaching from all sides, but were everywhere still a couple of miles or so distant, or else, as a part of the 2d Division, engaged in an encounter with a brigade of the 4th Austrian corps that had remained behind at Tschistowes through a misunderstanding, and which soon, surrounded on all sides, escaped only after suffering fearful losses.

In vain the brave General Hiller von Gärtringen looked about for support, as he saw the threatening masses approaching from the south. For the time he could only rely upon the irrepressible courage of his own troops. It was not until shortly after the beginning of the hostile attack that the artillery-reserve of the Guards appeared and began to hurl their shells, making terrible havoc in the close battalions of Ramming, while they themselves were hard pressed by the fire from the fifteen batteries of the enemy.

General von Ramming had been awaiting with painful impatience the order to make the assault, since the

feelings of his troops under the impressions of recent occurrences were becoming more unmanageable with every moment's inactive delay. The march upward was made with great alertness; but the lack of internal union in the Austrian army showed itself at once. Not three brigades, as Benedek had ordered, but only one under General Rosenzweig turned to the immediate storming of Chlum. The two others, probably fired upon in the flank from Rosberitz, threw themselves with the fourth upon that village, which then after a stubborn resistance yielded to such superiority of numbers.

Rosenzweig, however, marched up the heights, suffered severe losses, but succeeded in reaching the church of Chlum. Hiller already believed that he must order the retreat to be sounded, when at the last minute relief appeared. Major von Sommerfeld of the 1st corps galloped up to the General and announced that Bonin's advance-guard had arrived in Chlum. "Now," cried the General with a burst of joyous satisfaction, "everything will be all right!" Hardly had he spoken when a piece of a bombshell struck him in the breast. And thus he died, with certain victory before his eyes, the most glorious death of a hero, after having served his country by his brave advance upon Chlum even more than did his equally heroic father at Waterloo in the storming of Planchenoit.

Four, and soon six, battalions of East Prussians now threw themselves upon Rosenzweig's front, while troops of the Guards hastening from Lipa fired upon

the Austrians upon one side, and on the other the Division of Zastrow occupied the hills behind Nedelitsch, and from there poured their fire upon the enemy. Rosenzweig was obliged to retire with the total destruction of his brigade.

In vain did Ramming now withdraw from the smoking ruins of Rosberitz what was left and serviceable of his three other brigades, in order to renew the attempt upon Chlum. The result was the same: hasty advance with already waning confidence, then hostile fire from all sides, and soon an irrepressible flight and utter loss of all disciplinary control. A confused mass of humanity, which had once been the 6th corps, fled back to Königgrätz, to rescue their poor lives from the embrace of the death that pursued them on all sides.

At this moment, the leader of the 1st Austrian corps, Count Gondrecourt, believed that he ought to risk one last attempt. After having sent off Piret's brigade, he still had four others, which had, to be sure, been badly damaged at Gitschin, but which were voluntarily joined by another, that of Knebel of the 10th corps, as it was retreating from Langenhof, — altogether a throng of 20,000 men. With incredible blindness, he had them advance in masses of battalions and half-battalions, in whose close ranks no hostile bullet missed its mark. Meanwhile, the artillery of the 1st Prussian corps together with the batteries of the Guards had come upon the heights. Sections of the 2d Division of the Guards arriving from Lipa appeared on the left, and a brigade of the 6th corps on

the right, flank of the Austrians, so that the latter were overwhelmed by such a hail-storm of bullets, that after a battle of twenty minutes, everybody fled in the wildest confusion. Immediately upon this the East Prussians again captured Rosberitz. Count Gondrecourt had in this fateful quarter of an hour, from a force of 20,000 men, lost 279 officers, 10,000 privates, and 23 guns.

Nor, lastly, was the attack of Piret's brigade upon Problus more fortunate, though it was supported by a strong body of Saxons and the weak assistance of the 8th Austrian corps. The village was reached in the first onset, but at once lost again to the throngs of Rhinelanders and Westphalians who poured in from all sides in columns and in squads. At the same moment the 16th Division under Etzel came across the bridge of Nechanitz and was sent by General Herwarth in the direction of Pardubitz, in order to blockade here the last way of escape for the enemy.

The issue upon all sides was decided: the greatest battle of the century<sup>1</sup> was won for Prussia. Immediately after the Guards had conquered the heights of Lipa and Langenhof, King William ordered the general advance of the First Army also, and particularly the pursuit of the retreating enemy by the cavalry, which had hitherto been inactive. But the strong reserve Divisions of the Austrian cavalry threw themselves in the way of these between Langenhof and Stresetitz. The result was a cavalry battle of such

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jähn's *Die Schlacht von Königgrätz*, p. 484.

enormous magnitude as modern history has rarely known.

This engagement is one of the few events concerning which the reports upon the two sides contradict each other sharply. Each party acknowledges the bravery of the other, but asserts the superiority of its own cavalry men in the separate encounters. It is the more difficult to arrive at a positive judgment on the matter, because it was no regularly arranged battle, but each regiment and often separate squadrons rushed upon whatever enemy they caught sight of; the combatants became mixed up with each other, and fresh companies coming up increased the confusion of the host that surged back and forth.

The fact remains that finally the Austrian cavalry after heavy losses fled in wild disorder, caught up with the infantry hitherto protected by them, and in several places trampled down the foot-soldiers in the indiscriminate flight or scattered them asunder, thus aggravating seriously the general panic. Austrian reports explain this by the observation that it was not the Prussian cavalry that wrought this evil, but the destructive fire that the hostile infantry and artillery, advancing from all sides, poured in upon the imperial squadrons—which naturally is not contradicted by the Prussians.

A further fact is, that the Prussian cavalry did not follow up the pursuit after the flight of the Austrians. This was, however, by no means because they had previously been worsted, but because it was necessary before going any farther to collect and arrange the companies

that had been so widely dispersed; and before this could be accomplished the general order had been given by the King to cease from all further pursuit.

The last resistance was offered with death-defying heroism by the Austrian artillery, which indeed covered itself with glory on this day, making willingly the greatest sacrifices and suffering the severest losses, in order to cover as long as possible the retreat of their flying comrades. Yet even their valor could not much longer hold out against the progress of the enemy advancing from three sides.

Towards six o'clock in the evening the sections of the Silesian Army and the Army of the Elbe met upon the highway running across the battle-field, not far from Königrätz. Soon afterwards there came up also scattering companies of soldiers from the troops of Frederick Charles. King William rode about the extensive scene of the struggle, and was everywhere welcomed by his troops with enthusiastic cheers. Once he came within the range of one of the enemy's batteries, whence, as he wrote to the Queen, he was anxiously removed by Bismarck.

The sight of the battle-field announced distinctly the defeat of the enemy: the sad mass of dead and wounded, the endless processions of prisoners, the heaps of arms and equipments cast away—everything presented the picture of a precipitous, frightened flight. "Your Majesty," said Moltke to the King, "has won not only the battle, but the campaign." Upon this Bismarck remarked: "The question at issue is then

decided. . Now we must try to establish again the old friendship with Austria."

What was the next thing to be done appeared still very doubtful to a large number of the influential generals. The great extent of the battle-field made a complete and rapid survey of the same impossible. During the long and painful suspense of the forenoon the opinion had become fixed that the Silesian Army in spite of all its efforts had nevertheless come too late; to be sure, certain sections of the Austrian army had suffered severely, but it was felt that the appearance of the Second Army had in general had only the effect of inducing Benedek to break off the battle and lead his troops back over the Elbe; and under such supposed conditions it might very well appear rash to allow single companies to follow him over the river. Accordingly, at half-past six the orders were given that the next day should be one of repose, and only General Herwarth should continue the pursuit towards Pardubitz. This implied, of course, the prohibition of any further disturbance of the enemy that evening. This was the salvation of many thousands of the vanquished army, who sought in endless confusion and distress to get across the Elbe either at Königgrätz or even down so far as Pardubitz, and who, some of them, did not succeed in passing the sheltering river before the middle of the night.

The chance that there was of making the most of the Prussian victory by a hasty pursuit, after the fashion of Waterloo, and perhaps of completing it by the utter

overthrow of the Army of the North, can now no longer be denied; for a considerable portion of the Prussian troops had on that day fired no shot, done no stroke of work, and suffered no loss: the whole of the 5th corps, sixteen battalions of the 1st, Hartmann's cavalry Division, most of the battalions of Etzel's Division,<sup>1</sup> about one-half of the 3d army-corps, and ten battalions of the 2d Division of the Guards, — in all about 70,000 men. Almost all of these sections of the Prussian forces stood well-arranged and in good order, ready for further action. These had been in motion, it is true, for twelve, some of them for fifteen, hours; but the great majority of them had only made a march of nine miles. They would have been able to begin the pursuit either immediately (Steinmetz had already formed an advance-guard for the purpose), or at any rate in the early morning of the 4th of July; and on that day they would have found five corps of the enemy and one-half of the cavalry in complete confusion and all of the remaining forces severely damaged and demoralized. According to Austrian testimony, there would have been no longer any hope for the Army of the North.

Nevertheless, however that may be, the results that were attained were incomparable. After subtracting the troops enumerated above, it remains that five Prussian army-corps defeated in an almost annihilating manner eight Austrian. The road to Vienna lay open and defenceless to the victors. Benedek is said to

<sup>1</sup> This Division reported in the evening 150 killed and wounded.



have cried out: "I have lost everything, except, alas! my life." The losses of his army were, indeed, extraordinarily great: 5,600 killed, 7,600 wounded, 9,300 wounded prisoners, 12,800 prisoners not wounded, 6,100 missing, altogether 41,400 men. If we add to this the Saxon loss of 1,500, we have a fearful total of 43,000 men. In the matter of equipments, there were lost above 6,000 horses, 18 cannon, and 641 transports and vehicles of various kinds. The former engagements had, as we remember, cost the Austrians and Saxons 32,000 men; so that, within one single week of war, more than one-quarter of the proud Army of the North that had been so confidently put into the field, had been destroyed.

Prussia had also paid dearly for the victory of Königgrätz. The First army sustained a loss of 1,065 killed and somewhat over 4,000 wounded (of whom more than one-half belonged to the division of Fransecky), the Army of the Elbe 328 killed and 1,200 wounded, the Second Army 500 killed and 1,550 wounded (1,000 of whom were from the 1st Division of the Guards): making a total of something over 9,000 men.

As the King late in the evening at Sadowa passed by the wounded lying in the hospital of the Knights of St. John, he exclaimed with deep emotion: "This is the reverse side of fortune! Yet they do not bleed in vain, but for the glory of the Fatherland."

On the following morning the great news flew through all Europe. The impression produced was

everywhere tremendous: this unexampled triumph of an army, the greatest share of whom had not been under fire for fifty years, — an army (as the various parties had a hundred times declared) composed of soldiers fit only for parades, of militia, of unbearded boys! In Prussia a refreshing feeling of satisfaction filled the hearts of by far the great majority of the people. The quarrel of years, which had grown up precisely in consequence of the creation of this army, was extinguished by its own remarkable exploits. However it may have arisen, it had now shown itself to be a sure defence and a glorious ornament to the Fatherland. The zealous Progressists in the east were sorely puzzled over the future of their constitutional strife, and the Ultramontanes of the "Entire Germany" party on the Rhine were filled with resentment at the defeat of the Catholic Emperor; but neither the one party nor the other was able to disturb or turn aside the general tide of joyous enthusiasm. The South German population, as may be supposed, did not exactly exult at the triumph of the state against whom they had gone to war; but the hostility of their sentiments was softened for the simple reason that it was impossible to refuse any longer to acknowledge their respect for the opponent that had been hitherto so hateful to them.

Whereas in Prussia the victory had raised the people to a pitch of enthusiasm that turned the current toward political unity, in Austria there broke forth now in a hundred places and over all barriers the pent-up anger against the mismanagement of the Ministry of Bel-

credi. In Vienna the people would not listen to any adverse criticism of Benedek. They regarded him as rather, like themselves, the unfortunate victim of a wretched system of government; and with almost pessimistic joy were the consequences of the defeat for this system dwelt upon. Encouraging manifestos from the Emperor produced but little effect; and more than all, a call to the Hungarians to rise, as once under Maria Theresa, and ward off the foreign oppressor by means of a great insurrection, did not succeed in bringing a single district under arms.

Simply crushing and overwhelming, after all those promising hopes of June, was the effect of the news of the defeat of Königgrätz upon the Vatican. "The world is falling to pieces!" Cardinal Antonelli is said to have exclaimed — that same Antonelli who shortly before, in answer to the question of an English statesman as to how his Government might quiet the Irish Catholics, had replied: "That is very simple! By the introduction of Prussian ecclesiastical law." But of what use in the Vatican to the Prussian Government was the ecclesiastical liberty so freely and bountifully granted to the Hierarchy, now that Prussian arms had ruined the prospects for the destruction of Italy and the restoration of the Papal States? Henceforth Prussia stood in the eyes of the Vatican for the incorporation of the unpardonable sin, in the same category and under the same condemnation as her ally the Robber Prince of Subalpine Italy.

But through the rest of Italy there went a universal

shout of joy, almost louder in its echo than that which arose in Prussia itself. Naturally, after their own humiliation at Custozza, the Italians could not be wholly free from a secret feeling of envy; but with truth it can be said that this feeling did not among the people nor in the army diminish in the least the sentiments of joy, of thankfulness, and of admiration. To such an ally they felt themselves laid under endless obligations.

This was to be noticed in the first place in its effect upon the Emperor Napoleon and the subtle policy of France.

BOOK XIX.

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*NEGOTIATIONS AND BATTLES.*



## CHAPTER I.

### FRENCH MEDIATION.

IN Paris the excitement which Königgrätz called forth was boundless. In the first place, the pride of the army reared its head, conscious of the affront received. By the side of such a victory as this, Magenta, Solferino, and all the military exploits of France since 1815 withdrew into the shade. This seemed to be a personal insult offered by the hand of Prussia; and from that very day the cry of revenge for Sadowa went through the ranks of the officer-corps of France. Nor was the feeling among the population much different. We know how little love was felt for Prussia among the French people, and how the Clericals condemned the ally of Italy, the financiers and manufacturers hated the disturber of European peace, and the Radical parties censured the internal policy of Bismarck: but now all this ill-will was swallowed up in the one disagreeable consciousness that suddenly, right on the borders of France, a Power had arisen, equal to France if not superior, and more than all, upon that very German ground which had been for two centuries the always open and convenient arena for France to establish and confirm her European hegemony. And if Germany should now become united and strong, then

this hegemony, which had only recently, since the Crimean War, been fairly enjoyed, would be assailed at its very roots. France must put up with living as one among equals — an insupportable thought!

With what suspense the Emperor Napoleon followed the events in Bohemia needs no description. The secret alliance with Austria, into which he had been forced by Drouyn de Lhuys and Gramont, at the time when he was so irritated over Prussia's reserve and Italy's stubbornness, had been concluded, as we know, upon the ground of the undoubted military superiority of the Austrians. Accordingly, the first victories of the Crown Prince had already filled Napoleon with misgivings. He began to feel unsafe. Yet after that despatch from Vienna on the 1st of July, he awaited the speedy arrival of the news of a great and decisive battle which would, he hoped, give matters a more favorable turn.

When Count Goltz explained to him, in an audience on the 3d of July, how manifestly events were proving the correctness of Prussia's political programme and the unfitness of Austria to be the leader of Germany, and when the ambassador expressed his hope that Austria would soon yield: then the Emperor declared to him with serious earnestness his urgent wish that the existence of Austria might not be threatened; for that, he said, would result in a break in the system of European states, which could not be repaired without exciting a general conflagration; Russia would oppose such a result, and France would scarcely be able to remain



passive. He therefore trusted in Prussia's moderation, and that she would content herself with the confirmation of her own proper rank as a Power—and, he added, Prussia's great successes would not have been possible without my neutrality. Goltz did not undertake to deny this.

On the following day came the news of Benedek's complete defeat at Königgrätz. Late in the evening Prince Metternich called upon the Emperor with the announcement that Austria formally made the promised cession of Venetia, desired France to mediate with Italy, and had given to the Prince himself unlimited authority to negotiate in the matter. This corresponded exactly with the wording of the Treaty of Vienna; but how radically had the sense of the same been converted into its opposite! The idea had been that Austria would make up to herself for Venetia by gaining Silesia; and then Napoleon should magnanimously offer his protection to conquered Prussia in a moderate calculation of the costs. And on this basis it had hitherto been possible for the Emperor, in spite of the Vienna agreement, to assure King William of his favorable neutrality.

But what Austria now desired put an end most effectually to this neutral position. In return for the cession of Venetia she wished the Emperor to enforce upon Italy an immediate cessation of warfare, so that the Austrian Army of the South might be employed against Prussia: this meant for Napoleon open, active participation in the war as an ally of Austria.

We may well believe that at this crisis contradictory feelings filled the breast of the Emperor. In a moment of temporary irritation he had taken sides with Austria, in the belief that by so doing he could manage affairs to his own liking, without, himself, engaging in the war; but now he saw himself in this very policy forced to the brink of the danger of being involved himself in a great war: and to what purpose? In order to assist in tearing down with his own hands the work of his life, the freedom of Italy, and in order to gain a scrap of Rhenish territory, the acquisition of which was a matter of indifference to himself and had been advocated by him only under the pressure of a hated Public Opinion. But that Public Opinion held him firmly in its grasp. Since Sadowa its jealousy of Prussia had been doubly aroused: the simple refusal to accept Austria's offer would have been impossible for the Emperor.

So he struck upon a middle course, by which, although essentially acting in keeping with the Treaty of Vienna, he could at least for a while preserve the appearance of neutrality, and at the same time grant to the self-consciousness of the French people a temporary gratification. He determined to base his action upon the cession of Venetia and then to offer his services as mediator, not only to the Italian, but also to the Prussian, Government, and thus step forth into the high office of acknowledged umpire in the affairs of Europe.

This was not exactly what Austria had desired; but

the powers in Vienna were no longer in a position to have any will of their own in opposition to one in Paris. Metternich, and soon afterwards Mensdorff also, gave their assent. Thereupon, on the morning of July 5th, the *Moniteur* published a note said to have been drawn up by Napoleon himself, which announced to the astonished world the important information that Austria, consenting to the plan proposed by Napoleon in his letter of June 11th, had ceded Venetia to the Emperor of the French and had requested him to mediate between the Powers at war; that the Emperor had consented to do so, and had taken the necessary steps towards bringing about an armistice, by conferring with the Kings of Prussia and Italy.

The effect of this article in Paris was precisely that desired by the Emperor: a mighty flush of patriotic pride, a general flying of flags by day, and a brilliant illumination of the city in the evening. The Parisians did not know much about the secret plans of June 12th, which Königgrätz had overthrown. They only knew that their Emperor had been called upon to still the raging waves, and that he had risen to regulate the destinies of Europe consistently with the welfare of France. They thought that it had once more come to pass before their eyes that the arrangement of Europe depended upon the decision of France. "If France is contented, Europe is at peace!"

All that seemed to be extremely delightful and exalting. Nevertheless, the high and mighty bearer of this proud dignity was obliged at the very first step to see

that he had taken upon himself an office in many ways most trying. On the evening of July 4th, he had appointed a meeting for further consultation, to be held the next day at St. Cloud, to which he summoned his Minister of State, Rouher, and his Minister of Foreign Affairs, and at which the Empress Eugénie was also present. Telegrams had already been sent during the night to the two Kings concerning mediation and an armistice. The despatch to Victor Emmanuel referred, as did the note in the *Moniteur*, to the imperial letter of June 11th; but in the message to King William this citation was omitted for certain considerations of politeness. But since the note in the *Moniteur* had mentioned it, the tendency of Napoleon's project of mediation was of course already understood in Prussian Headquarters.

In the deliberations at St. Cloud, Drouyn de Lhuys was decidedly of the opinion, that, in spite of Königgrätz, the plan adopted in June must be retained and carried through. He had no doubt but that Prussia would object to this and resist it; but he proposed the more resolutely, not only to offer French mediation, but to impose it. Accordingly, he moved the convocation of the Chambers, the loan of a thousand millions, the establishment of an army of 100,000 men upon the eastern frontier, and the issue of a notice to King William that France would be obliged to occupy the left bank of the Rhine, if Prussia were immoderate in her demands or made annexations that disturbed the European balance of power. He demonstrated, more-

over, that all this would be running no risk at all, since Prussia was now so entirely occupied with Austria, that she would have no troops at her disposal with which to defend her territory along the Rhine, and would make haste to agree to the conditions exacted by France.

The Empress Eugénie coincided with the Minister in his views. Rouher remained silent. Napoleon expressed his approval. Then the door was suddenly opened, and the Minister of the Interior, Marquis Lavalette, the old opponent of Drouyn, although not invited, walked into the hall. Napoleon, who especially valued him on account of his personal amiability, welcomed him and informed him of the subject of their deliberations.

“Why!” cried Lavalette, “that is openly inconsistent with the position of a mediator, which the Emperor has but just now assumed! A mediator cannot command, nor can he threaten; he must balance and equalize the claims and appease the passions. Now, the alliance of Italy with Prussia was effected under the management of the Emperor: can he, then, to-day require Victor Emmanuel to violate his pledge of honor and to break that treaty, which the Emperor himself urged him to conclude? Suppose the King should expose such advice to the knowledge of Europe!”

Drouyn de Lhuys, certain of his case, did not answer a word. Nor did Napoleon make any definite reply to Lavalette's remarks, but withdrew with Drouyn and

the Empress into an adjoining room. After considerable time they reappeared, and Napoleon said to the Marquis that after a thorough investigation of the matter he still believed that it was his duty to abide by the propositions of Drouyn. Lavalette made answer by requesting permission to present to the Emperor a protest; and thereupon put the question as sharply and concisely as possible: "Has Your Majesty the means at hand to enable you to carry out a policy which must unavoidably give rise to a ruinous war with Prussia and Italy?" He then explained that the French army was not properly equipped for such a war as that, that everything was wanting, even the most indispensable requirements, and that the soldiers, in spite of all their bravery, had received a great impression of the destructive effectiveness of the Prussian needle-guns. After a few painful attempts to evade the point, Napoleon confessed that the army was not at the present time ready for a great war. Then Lavalette immediately forced upon Drouyn de Lhuys the question, how he could ever answer for having advised such a dangerous policy, without being certain of the means to carry it out. As Drouyn persisted in his silence, the Emperor, without any definite expression, closed the conference.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is Lavalette's account of the proceedings, repeated by Rothan, *Affaire du Luxembourg*, p. 43. It appears to me more plausible than the representation in Manpas' memoirs, according to which it was Rouher that used these arguments against Drouyn de Lhuys. None of the other versions with which I am acquainted is founded on the report of any one of the persons present. Hansen did not, as Rothan believes, receive his different account from Chaudordy, but from some friend not named. The Duke de Broglie's version, founded upon this latter one, was publicly denied by Prince Napoleon.

Lavalette had not yet fully won; but his reference of Napoleon's former ambitions and the danger of a great war as the result of Drouyn's policy was not without its fruit. The Emperor was not yet ready to cast aside Drouyn's propositions; but he fixed upon the determination not far from that, of deferring their execution until after receiving the answers of the two Kings to his offer of mediation. If these were favorable, then nobody need get excited; and in the opposite case, there seemed to be still time for vigorous action. The order to publish in the *Moniteur* the summons to the opening of the Chambers was accordingly withdrawn, and no measures were taken for the present towards the mobilization of a part of the army. The very first move in the direction chosen revealed serious difficulties on every side of the path; and it was not long before the troubles and vexations accumulated to a threatening degree.

The first consequence of having seized upon the proud office of umpire was the complete isolation of France in Europe. ✓

In St. Petersburg the Emperor Alexander had thoroughly regretted the outbreak of the war. He was connected by marriage with the Houses of Würtemberg and Darmstadt. Bismarck's plan of German reform seemed to him to be neither in the interests of Russia nor of Conservatism; and Prince Gortschakoff, who had since the frustration of his Polish project felt a secret but hearty dislike for the Prussian Minister, asserted emphatically that the German Confederate Con-

stitution, being a part of the Act of the Vienna Congress of 1815, could not be changed without the consent of the Powers.

In England, too, the Ministers Gladstone and Clarendon, always anti-German, were of the same opinion; and Gortschakoff had therefore besought Drouyn de Lhuys, in common with Lord Clarendon, to draw up a short and distinct note stating the indissolubility of the German Confederation, and to send it in the name of the three Great Powers to the Prussian Government. It may easily be imagined how sympathetically Drouyn de Lhuys accepted such a proposition.

But it was just at this moment that the events we have been narrating occurred; and evidently the course proposed by Gortschakoff would be inconsistent with the *rôle* of a mediator which Napoleon had just assumed. The impression made by Napoleon's one-sided action was the worst in London and in St. Petersburg. Both Courts determined to observe in the future an attitude of reserve, and declined all requests of Napoleon to second his efforts to exert an influence at the Prussian Headquarters.

It happened also that a change of ministry took place just at this stage in England, and the new Tory Cabinet, if it did not intend to advocate Prussia's policy, certainly had no idea of opposing it. The public sentiment, too, in England, which had been previously on the side of Austria, was strongly influenced by the tremendous successes of Prussian arms; and the last move of the Vienna Court could but



strengthen this feeling. "Such a humiliation," said the *Times*, "as to crawl under French protection, is unexampled in the history of a great empire!"

And as here upon neutral ground, so also was the effect the same upon South Germany, hitherto hostile to Prussia. A very great share of the resentment felt there against Bismarck was due to the slander, that he had been playing a game with Napoleon at the expense of the German border-lands. Now the people saw all on a sudden the reverse spectacle of Austria cleaving to France, and Napoleon, certainly not from motives of unselfishness, trying to obstruct the course of Prussian victory. All the distrust formerly felt towards Berlin was now by a violent revulsion turned against Vienna. Peace was earnestly desired with Prussia as speedily as possible and united resistance to the interference of foreign influence.

Above all, in Berlin itself, and soon throughout all Prussia, the national consciousness was as enthusiastically aroused as the joyous pride over the heroic deeds of the army. *No weak peace! No French peace!* was the unanimous cry that echoed in millions of hearts upon reading the note of the *Moniteur*.

It was under these circumstances that King William in the Prussian Headquarters at Horschitz received Napoleon's telegraphic despatch. Usually every telegram to and from Headquarters took from forty to forty-eight hours, because the Czechish peasants kept tearing down the lines at one place or another; but on this memorable 5th of July the wires were undis-

turbed and Napoleon's despatch came within a few hours into the hands of the King.

He was no less astonished than the rest of the world. His first exclamation was: "Incredible!" But his first thought, too, was that it would not do to refuse roundly this officious offer of mediation. A few notes hastily put down by him upon paper are at hand. He asks: "What shall we demand?" The answer shows that in spite of all the victories he remained still upon the old standpoint: "Annexation of Schleswig-Holstein. German Confederate reform under Prussian leadership, that is, supremacy over all Germany." Then, as the only results of the unexampled triumphs: "Reimbursement of the expenses of the war. Abdication of the hostile sovereigns of Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Meiningen, and Nassau, in favor of their heirs-apparent. Cession perhaps of a strip of Bohemian border, and of East Friesland. Claim of inheritance to Brunswick." No thought of further conquest nor of the removal of a German princely House. At the end, simply the question: "Or, decline?"

Bismarck shared the opinion of his Sovereign, that the offer of mediation could not be refused, however hotly his anger boiled at this foreign interference, which, after so many protestations of favorable neutrality, suddenly sought to stay the victor's arm.

General Gablenz had already, the day before, desired the King to grant a truce, since the campaign was manifestly at an end and the Austrian army no longer able to offer any resistance. He received the reply

that Prussia was very willing and ready to negotiate concerning a peace upon a political basis, but that the Prussian armies could not be expected to consent to an armistice.

It was decided to reply to the French Emperor on the very same day, and to send the following answer of the King:—

“To His Imperial Highness: Led by the confidence inspired in me by the mutual good-will and the community of important interests existing between our two countries, I accept the proposition of Your Majesty, and am ready to come to an understanding concerning the means of establishing peace. Yesterday, General von Gablenz requested an armistice with a view to holding direct negotiations. By a telegram in cipher addressed to my ambassador, I shall indicate to Your Majesty the conditions under which the military situation and my obligations to the King of Italy will permit me to conclude a truce.”

At the same time Goltz received the commission to add to this by way of explanation to the Emperor, that consistently with the treaty of April 8th between Prussia and Italy a common agreement was necessary to the conclusion of a peace or of a truce; that with this understanding the King would be ready to grant an armistice, provided the same insured the care of the soldiers and the maintenance of the military results already gained; and that this had been explained the day before to General Gablenz.

This reply preserved the interests of the Prussian

State with dignified calmness. In order to appease Napoleon his offer had been simply and immediately accepted, but no further obligations had been assumed than a willingness to discuss with him the means for securing peace; and the reference to the attempt of Gablenz to open direct negotiations showed that the acceptance of the French proposal should not prevent the prosecution of the former method. The King manifested, too, a readiness to conclude a truce, and imposed only certain conditions to which no sensible man could object; but they were nevertheless such, that to fulfil them would require a certain, and perhaps not inconsiderable, amount of time, during which no promise had been made that should prevent the military successes from becoming still greater.

In order to demonstrate to Napoleon more fully the chief element of Prussia's position, namely, that she would consent to no truce, unless it be recognized by Austria as a basis for negotiations of peace, Prince Reuss, who was personally so popular in the Tuileries, was sent to Paris on the 7th of July with an autograph letter of the King, containing very indefinite observations concerning Prussia's requirements in a treaty of peace. Reuss was to say that in view of Napoleon's position as mediator, it was expected that he should make the first definite suggestions.

Napoleon could not help thankfully acknowledging the unconditional acceptance of his mediation in the King's reply. If only — what he at the time cared most about — the truce had also been as uncondition-

ally accepted by Prussia! That, however, was still far in the distance. And, unfortunately, no objection could be raised to Prussia's reference to her obligations by treaty to Italy, and her unwillingness to make any decision without the latter's assent. And just here was revealed Napoleon's most bitter disappointment. This Italy, hitherto so richly favored and in return so constantly compliant, into whose lap Napoleon at last was about to throw as a free gift the longed-for province of Venetia — this Italy now suddenly arose upon her own feet, declined the fine offers of the Emperor, and thus called in question the whole system of French politics and policy. A more astounding and a more disagreeable blow could not possibly have fallen upon Napoleon.

Though the rejoicing over Prussia's glorious victories had been long and loud in Italy, yet the national feeling rose quite as enthusiastically in all parts of the land against the note published by the *Moniteur*. This indignation was not least strong among the army, where there was the most ardent longing to wipe out the stain of Custoza: and instead of that it was now proposed that they should passively look on while Venetia, the prize of the conflict, was thrown as an alms to Italy from two great lords! And for this alms they had to thank, as all the world well knew, the sacrifice and efforts of their Prussian comrades. And now, even at this moment, Napoleon dared to call upon Italy faithlessly to break her word to this same Prussia! One united and daily increasing cry of resent-

ment sounded from Messina to Milan; and this time the Government, too, with very few exceptions, fully sympathized with the feeling of the nation.

The President of the Ministry, Ricasoli, beside himself over the inactivity of the army since the battle of Custoza, had already on the 30th of June betaken himself to Headquarters in order to secure the deposition of that hardened hesitater, La Marmora. He found there already a note from La Marmora requesting his dismissal, but at the same time also the refusal of Cialdini to take his place. So the Minister at last brought it about that the two united upon a new plan of campaign, according to which the *tête-du-pont* of Borgoforte should first be taken in order to secure the line of advance, and then Cialdini with his eight Divisions should cross the Lower Po.

The King, who did not wish to lose La Marmora, but yet was impatiently anxious to push forwards, had expressed his approval of this plan on the 3d of July. And then in the early morning of the 5th he received Napoleon's telegram: to the effect that since Austria had given up Venetia to him and called upon him to mediate, and since the Italian army had already had an opportunity to show its valor, no further bloodshed was necessary; Italy might now by an easily-arranged understanding with France attain the object of her wishes; Prussia had been informed of the matter, and likewise asked to make a truce.

The King was beside himself at this intimation and at once summoned La Marmora. At this time no one

else was informed of the circumstance; and even La Marmora, however much it would before have answered the wishes of his heart, now knew that, after the disgraceful retreat of Custozza and the excitement of national indignation which this had aroused, obedience to the French command in this form and at this time would call forth throughout all Italy a storm of passion that would be incalculable in its consequences. The King therefore replied to the Emperor that he thanked him heartily for his warm interest in favor of Italy, but that the proposal was of such weight that he must first consult with his Government concerning it; and that furthermore he was bound by obligations arising from the treaty between Italy and Prussia.

La Marmora telegraphed in the course of the forenoon to Nigra: "The imperial telegram is a more serious matter on account of its being published in the *Moniteur*. I readily comprehend that the Emperor wishes to restrain Prussia, but it is exceedingly distressing that this is to be done at the expense of Italy's honor. To receive Venice as a gift from France would be humiliating for us, and all the world would believe that we had betrayed Prussia. No government would be longer possible in Italy, and the army would lose all its reputation. You must seek to save us from these hard alternatives (this humiliation or a rupture with France)." What he wished was by no means a vigorous pursuit of the Austrian army, which was consistent with the Prussian alliance, but French permission to march quietly into Venetia behind the now

yielding Austrians, to take possession of the province in his own name in behalf of Italy, and perhaps to fulfil nominally all obligations to Prussia by storming one of the fortresses for the sake of appearances. For any thought of opposing Napoleon there was no room at all in his narrow soul.

But as in the rest of Italy, so also in Florence, the feeling was quite different.

“While the populace are raging so against Napoleon,” said the Prince of Carignano (who was administering the state business during the absence of the King) on the 6th of July to the Prussian ambassador, “the acceptance of Venetia in this fashion is impossible. But above all, Victor Emmanuel wishes to learn of Prussia’s decisions. The attack upon Borgoforte will begin to-day.” Ricasoli expressed himself also in the same strain. “The gift,” said he, “we decline, and shall prepare for new offensive movements, which will develop the more quickly, inasmuch as the Austrian troops are withdrawing towards the north. We only hope that Prussia will also remain firm against these French allurements.”

Meanwhile Paris set in action all possible means to break this stubbornness, which was termed exasperating ingratitude. Victor Emmanuel received a telegram from the Emperor, saying that Prussia was ready for a truce if Italy would accept it; and that therefore the King should consider well what responsibility he was assuming by rejecting it. This was, as we know, only half true, since Prussia had also imposed other very important conditions to the acceptance of a truce.



Still more striking were the fabrications made by the French ambassador, Baron Malaret, at the instigation of Drouyn de Lhuys. Late on the evening of July 6th, he obtained admittance to the house of Visconti-Venosta and then at Ricasoli's with the news that Prussia had accepted the French offer of mediation, and there could therefore be no more thought of hostility. Ricasoli gave him no time for further utterances, but interrupted him with the remark that neither Prussia nor Italy had the right to conclude an armistice without mutual consent; if Prussia had done otherwise, she had not well observed the stipulations of the treaty; but he should himself take no step until he had been informed of Prussia's intentions.<sup>1</sup> It is true that Malaret's behavior did cause the Minister to feel anxiety about Prussia's yielding; and on the following morning he spoke about the matter to Count Usedom in deep distress, saying that in the war the accession of Venetia had been for him only of secondary consequence, the main object being to liberate Italy from the yoke of France, which now seemed to have been trifled away for a long time to come by La Marmora's wretched management of the war.

It lay heavily upon his heart that no message at all had yet come directly from Prussian Headquarters.<sup>2</sup> But he did not allow himself to be moved. On the forenoon of the 7th the Ministerial Council discussed the reply to be sent to Napoleon. The Minister of

<sup>1</sup> Harcourt, *Les quatre ministères de M. Drouyn de Lhuys*, p. 277.

<sup>2</sup> Bismarck suspected that his telegrams to Florence were detained in Paris.

Finance, in view of the seriousness of the deficit, would not have been disinclined to yield, and the Minister of Education, a quiet Clerical, was for accepting unconditionally; but all the other members were unanimously in favor of declining. "Never," cried Visconti-Venosta, "shall I give my consent to such corruption!" Accordingly, the reply was fixed upon to the effect that the cession of Venetia must be made by Austria directly to Italy, and that as a guaranty the fortresses must be immediately given up.

Ricasoli at once wrote to the King that the acceptance of the offer would mean a revolution throughout all Italy; and Visconti-Venosta proceeded to Headquarters, in order to help the King resist La Marmora's urgent appeals to come to an understanding with France. But Victor Emmanuel had already made up his mind in the same way as his ministers, had telegraphed to Napoleon to that effect, and had issued orders to General Cialdini to lead his army over the Po without further delay. The advance began accordingly on the 8th of July, and was continued during the following days by way of Rovigo towards Padua, as if there had never been any note published in the *Moniteur* nor ever any cession of Venetia to France thought of in the world.

Such behavior then called forth in Paris wrathful condemnation. This Italy, created by France, dares at the first test to upset the political calculations of France! Only too true had Thiers' declaration proved to be, that it is folly to strengthen a neighboring

people; for, so soon as it has grown strong, it will live unto itself and its own interests and forget its former protector. The more did Drouyn de Lhuys now seek to prevent an increase in the strength of the other, the Prussian neighbor, and therefore to restrain by every means the resistance of Italy.

Forthwith, on the 8th of July, Napoleon sent a telegram to Victor Emmanuel, expressly forbidding him to allow Italian troops to enter Venetia, which was now the property of France, and categorically requiring him to accept at once the truce, to which Prussia had already consented. The King, who could not well give the lie to this imperial declaration, telegraphed back that he would accept the truce under three conditions: the cession of Venetia to Italy by Austria directly, the cession of Italian Tyrol, and the non-introduction of any other question into the negotiations—by which he meant especially the Roman question.

At this juncture there arrived in Florencè the long awaited Prussian despatch from Horschitz, dated the 6th of July, giving in a few words, for the information of her ally, Prussia's answer to Napoleon. Ricasoli drew a long breath. When Malaret again urged the acceptance of the truce on the plea that Prussia had already given her consent, the Minister begged him kindly to mention the day upon which Prussia's acceptance had taken place. To this Malaret was dumb. The hope of forcing Italy back into subjection by intimidation was shattered.

Naturally this only increased the bitterness in Paris. On the 9th of July appeared a fresh telegram from the Minister, expressing the severe displeasure of the Emperor at the three conditions, and threatening further obstinacy with a Franco-Austrian alliance and with the sending of a French fleet of war to Venice. Ricasoli, now assured of the firmness of Prussia, did not allow that to trouble him, and urged the more persistently the speedy advance of Cialdini. To be sure, La Marmora had succeeded in making it no longer possible to prevent the retreat of several Austrian corps to Vienna; and consequently it seemed to be the most pressing duty of Italy, as an ally, to hurry Cialdini onward in hasty pursuit as far as the Danube. Use-dum's "thorough-going war" had now become, although somewhat late and precisely as the result of French interference, a matter of honor for the Italian Government.

But what would be said to this in Paris?

In view of the incalculable importance of the negotiations that now begin, it will be permitted us to follow them in detail through each new phase, especially since on the part of the French a mass of half-true statements and of off-hand, for the most part invidious, fabrications have been spread abroad concerning them.

However indignant the French Government was over Italy's sudden independence, its further conduct could be determined only by the outcome of negotiations with Prussia. For the requests made of Italy had, of course, the single object of bringing more

pressure to bear upon Prussia. If an understanding was reached with the latter, then it was a matter of perfect indifference to Napoleon, whether Venetia came into Italy's hands as a gift from France or as ceded by Austria.

Accordingly, Drouyn de Lhuys had at once, on the 5th of July, asked Count Goltz concerning Prussia's conditions of peace. Goltz said to him that of course he could not give him any official information on the subject; but his personal opinion was that Napoleon's programme of June 11th (an important position for Austria in Germany and a closer union of the Lesser States among themselves) would be wholly unacceptable to Prussia. It seemed to him that as a minimum she would demand the recognition of the plan for Confederate reform proposed on the 10th of June, involving the withdrawal of Austria from the German Confederation, the establishment of a Confederate parliament by the side of the Confederate Diet, and the military supremacy of Prussia in North Germany. That, he said, would be nothing more than the legitimate sanctioning of the actual situation. But would that be any indemnification for the blood that had been shed? Would Public Opinion be satisfied? Would it be possible to restore to their thrones the sovereigns of Saxony, Hesse-Cassel, and Hanover, whose authority and dignity in the eyes of their subjects had been so seriously shaken?

Drouyn de Lhuys, in spite of his opposing sentiments, could not help acknowledging a certain amount

of justice in these suggestions, and told Goltz to lay them before the Emperor. To Goltz's question whether the Emperor had a congress in mind, he replied positively in the negative. Moreover, Goltz believed he found reason to suppose that the French Cabinet would not oppose the annexation of Hanover and Hesse-Cassel, but would strenuously insist on preserving the independence of Saxony. "If we went too far in this direction," said Goltz in his report of this conversation, "we should run against French demands for compensation, which we must seek to avoid."

On the following day, the 6th of July, the Count had a long interview with the Emperor, who expressed his satisfaction over the reply of King William, but did not seem to be pleasantly affected by the fact that General Gablenz had gone to the Prussian Headquarters for the purpose of starting direct negotiations. With manifest impatience he was awaiting Prussia's definite terms of a truce and a peace. He listened with friendly attention to the argumentation of the Count, neither contradicting him nor expressing concurrence.

Goltz held another conversation the next day, July 7th, with Drouyn de Lhuys. The Minister complained that Prussia and Italy alternately referred the matter to each other, which must gradually exhaust the impatience of the Emperor. Goltz remarked that it could not be otherwise, until plenipotentiaries from all the three Powers at war should be brought together at one place. This Drouyn de Lhuys could not very well

deny; and so it was decided to send Count Benedetti from Berlin to the Prussian Headquarters in order there to take a positive and half-threatening stand for the speedy conclusion of an armistice.

On the 8th of July Goltz telegraphed to Bismarck that he should lose all touch in Paris, if he were not soon informed concerning the Prussian terms of peace: Napoleon was in the greatest suspense, Drouyn de Lhuys was stirring up things in every way, and Prince Metternich was constantly closeted with the latter. This despatch crossed with a telegram from Bismarck saying that so far as he understood the ideas of the King, the programme for a peace would not extend far beyond the conditions of Confederate reform; yet some difference between the treatment of friends and enemies would be unavoidable; and that so soon as the royal purposes had taken definite shape, he should acquaint the ambassador with them.

It is truly not surprising that on the 8th of July no detailed peace-programme from Prussia had yet arrived in Paris. The official consideration of the same had not been begun until after the 5th, when Napoleon started upon his *rôle* as mediator; and the quickest time that could be made from Pardubitz to Paris was at least three days. On the other hand, Napoleon in his unstable situation had reason enough for impatience: on the 5th of July the vaunting pretensions of the note in the *Moniteur*, and now, in contrast with this, on the one side the calm march of the Italians on the 8th into French Venetia, a cutting insult to the

Parisians, and on the other the advance of the Prussian banners of victory every day nearer to Vienna, adding fuel to the increasing fury of the French generals, prelates, and financiers.

With these conditions of excitement to work upon, Prince Metternich raised his tone. He no longer requested, he demanded, that the treaty of June 12th should be fulfilled. He called attention to the conditions which this treaty had imposed upon Italy in return for the cession of Venetia, and insisted with Drouyn de Lhuys upon the sending of French forces to protect the new French province from the incursions of the modern banditti. He found hearty sympathy in the sentiments of the Empress Eugénie, who had always clung to the Austrian cause. She wept tears of pity for the misfortunes of ill-treated Austria, and portrayed to her husband the dangers that would so threaten France from a Germany united under Prussia, that every French heart would turn away from the dynasty, if the Emperor did not energetically stand in the way of Prussian arrogance.

When as yet no news had come on the 9th of July from the Prussian Headquarters, but on the other hand fresh reports of Cialdini's march into Venetia, this agitation increased exceedingly, although Lavalette, Rouher, and Prince Napoleon exerted themselves to their utmost to restrain it. Drouyn de Lhuys fell back upon his motions of the 5th: to station an army-corps on the eastern frontier, to summon the Chambers, and to send a fleet to Venice. Again he declared his con-



viction that these demonstrations would at once intimidate both Prussia and Italy; and even if, contrary to his expectations, they should not do so, — well, then an alliance should be formed with Austria and the Lesser States, and a heroic bout at arms be opened. Indeed, he said, nothing could be more popular in France than such a war; the army had no more ardent wish than to tear the laurels of Sadowa from the brow of Prussia.

Besieged more and more violently by such appeals, Napoleon came to no decision. He saw full well, that his proud offer to mediate would be the victim of everlasting ridicule, unless he came to some satisfactory agreement with Prussia, before Moltke's military columns entered Vienna. But while Drouyn de Lhuys presented the truth of this to him as sharply and vividly as possible, the Minister did not suspect the effect that this was producing in the brooding and war-fearing heart of the Autocrat. If, indeed, the path chosen on the 4th of July could not be traversed without war-measures, then, Napoleon asked himself, was not the choice of this course a fatal mistake in the very beginning? What was it that had so suddenly induced him to turn aside from the line of endeavor and ambition of his whole life hitherto? Why should he, who had liberated Italy in 1859, and offered Prussia the Duchies of the Elbe in 1864 — why should he now bring upon himself the danger of a double war, for the sake of protecting Austria whom he always disliked?

While these thoughts were racking his brain, his

Empress granted to her old admirer, Count Goltz, with whom she had not for months spoken a word of politics, the honor of an audience on the 9th of July, in order to speak her mind to him once for all and most plainly concerning Prussia's presumption. He was deeply moved and perplexed. "Never," he confessed afterwards, "had I supposed that she would go so far in her hostile sentiments." But this time he stood his ground bravely in the presence of the beautiful woman. With quick decision he took, himself, the offensive, and pictured to her the dangers that must result for the Emperor from a rupture, and under these circumstances an ever-incurable rupture, with Prussia and Italy. He reminded her that Napoleon's alliance with England had been abandoned, that Russia bore in mind against him his support of Poland, that Austria could never forget his liberation of Italy, and then asked whether this was the sort of situation in which Napoleon could well venture to urge upon Italy an act of dishonor, to insult mortally King William's honest pride in the moment of victory, or, indeed, to stretch out his hand to the left bank of the Rhine, and thus bring down upon his head the irreconcilable anger of the two great nations on this side and the other of the Alps. At the close of the conversation he believed that he had not talked wholly in vain. We shall soon see that his impressions did not deceive him.

In the course of the forenoon of the 10th of July, Prince Reuss arrived in Paris with the autograph letter of the King. After a few hours he was received

by the Emperor and immediately afterwards by the Empress also. The royal letter repeated the courteous assurances of the telegram of the 5th. Napoleon expressed his appreciation of this and at once asked about the Prussian terms of a truce. Reuss replied that the King on his part awaited proposals from the mediator; that, moreover, a truce was not possible without the assent of Italy and unless founded on a secure basis of peace; and that as to the latter, the King had determined upon great moderation, and was consequently ready to accept as the basis of negotiations the plan of Confederate reform proposed on the 10th of June, of which the Emperor had, as was well known, expressed his approval.<sup>1</sup>

Of this expression of his approval the Emperor said he had no remembrance. "A Germany," he said, "that excludes Austria and is ruled by Prussia seems to the Public Opinion of France to be inadmissible." Reuss explained that the future Parliament would have a very restricted competence and be occupied only with internal affairs, while the foreign relations would be regulated solely by whoever carried the sword; and Prussia claimed the military supremacy only for North Germany. The Emperor offered only a half-hearted opposition to this. "I missed," wrote Reuss afterwards to the King, "the Emperor's wonted precision. He spoke like a man whose conscience is not wholly at rest, and who is trying to extricate himself from a

<sup>1</sup> Goltz had reported this on the 17th of June, immediately after a conversation with the Emperor.

self-imposed embarrassment." Napoleon, however, dismissed the Prince very graciously, promised to consider the matter further, and hoped to see him again.

With the Empress also, the sore point seemed to be the apparition of German Unity. "You have shown," said Eugénie to him, "such power and such alertness in the exploits of your army, that our being neighboring nations puts us in danger of finding you some fine morning quite unexpectedly before Paris. I should go to sleep in the evening as a Frenchwoman and wake up in the morning a Prussian!" The simple annexation of Hanover and Hesse-Cassel, on the other hand, seemed to excite no misgivings in her mind.

Immediately after these events, in the evening, the decision was made.

Drouyn de Lhuys had at first proposed to send Benedetti into the Prussian camp with very sharp and positive instructions; if Prussia would not comply, then the alliance with Austria was to be concluded; since Reuss had brought no proposals, it was very evident that Prussia wished solely to gain time for her triumphal march to Vienna. With the greatest emphasis he was opposed by Rouher and Prince Napoleon. The old arguments were repeated: that by such conduct the Emperor would be turning his back upon his whole past, would overturn what he had been so many long years in creating in Italy, and would plunge himself into a war for which France was not prepared. The Emperor in the greatest state of excitement closed the conference with the declaration: "The whole system

of July 4th rests upon a false basis. We must make haste to abandon it. Prussia, through Reuss, asks for proposals from me. We must see to it, how far we can come to some agreement about them."

Early on the morning of July 11th, Goltz received a telegram from the Prussian Headquarters, which announced to him the despatch of a messenger with the Prussian programme for a peace. His arrival could not be expected before the evening of the 12th; and Napoleon intended within a few days to go to Nancy. Goltz therefore at once requested an audience, and received the reply that the Emperor also on his part had wished for the same. Beforehand, however, Drouyn de Lhuys, who only the day before had overwhelmed the Count with threats of war, now invited him to call upon him and told him in a different tone that the Emperor wished as soon as possible to learn the Prussian terms in order to recommend them in Vienna, or else he must regard his attempt at mediation as baffled. Then came Prince Napoleon, who confirmed this announcement, begged that the demands might be moderate, and recommended in particular the establishment of an independent state on the left bank of the Rhine, which should, however, be a member of the German Confederation. Thus prepared in advance, Goltz drove to the Tuileries.

We will allow him to tell his own story.<sup>1</sup>

"I found the Emperor deeply affected, I might say almost broken. He said to me that we must have

<sup>1</sup> Report of July 11th, somewhat abridged in form.

an extremely important interview with each other; and that it would be of no use to indulge in mutual recriminations. The Empress, he said, had told him about our conversation: perhaps much of what I had said was true. It was possible that, without considering its effect, he had expressed himself favorably concerning our plan of Confederate reform. Then the excitement over our tremendous successes had come upon the country. He had been reproached for having pursued such a foolish policy as would give into the hands of a Power already so strong the means of establishing a German empire on the very borders of France. In this situation, the long wished-for opportunity had offered itself to him for giving to Italy the province of Venetia. He had not properly weighed the consequences nor the difficulties. He had, he confessed he had, committed a great blunder, made greater by the publicity that had been given to the affair against his will. If Prussia and Italy were now to persist in their opposition, he should be exposed to a deep humiliation before his own country. He might thereby be driven into a policy which was contradictory to all his inclinations and the views to which he had been steadfastly true for many years. In some way or other, and most speedily, he must try to get out of this untenable position. He would therefore ask what were our conditions for a truce."

Goltz replied that a truce could be possible only upon the sure prospect of a satisfactory peace. This would be regarded as given, if Napoleon approved of

Prussia's terms of peace, made them his own, and recommended them in Vienna. If Austria refused them, then Napoleon would be again free, the situation of things before July 4th would again obtain, and good-will between Prussia and France would be restored. After then announcing the expected arrival of the Prussian messenger, he turned the conversation again to Prussia's plan for Confederate reform. Goltz emphasized the necessity of excluding Austria, whereby alone the formation of that "Empire of seventy millions," once projected in Vienna, could be prevented. He also laid stress upon the limitation of Prussia's military supremacy in the Confederation to North Germany.

Napoleon thereupon asked whether it was not possible to create two German parliaments instead of one. Goltz answered in the negative, saying that such a division of Germany would be most repulsive to the popular feeling of the nation. He referred to the counterbalancing influence of the Confederate Diet, which in the proposed plan was to take the place of the previously-suggested central authority vested in one person, and observed that the Chambers would continue to exist in the individual states. The Emperor then begged him again to present as soon as possible Prussia's minimum demands in the negotiations for peace, and asked whether Prussia, in case he recommended these in Vienna, would be ready for a truce and would refrain from further advance until the same should be formally concluded.

"I gave him," reports Goltz, "reason to hope for fulfilment of these wishes, and acknowledged that his situation did not allow of longer hesitation and debating. We were willing to discuss with him the new arrangement, and wished to keep in accord with him, not only for the sake of the temporary advantages to be gained, but also with regard to the future, for the sake of the restoration of lasting friendship between two Powers whose interests were so little in conflict with one another that the strengthening of one could only be a matter of gratification to the other. In any case, we should take into consideration his sources of anxiety and regard them as much as possible; nor should we refuse to take into account the propositions that he might make with a view to re-establishing the balance of power in a way consistent with the best interests of France.

"By these hints I aimed at drawing from him, as I had been advised by Prince Napoleon, some remark about his possible wishes concerning French compensation. But Napoleon did not directly respond to this. Not until somewhat later did he observe, that he had no demands to make; that something had been said to him about a corner in the vicinity of Landau; but that those 50,000 inhabitants were not worth consideration." Goltz here demonstrated how this cession could be accomplished by a somewhat complicated exchange. He then goes on to say: "Napoleon placed no value upon that. He said with a certain resignation that after all it would be better to give up all gains for France."



In the evening Prince Napoleon again called upon the ambassador, and told him that the Emperor was satisfied with the interview: for Goltz, although offering him very little, in reality nothing at all, had manifested to him nothing but friendly sentiments. Then the Prince mentioned again his own wish, that for the sake of appeasing the feelings of the French, South Germany might be constituted more independently than was projected in the Prussian outline of reform. He also expressed his gratification that the Emperor was inclined to make over Venetia to the Italians in the form of a vote of the inhabitants, and without any reservation in favor of the Pope; and further spoke of his assurance that Italy, in spite of all temptations, would stand firmly by her Prussian alliance.

“Your Excellency sees,” wrote Goltz in closing his report, “in what a state of vacillation the Emperor Napoleon stands. He seems, indeed, in consequence of yielding to contradictory influences, to have lost his compass. For the moment we have won him. But in any succeeding minute he may turn about, if we make his position too hard for him. His decisions cannot be depended upon on the ground of their being reasonable: he is quite capable of making unreasonable decisions, as on the 4th of July. It certainly goes against his feelings to oppose Italy and us.

“On the other hand, the public feeling is perhaps not exactly against Prussia; but it is against the absorption of Germany by that Power. Annexations within certain limits would be preferred. It seems to me

absolutely necessary to insist upon the exclusion of Austria from the Confederation; but in everything else we may be most conciliatory. Other things will regulate themselves later. If we make it easy for the Emperor to extricate himself from his painful embarrassment, he will be always grateful to us. If we do not, we may, before we know it, find ourselves in war with France; for sudden fluctuations are in keeping with his present mood, and in fact he *cannot* remain longer in the slippery situation in which he now stands."

Goltz nevertheless had good reason to write down these observations with a certain feeling of satisfaction; for without doubt his ceaseless activity had largely contributed to preventing the rupture. He was the more pleasantly made conscious of this, since Napoleon himself acknowledged it and had made up his mind, although he still kept Benedetti in Prussian Headquarters, to carry on the main negotiations with Goltz in Paris. The latter had then to learn that his great Chief was beginning to take a considerably modified course in the continuation of the discussion.

## CHAPTER II.

## PROPOSALS OF PEACE.

AT Prussian Headquarters, which on the 6th of July were moved from Horschitz to Pardubitz, many busy days were passed. The occurrence of the French intervention made a rapid and vigorous advance urgent, in order that in the peace-negotiations that were to follow the military situation might be as favorable as possible. The 4th and 5th of July had been granted as days of rest to the soldiers. On the 6th, Hartmann's cavalry Division of the Second Army and the advance-guard and cavalry-corps of the First Army crossed the Elbe at Pardubitz, in order to proceed upon the road to Hohenmauth and take up again the pursuit of the enemy, who had so hastily withdrawn.

It was supposed, and quite correctly, as the sequel proved, that Benedek would not lead his disordered army immediately to Vienna, but rather, turning eastwards, to the well-defended camp before Olmütz, where he might as soon as possible provide for them a secure place for repose and re-organization. So far as information had been gained by the Prussians since the battle concerning the condition of the Austrian troops, it seemed safe to plan, not so much to insure protection against attacks from the enemy, as to do them as

much harm as possible. Accordingly, the Second Army was instructed to leave behind the 6th corps to guard the two fortresses on the Elbe, and with the other three to advance into a position north-westerly from Olmütz. Should Benedek make an attempt on the offensive, they were to offer as much resistance as practicable, but if necessary they should withdraw to the Silesian frontier and allure the enemy after them thither. The First Army and the Army of the Elbe should follow along in forced marches the straight roads to Vienna, the former by way of Brünn, and the latter by way of Znaim, so as to be able, it was hoped, in or in front of the enemy's capital, to compel the acceptance of an honorable peace.

The chief difficulty of this operation, inasmuch as little anxiety was felt for the moment about being disturbed by Benedek's forces, consisted in the question of the nourishment and the care of the troops, which would in the nature of things become a more and more serious problem with every step forwards into the enemy's country. Therefore the militia-division of the Guards was sent ahead to Prague, which they took possession of on the 8th of July without encountering resistance, thus gaining for the army a railway connection from Lusatia *via* Turnau and Prague to Pardubitz. This was especially important, because, in consequence of the precautions of the enemy, only seldom was a sufficient quantity of provisions to be secured in the country itself. For at the approach of the Prussians all the imperial officials and large landed

proprietors fled away, so that it was impossible to arrange systematically for supplies from wide areas round about, and the district immediately occupied was completely drained. Moreover, a preconcerted agitation on the part of the Austrians had given to the Prussian troops a fearful reputation among the people for savage ferocity and cruelty. In many places the peasants ran away into the woods with wife and children and cattle, leaving for the hungry soldiers poor enough quarters in the empty houses.

But the discipline was strict and the conduct of the troops towards the natives exemplary. "Our soldiers," wrote Bismarck to his wife on the 9th of July, "are good enough to kiss! They face death with defiance, are quiet, obedient, and well-behaved! They are obliged to go with empty stomachs and wet clothes, to lie in damp quarters and to go with little sleep, the soles of their boots are falling off, and yet they are friendly to everybody! There is no plundering nor burning. They pay for what they take, so far as they can, and are willing to eat mouldy bread. There must be a rich store of the fear of God among our common people, or all this could never be!"

If this testimony is rejected as not being impartial, let the words of a French witness, the zealous Democrat Vilbort, stand beside it. "From the crossing of the frontier," he writes, "to the very walls of Vienna, I have noticed the noble conduct of the Prussians towards the population oppressed by the afflictions of war. No robbery, no act of violence! Further than

the official requirements they took no piece of bread, no glass of wine or beer, without paying for it in cash. The good Bohemians would hardly trust their eyes."<sup>1</sup>

The authorities that controlled the affairs of the army were therefore the more careful not to allow this spirit to become demoralized by the presence of want, but to provide in every possible way for the regular and abundant supply of provisions. Besides this they had to attend to making arrangements for the transportation of substitutes, for the increase of the means of caring for the wounded, for the removal of the slightly wounded, for the replacing of weapons, ammunition, and clothing, and finally for the fresh formation of militia at home. In short, the work to be done claimed all their strength by day and by night.

On the side of the enemy, Count Mensdorff, immediately after receiving the disastrous news of the battle of Königgrätz, had hastened to the defeated army, in order to convince himself with his own eyes of the situation of things. He found all those sad fears realized with which he had entered upon this war. Since the early dawn of the 4th of July the troops had been obliged to be on the march day after day. Only incompletely had the tactical framework of the army been re-organized; a renewal of the material lost could not be thought of before reaching Olmütz. Therefore, only the 10th corps and the three Divisions

<sup>1</sup> Similar descriptions came to me in Vienna from various sources. It is a matter of course, that the Duke of Gramont took pains, in this respect as well, to drag the Prussian name in the dirt by vigorous calumniations.

of the heavy cavalry reserve had been ordered to Vienna. The march of the remainder continued without interruption, with renewed exhaustion of the troops, on towards Olmütz.

Mensdorff saw that above all the army needed rest in order to become ready again for action. Accordingly, he sent General Gablenz on the 7th of July for the second time to King William with the request for a truce. In keeping with the custom at Vienna, the form and wording of the message was the more haughty, the greater the weakness to which it was designed to bring help; so that Moltke wrote in answer to the General on the 8th: "The King is ready for a truce that shall introduce such negotiations as may be likely to lead to a lasting peace. No proposal of this kind, however, has been made. Moreover, before every such decision an understanding with Italy is necessary. To such conditions relating to a truce as are contained in the message received His Majesty, the King, can under no circumstances now consent."

The attention of Bismarck was quite as thoroughly taken up with political anxieties as that of the King and Moltke with military cares. Many things were to be considered with regard to the Prussian Parliament, which was soon to be convened. With several of the North German Petty States, Brunswick, Hamburg, and Mecklenburg-Strelitz, who were now more or less involuntarily upon Prussia's side, there were many difficulties to be settled over the slowness of their equipment.

Yet such things as these disturbed but little the calmness of Bismarck's soul. In greater measure, however, was his consideration called to the relations with the non-German Powers. To be sure, the English Ministers always spoke in a friendly tone, and from Russia, who avoided for the time any expression whatever, he feared no active interference. But France! Bismarck's blood boiled when he thought of the many asseverations in the past and of this new move of the Government at Paris. He knew nothing of the secret agreements of June 12th, but the note published by the *Moniteur* was quite enough to prove the existence of some sort of an understanding between Paris and Vienna; and who could estimate the further consequences! the possible defection of continually inactive Italy, a fresh resurrection of Austria, now so thoroughly defeated, and finally the appearance of French demands for German border-lands! In his heart, he was thoroughly determined not to grant this last voluntarily at any price, but if necessary to fight against it at the risk of his life, and rather—a hundred times rather! make the most painful concessions to Austria. Yet in spite of this passionate indignation at foreign interference, he retained his clearness of insight, calculating moderation, and judgment concerning what was at the same time necessary and attainable.

But his nerves were severely tried. How long had he struggled and striven to bring about at the right moment and at the last moment the outbreak of that war which he was convinced was unavoidable! And



now, when the fortunate issue seemed already to have been won by unparalleled successes, the interference of France threw him back into uncertainty, danger, and suspense! The steep ascent must be climbed all over again; and again he had reason to expect that he would have to bear the burdens alone. Without standing in fear of a rupture with Paris, he was exceedingly anxious to avoid it, and above all not to fight at once against Austria and France.

In the above-mentioned letter to his wife on the 9th of July he wrote: "We are getting on well. If we are not extreme in our claims and do not imagine that we have conquered the *world*, we shall obtain a peace that is worth while. But we get as easily intoxicated as discouraged. It is I that have the thankless task of pouring water into the foaming wine, and of pointing out the fact that we do not live alone in Europe, but with three neighbors."

Furthermore, communication was difficult. Neither from Goltz in Paris nor from Usedom in Florence did news come quickly. The despatches from the latter came as slowly as Bismarck's went to him: somewhere or other they were detained several days. Nor during these days of military bustle and activity could Bismarck secure any extended conversation with the King upon political matters.

But with Napoleon in such a state of impatience something must be done to quiet him. Some sort of a message must be sent, even though of only a temporizing nature, concerning the Prussian conditions of

peace, or at least the direction that they would take. For his part, Bismarck was fully decided about the matter in his own mind. And without any information from Goltz, he knew the French people and affairs well enough to know just what demand would excite the greatest opposition in Paris,—and that was, the idea of a German empire under Prussian supremacy. That set French hearts into a storm of passionate excitement. In order, therefore, to keep within plain sailing, it seemed advisable for the present to secure for Prussia an increase of her power in some other form, without, of course, implying by this the abandonment of the design of fulfilling the destinies of Germany at some future time.

So he wrote to Goltz from Pardubitz on the 9th of July: “The French Cabinet has expressed the wish to learn our demands. Your Excellency must have the same impression as myself, that Public Opinion in our country demands the incorporation of Hanover, Saxony, and Hesse; and certainly this would be the best solution of the matter for *all* concerned if it can be effected without the cession of other Prussian territory. For my part, I do consider the difference between a system of Confederate reform that shall be satisfactorily favorable to us and the immediate acquisition of those lands not great enough to justify placing the fate of the monarchy again at stake. Our actual political necessity confines itself to our getting control over the forces of North Germany in some form or other. The details of the form decided upon will be a matter to be

settled so far as possible internally with the parliament. It seems to me unwise to grant to those that assented to the vote of making Confederate war upon us on the 14th of June the same conditions as to those that were willing voluntarily to join our new federation. The former are, moreover, the stronger and therefore the more dangerous to the existence of the new creation. This trouble may be avoided in one of two ways: either by imposing less favorable conditions upon Saxony, Hanover, and Hesse with regard to their military supremacy, or by lessening their territorial possessions; for example, by depriving Saxony, perhaps, of the district of Leipzig, and Hanover of East Friesland, and forcing her to recognize our claims of succession to Brunswick. Further, it is important for us to secure a new shaping of Hesse-Darmstadt, possibly by the cession of Upper Hesse to us and an exchange for Hanau, or, if that does not succeed, the admission of the whole of Hesse-Darmstadt into the North German Confederation.

“I use the term North German Confederation,” said Bismarck, “without any hesitation, because I consider that if the necessary consolidation of the federation is to be made certain, it will be at present impossible to include South Germany also in it. Therefore, for giving our new creation just that limitation which will secure to it a firm union, the present moment is very favorable, since it would be impossible for us, on our part, to summon a representation of South Germany to the parliament. The plan is to lay before

the Prussian Parliament a proposed system of elections to the federal diet to obtain in Prussia, and to proceed without delay to the convention of this Reichstag composed of delegates from those portions of Germany not occupied by the enemy.

“That we shall retain the Duchies of the Elbe is a matter of course. If other disadvantages can thereby be avoided I shall propose to His Majesty to make the question of being German or Danish in the district north of Alsen depend upon the wish of the population.” After Bismarck had then stated that he had not yet obtained from the King any definite decision about these things, but that His Majesty had in mind a change in the person of the sovereigns in Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, and Meiningen, a regulation of the Bohemian frontier, a war indemnity, and perhaps also a guaranty of the Hungarian Constitution, he closed with the following words:—

“The removal of Headquarters compels me to stop here. I send meanwhile to Your Excellency the foregoing with the request that, to start with, you see what effect would be produced, and what *non-German* compensations France would be led to demand, by our fully annexing Saxony, Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Upper Hesse, and Nassau; and that you then likewise discuss the further possibilities mentioned above. Without offering any threats, Your Excellency may make it evident that we are thoroughly determined not to accept any peace that cannot be called an honorable one in view of our successes. Should the prospects

which Austria has hitherto held out to us for direct negotiations, and which, since Count Mensdorff also is now personally present with the army, may possibly be discussed in an interview with him, come to nothing after all, and France manifest a threatening attitude towards us, then we should first await the development of such threats; and then, upon the solid foundation of the Imperial Constitution of 1849, we should effect a national rising of Germany, and, without regard to party lines, make use of every means for strengthening the resistance of the nation. Until then, however, I am convinced that the fears of the people in Berlin are unfounded in this direction, and that, if I can succeed in moderating our requirements down to what is sensible and sufficient for us, we shall be able to come to an agreement with the Emperor Napoleon."

In order to establish an actual material basis for the impending negotiations concerning the annexations indicated, Bismarck had a telegram sent the same day to General Falckenstein, ordering him to occupy so far as possible the countries north of the Main. On the 10th of July he also telegraphed by way of explanation to Goltz: "Do not present the alternative between annexation and reform in such a way that intermediate conditions involving the annexation of *some* hostile countries would be excluded; and hold the position firmly, that any complete annexation that can be gained without the cession of Prussian territory is better than semi-annexation in the way of reform."

With these declarations the war entered a new phase.

We have seen that Prussia began the war with the object before her of Confederate reform and the assertion of her rights in Schleswig-Holstein, and with no thought at all of further annexation. It was Napoleon, that, by his opposition to German Unity, forced Bismarck to seek other means, the strengthening of the Prussian House itself, in order to gain for the King that position of power which was essential to the interests of Germany. In adopting these means, Bismarck abandoned for the time the idea of including the South German states in his new Confederation. But it may be said with perfect safety that he never had the idea of a permanent division of Germany. Although for the moment and for the sake of getting rid of French interference he limited his plans to the firm consolidation of Northern Germany, he certainly did not lose out of sight for a single instant the naturally close connection of all Germany and the realization of the same in a fixed constitutional form.

What distinguished him in this from the men of the Cathedral of St. Paul was not a difference of opinion with regard to the end in view, but a greater elasticity of mind, by which he discovered various ways and means, and selected from them to fit the circumstances. In 1850 the formula had been a restricted federation within the larger one. In 1866 Bismarck's scheme involved beside the founding of the North German Confederation the resuscitation of the old Confederate Diet, which should in that case be composed, not of seventeen, but of five or six Curias: the Northern

Confederation, Austria, and the Southern States. In his ever-active brain this plan was, as it were, still in a fluid state, and at every moment dependent for its shape upon the relations of things; while at the same time he sought to keep the paths on all sides still open and to find some points of support.

A few days after Königgrätz, he had requested Goltz to find out from his Bavarian colleague in Paris whether Pfordten would not now be inclined to take part in the Prussian plan of confederate reform, in which, as was understood, Bavaria would be given the military supremacy in South Germany; and this fitted very well with the above-mentioned despatch to Falckenstein, which diverted the latter's movements from Bavaria to other adversaries.

And in the same manner did Bismarck act with regard to the chief enemy, Austria. It would not do to send official proposals down to Vienna. So he called attention in St. Petersburg, where Napoleon's one-sided conduct had caused continued annoyance, to the facts of how much more advantageous than French mediation it would be for Austria to come to some understanding with Prussia, and of how willing King William would be to grant to her the most favorable terms. Bismarck was convinced that the Russian Government would gladly report this hint to Vienna.

He had also, it is true, accepted the offer of French mediation "in principle;" but in his reservations it was stated that this would not be binding upon him, until after he had agreed with Napoleon concerning

the terms of peace and Italy's assent had been obtained: until then he was free to seek a successful issue in any other way that offered itself. Indeed, since the publication of the note in the *Moniteur* of July 5th, he considered himself relieved from any obligations whatever to the unreliable mediator.

While the messenger from Prussian Headquarters was hastening to Paris with Bismarck's propositions, Napoleon's embarrassment and anxiety were increasing every hour. Hardly had he had that important conversation with Goltz, when he summoned Prince Reuss, on the 12th of July, and asked him whether he did not yet know anything further about the Prussian demands and as to whether and on what terms a truce could be concluded. For, he said, he was standing on hot coals; the situation was growing worse every day; he must be authorized to tell the country that the Prussian demands were consistent with the interests of France. The main thing, he affirmed, was that in the new confederate arrangement of Germany, the Southern States should be separate from the North, *if only apparently so*; for this would relieve him from the burden of his position and make it possible for him to advocate Prussia's proposals for peace as his own.

Accordingly, Goltz, after receiving the messenger's despatches in the evening, hastened hopefully on the 13th of July to Napoleon. He was further encouraged by the news that the Emperor had just requested Drouyn de Lhuys by letter to declare whether he was willing to carry out the Emperor's policy; since other-



wise His Majesty would unfortunately be obliged to part with him. The Minister, in the fashion so well known to us, hastened, not to accept his dismissal, but to promise unconditional obedience. Under these circumstances Goltz did not deem it necessary to acquaint him first with his messages to the Emperor.

Napoleon received the ambassador with friendliness, but with burning impatience. "Tell me honestly!" he cried, "are you trying to gain time, in order to capture Vienna? Everybody is besieging me with the request that I should stop you, because your continual advance makes me play a ridiculous *rôle* as a mediator." Goltz reminded him of the impossibility of hastening the course of negotiations, in view of the great distances between Paris and the different Headquarters, and then informed him of the contents of his instructions.

Napoleon at once declared that he had no objections to make to the North German Confederation, and that the question of form, as to whether it should be one of annexation or military subordination, and whether it affected all or only certain of the North German states, was a matter of indifference to him, provided Prussia would leave out the Kingdom of Saxony from her system, and would refer it to a connection with the Southern States. The latter idea Goltz rejected as being impracticable, and asked Napoleon whether he made this proposition from a desire to strengthen the South German system as compared with the North or from personal good-will towards the Royal House of Saxony. The Emperor replied that he was perfectly indifferent

to the Saxon dynasty: he wished only to restore in some measure the balance of power.

Goltz remarked that this might be effected by means of other formal arrangements; in reply to which Napoleon emphasized the fact that he laid especial value upon the right of South Germany, as an independent group of states, to conclude alliances and carry on war. He was compelled to do so, he said, by the public feeling in France, which was especially uneasy over the possible formation of a new German empire under Prussian supremacy. Goltz then expressed the hope that Napoleon's views did not stand in conflict with the Prussian programme. Only, he said, tact must be used in avoiding every phrase which involved an express renunciation of the idea of German Unity; for, if peace should not be concluded, Prussia might find herself compelled to appeal to this idea, and to inscribe upon her banners the execution of the Constitution of 1849.

"Yet," continued Goltz, "we wish to avoid every disturbance of the European balance of power to the injury of France. If necessary, therefore, we should moderate our demands or await and consider those made by France in turn." Napoleon, however, came forward with no requests for compensation, but only threw out the question whether Prussia might not grant the Rhine Province to the King of Saxony, — which Goltz then declared to be impossible, alleging the sentiments of the people.

Thereupon the Emperor did not pay much attention

to the projects of partial annexation, which Goltz mentioned as feasible methods of solving the difficulties; and he further asserted that the possible abdication of the sovereigns hostile to Prussia was a matter of perfect indifference to him. But he very positively insisted upon the preservation of Austria's integrity, with the exception of Venetia, not meaning, however, to forbid slight rearrangements of the frontiers.

"Thus, then," concluded Goltz, "the possibility of a mutual understanding is assured." Napoleon responded: "Now, if King William is ready for a truce, and accepts as the basis of a peace the principles we have discussed, I will send these to Vienna with the understanding that if they are declined my office as mediator is at an end, and I shall leave Austria to her fate. It might be well," said he further, "to note down in a few words these main principles upon paper." Goltz offered to try to do this, to which the Emperor assented.

Much pleased with the tenor of this conversation, Goltz then drove to an appointed meeting with Prince Napoleon, Rouher, and Nigra. Rouher related to him how near they had been to war three days before, and how Drouyn de Lhuys and his associates were still continuing to rave with the same sentiments. "We are standing," said he, "upon a volcano. Everything depends upon the speedy conclusion of a truce before you enter Vienna, to which the Emperor would not submit. Conclude the truce, therefore, so soon as Austria is willing to withdraw from the German Con-

federation. Everything else will take care of itself." Prince Napoleon confirmed this, and said: "If you grant to him this chief point, he will willingly favor you in all your other peace-conditions. And he hopes then to be met with similar sentiments on your part. For he, too, wishes to do Public Opinion a good turn by the acquirement of a small bit of territory; and you would completely win his favor, if you should offer him such a piece."

Moreover the Prince expressed to Goltz his willingness, when the latter on the 14th was to present to Napoleon his draft of the basis of peace, to second him with an urgent letter to the Emperor. This letter which he accordingly wrote to his imperial cousin, is remarkable enough to be inserted here, at least in its main sentences.

After the Prince had in a few words represented as self-evident the fact that a rupture with Prussia and Italy would mean in the first place the destruction of the great work of 1859 and the abandonment afresh of Italy to Austria, he remarked with regard to Prussia: "We must expect that if Herr von Bismarck is threatened by France at his back, he will play out his last high card and come forth no longer as a Prussian but as a German, and will call out the ardent passions of all Germany by proclaiming the Imperial Constitution of the Revolutionary Parliament of 1849. In what a position would he thus place us! What would then be our motive for engaging in a war against Prussia and all Germany! In the name of the European bal-

ance of power the Emperor would then be marching out against a people that had no intention to take anything from us, but simply to organize its own affairs according to its own discretion. Shall the Emperor draw his sword, then, in a war against the principle of nationality, against liberal ideas, against the desire of Germany to establish for herself such a constitution as she chooses? In 1792 the Coalition was formed and the Duke of Brunswick issued his notorious manifesto in the name of the European balance of power, and to abolish the Constitution which France had set up for herself.

"It lies," continued the Prince, "in the interests of France, of course, that Germany should remain divided; but this can be secured only by moderation, mildness, and tact. Threats and violence would ruin everything.

"Whoever wishes to behold the Emperor as the representative of a European and Clerical reaction must urge him into an alliance with the Austrian cadaver and into a war against Prussia, Germany, and Italy. But those who admire in him the brilliant leader of the Revolution, of Liberty, and of Nationality, the doctrines which are going to declare his true greatness to posterity — they will be severely shocked on the day when he inaugurates a policy that, even though for a time successful, must obliterate the real fame of Napoleon III.!"

Meanwhile Goltz was working out the outline of the peace-proposals as he had promised the Emperor. He

found himself somewhat in a dilemma between the French declarations and the directions of his instructions. To be sure, in Prussia's voluntary limitation of her control to North Germany and in the greater independence of the South, both harmonized satisfactorily. But it was not so with the question of annexations, upon which Bismarck now placed the first importance. If Goltz were to propose this extensive incorporation (of Saxony, Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, and Nassau), he feared Napoleon would either reject it or answer it with corresponding demands. But if he were to mention a number of smaller districts, he feared lest he should not be expressing the actual wishes of his Government or be reckoning below them. Consequently he decided to pass over the subject of annexations entirely in the document, and trust to Napoleon's declaration that the internal arrangement of the North German Confederation was a matter of indifference to him.

On the 14th of July, he presented to the Emperor the following draft:

"Austria shall acknowledge the dissolution of the old German Confederation, and not oppose a new organization of Germany, in which she shall have no share.

"Prussia shall establish a union of North Germany, which shall include all states north of the line of the Main. She shall hold the command over the troops of the same.

"The German states south of the Main shall be free

to form among themselves a South German union, which shall enjoy an international, independent position. The national connection between the Northern and the Southern union shall be regulated by free and common consent.

“The duchies of the Elbe shall be united with Prussia, except those districts of North Schleswig, where the inhabitants shall of their free choice desire a return to Denmark.

“Austria and her allies shall indemnify Prussia for the expenses of the war.”

Napoleon declared that he was satisfied with it all, especially with the clauses concerning the Northern and the Southern Confederations. Only in the last Article did he make a change, by saying “*a portion* of the expenses of the war,” in order not to frighten Austria who was utterly bankrupt. Finally, on account of a message received the day before from the Emperor Francis Joseph, he added the clause:

“Austria’s integrity, excepting Venetia, shall be preserved.”

“You have exactly expressed my ideas,” said he then to Goltz who was proud of this imperial recognition of his literary talent. In fact, they were far enough from that state of mind in which Drouyn de Lhuys hoped to persuade the Emperor to lay upon King William severe limitations to Prussian successes. It was now the Prussian ambassador himself, that had been commissioned by the Emperor to draw up in the name of the French Government a basis of peace that

might be acceptable to Prussia. A strange phenomenon in the annals of diplomacy!

The degree of Napoleon's inward satisfaction at having escaped from the carefully-prepared schemes of Drouyn de Lhuys was first appreciated immediately afterwards by the Saxon Minister, Beust, who had been in Paris some days for the purpose of imploring the mighty protection of France for his afflicted land. Being admitted to an audience by the Emperor, he explained to him how very advisable it was for him to station a French army of 100,000 men upon the Rhine as a demonstration against Prussia. Napoleon replied to Beust: "You are not at all certain that I consider Prussia's policy as inimical to the interests of France, nor consequently, whether I have any occasion to oppose it with an attempt to intimidate her."

"Poor Beust!" said the Russian ambassador, Baron Budberg. "He came three days too late."

Napoleon had agreed with Goltz to telegraph the result arrived at at once to the two Monarchs that were at war, with the request to accept this peace-programme and upon its basis to conclude a truce. For, if Napoleon was anxious not to see his mediation become a universal butt of ridicule by reason of fresh successes won by the Prussian army, haste was necessary. In spite of the cession of Venetia the situation of Austria became every day more critical.

Upon the part of Italy, Cialdini continued to advance, although with very short steps. As ever in such cases, there was an abundance of military



reasons with which to justify the slowness of his pace; but without doubt the real reason of it lay in the line of politics. On the one side, the King and Ricasoli urged him forwards, and on the other, Malaret and La Marmora held him back. The mean result was that he was going ahead at a rate that would bring him to Vienna perhaps at the end of two months.

Nevertheless, even this insignificant operation was not without value to the Prussian military plans. Austria had handed over Venetia to Napoleon with the idea that this would mean the end of the war in the South. Then it would be possible to convey 120,000 victorious troops from there to the Danube to oppose the Prussians. But since the Italians, in spite of Napoleon's agreement, had marched into Venetia, it would not do to risk laying bare the Quadrilateral nor to summon the whole Army of the South to Vienna. On the contrary, the 7th corps and all the garrison troops were left for the time behind, and only the 5th and 9th corps, beside the cavalry brigade of Pulz, making all together 57,000 men, were ordered to the Danube to the defence of the imperial capital.

It had been the intention at first to bring thither from the Army of the North, besides the 10th corps and the greatest part of the cavalry, only one or two corps more, and to leave the rest with Benedek, who should from Olmütz make operations in the rear of the enemy; but Archduke Albrecht telegraphed on the 9th of July so strong a protest against such a scattering of the forces, which would allow the enemy to plan first the

conquest of one body and then of the other, that orders were sent, on the 10th, to Benedek, to garrison Olmütz sufficiently, and then to bring all the rest of his troops, so far as possible by railway, but otherwise on foot, to, and across, the Danube.

In spite of his representations that such marches would again exhaust the weary troops and render them unable to fight, the orders were not changed, and he began to forward by the railway the 3d and the Saxon corps to Vienna. The remainder were to follow one another on foot between the 11th and the 14th of July, and were to reach, some Vienna and some Pressburg, within ten days. For all of them the straight road lay along the March river, which flows from Olmütz towards the south, and which is also followed by the railway from Olmütz to the frontier of Lower Austria at Göding, then the latter turns to the south-west to join the Brünn and Vienna railway at Lundenburg. From Göding the nearest road to Pressburg led in a southerly direction continuing in the valley of the March.

The question was whether these marches would be accomplished without any disturbance from the Prussians; and this danger was so imminent that Archduke Albrecht, when he assumed on the 13th of July the supreme command over all the Austrian forces, made it one of his first cares to telegraph instructions to Benedek, in case of a Prussian attack upon his flank, not to engage in any great battle, but to bend towards the east and advance by a circuitous route to Pressburg.

The Prussian Second Army had at first taken a position north-westerly from Olmütz, between Littau and Konitz, in order to defend Silesia against a possible offensive movement by Benedek. But soon the information brought by spies left no doubt concerning the fact that the condition of Benedek's troops was such that he could not possibly think of an undertaking of that sort. Accordingly, the Second Army moved into a position situated nine miles south-westerly from Olmütz, between Kosnitz and Prossnitz, from which latter place the March could be reached in a few hours. During this time also the First Army and the Army of the Elbe continued their course uninterruptedly towards the south, unmolested by the enemy, with the exception of a few unimportant skirmishes between the van of the Prussian advance-guard and the extreme rear of the imperial cavalry divisions who were hurrying on their way to Vienna.

The royal Headquarters were moved on the 11th of July to Zwittau, on the 12th to Czernahora, and on the 13th to Brünn, the capital of Moravia. At that time the Army of the Elbe had already reached Znaim on the Thaja, close to the boundary of Lower Austria; while the advanced troops of the First Army, on a line with them, had arrived at Muschau on the great highway to Vienna. Here they received orders to turn from the highway towards the south-east, to occupy Lundenburg, and at Göding to press forward into the valley of the March, so that thus the roads leading directly from Olmütz to Vienna and Pressburg should be blockaded.

While these movements were being performed, the French ambassador, Count Benedetti, arrived at the Prussian Headquarters. He had left Berlin on the 9th of July, but had had a slow and difficult journey through Bohemia, where all the roads were overcrowded with troops on the march, with endless trains of wounded men and prisoners, and with military transports of all kinds. He had in this way, however, had a good opportunity to observe the quality of the Prussian soldiers. "Verily!" said he afterwards to Bismarck, "they are not militia: those are genuine troopers!"

On the night of the 11th he arrived at Zwittau, inquired for Bismarck's quarters, and came upon him quite unexpectedly. He found him in a desolate house, deserted by its inhabitants, sitting at a dimly lighted writing-table, with a revolver lying by the side of his note-paper. Bismarck received him cordially. After the Emperor's offer of mediation had once been accepted, he had often, as we know, desired the sending of a plenipotentiary from the French.

He did not, indeed, conceal from Benedetti the indignation with which the King had been filled at Napoleon's behavior on the 5th of July, and expressed even more strongly his regret at learning that the ambassador was commissioned only to demand a speedy truce and that he had no instructions concerning negotiations about peace. Benedetti preached moderation, that the neutral powers might not be forced to interfere actively. Bismarck held to his ground that a truce

was impossible except upon the basis of a peace and with Italy's consent. The conversation lasted without any result until four o'clock in the morning, whereupon Bismarck invited the ambassador and his secretary to share with him his lonely quarters.

On the following day, Benedetti was received by the King in Czernahora. It was clear that the Monarch had been completely converted to the standpoint of Bismarck's despatch that was sent to Paris on the 9th. He no longer demanded supremacy over the whole of Germany; but the more positively did he insist upon the formation of the North German Confederation and, within the same, upon the territorial connection of the two halves of the Prussian State. Benedetti could not, of course, give him any official information with regard to these points, but continued to urge most persistently the conclusion of the armistice. The King summoned Moltke and a few other generals present in Headquarters to a consultation about the military considerations concerning this point, which were in this regard the most important. It was decided that a few days of repose would be useful to the Prussians. The constant marches had severely taxed the strength of the men and the horses, the boots of the men were worn out, and the horses needed shoeing badly. A few days for making repairs would be right welcome.

Accordingly, the following proposition was made to Benedetti: in order to show to the Emperor of the French the good-will of Prussia, during the time that

Italy's reply concerning the truce and Goltz's answer to the despatch of July 9th were being awaited, it was proposed, assuming like conduct on the part of Austria, to refrain from all hostilities for three days; Prussia would withdraw her forces to a place about fourteen miles away from Olmütz, and Austria should transport her troops that were standing on the left bank of the Thaja to the other side of the river; otherwise all the forces of both parties should remain at the respective places where they then were.

Benedetti's secretary carried this proposal to Vienna. But there it was considered that this would delay the arrival of both armies at the Danube, which could never be suffered; and consequently, an answer was returned in the form of a counter-proposal, according to which the Prussian troops were to remain nine or ten miles away from the March river, — which would insure Benedek's march to the Danube. This was refused quite as decidedly by Prussia; and so the hostilities took their course.

General von Hartmann, who with his cavalry division formed the van of the Second Army, had already, on the 14th of July, made the announcement that his advanced posts had seen hostile troops marching from Olmütz towards the south; that according to the reports of prisoners, Benedek's whole army was on the march to Vienna; and that the testimony of the inhabitants confirmed all this. The General therefore begged for a support of infantry, that he might in the first place assault Tobitschau on

the March, and from there perhaps make a sally upon the railway-station at Prerau. During the night Malotki's brigade of the 1st corps, which was stationed at Prossnitz, was sent to him; and then on the morning of the 15th the attack upon Tobitschau was begun.

Upon the Austrian side things stood as follows: The railway had already transported to Vienna the 3d corps and a portion of the 1st Saxon Division; the remainder of the latter had on that very day begun the journey and had passed Prerau. The rest of the troops had been divided by Benedek into three companies for the march on foot. The first, composed of the 2d and 4th corps, had likewise passed Prerau and Tobitschau already. The second, comprising the 1st and 8th corps, was just coming along the left bank of the March; for the protection of its flank, Rothkirch's brigade of the 8th corps, the only one that had not yet fought against the Prussians,<sup>1</sup> had been ordered to march upon the right bank of the river. The third company, consisting of the 6th corps and the 2d Saxon Division, were still behind.

Thus Malotki, in his advance, met in Tobitschau Rothkirch's brigade, which upon the approach of the enemy immediately set its batteries into action, and was, moreover, soon reinforced by the artillery-reserve of the corps. For four or five miles the Austrians made a manly resistance; but here again the superiority of the Prussian firing was made evident. And

<sup>1</sup> This brigade had been stationed as a separate detachment to guard the southern frontier of Silesia.

now Hartmann's West Prussian cuirassiers appeared upon the scene, fell with unexpected violence upon the enemy's batteries from the flank, and captured by storm no less than eighteen cannon. Benedek, who was himself in the vicinity, sent some troops to the succor of the brigade; but when then General Bonin also brought up a second brigade to the support of Malotki the Austrians began the retreat.

Tobitschau remained in the possession of the Prussians. In the afternoon Hartmann, with two regiments of hussars, crossed the March, and rode an hour into the country as far as the little town of Rokeznitz. He dispersed several small companies of infantry, surprised a long train of baggage, took many prisoners, and finally, after one of his regiments had been attacked and defeated by Austrian hussars, crossed back over the river.

These events must already have made it seem doubtful to Benedek whether he should be able to continue his procession down the valley of the March. When, in the evening, he also learned that further down the stream Prussian troops had taken possession of Göding, and had blockaded the railway in front of the Saxons, and that the state of things foreseen by Archduke Albrecht had actually come to pass, he sent orders to all of his corps to turn to the eastward from the March, to take their way over the passes of the Little Carpathians into the valley of the Waag, and from there by a circuitous route of about fifty miles, to march towards Pressburg. This made it wholly



uncertain whether his 100,000 men would arrive at the Danube in time to take part in the final decisive battle that would probably be fought there; and a fresh, perhaps very important gain, would in this way be won for the Prussian cause.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE PRELIMINARIES OF PEACE.

IN Vienna, as in the Prussian Headquarters, the basis of peace proposed by Napoleon on the 14th of July, found only very measured applause.

Immediately after the conversation of Napoleon with Goltz, on the 11th of July, Drouyn de Lhuys had informed the Duke of Gramont that although the Prussian demands were not yet known, the first condition of peace was nevertheless believed to be the exclusion of Austria from the German Confederation. That was not the first time since Königgrätz that this had been mentioned in the imperial Hofburg. When the extent of the defeat was known in Vienna, the Emperor had summoned to the capital Franz Deák, the great leader of the Hungarian Opposition, and asked him his advice. Deák's reply was that it would be well for Austria to close up the source of the trouble by withdrawing from the German Confederation: neither the Dynasty nor Empire would thereby lose in dignity or in power. Moreover, added he, Hungary would, with all her forces, enter into the war so soon as the Emperor should grant the old constitutional requests

of that country.<sup>1</sup> This latter was, indeed, a complicated question of internal politics: the former cost only a slight, and after the recent experiences hardly a difficult, act of decision.

So Mensdorff sent his reply at once to Paris, on the 12th of July, that he must postpone making any pledge concerning Austria's withdrawal from the Confederation, until he knew Prussia's other demands. For, if among the latter there should be those that could not be met, such as, for instance, a cession of territory, Austria would rather perish with honor than purchase peace at such a price. By this, as is clear, any cession of territory was refused, but by no means Austria's withdrawal from the Confederation; and accordingly, as we have seen, Napoleon added the clause securing the preservation of Austria's integrity, excepting the province of Venetia. And yet upon the reception, on the 15th of July, of the French proposal, the Vienna Cabinet was greatly disappointed, that Napoleon's aid was so far behind what might have been expected after the assurances of June 12th. Mensdorff's reply, on the 16th of July, was therefore again one of postponement: before Austria could decide, she must first know whether Prussia would accept the programme. The thought suggested itself at once, that if Prussia should reject it, its acceptance by Austria, harmless in that case, might perhaps bring the French Emperor back to his position of July 5th.

<sup>1</sup> From one of Deák's letters communicated by Neményi in "*Deutsche Rundschau*."

There was, indeed, reason enough to desire such a turn of affairs. For, although the troops of the corps recalled from Italy began already at this moment to arrive in Vienna, and might by the 21st of July be all collected there, so that the Danube would be defended then by 120,000 men, still the enemy might during the same time reach the river in like numbers, and it was a question of grave importance, whether then Benedek or the Prussian Crown Prince would reach Vienna first.

But discouraging in the highest degree was the internal situation. In the matter of finances, there was no other help for Count Lanisch than a loan of sixty millions from the bank in paper currency. The higher Clergy, to whom the Concordat granted the free administration of the immense possessions of the Church, replied to the request of the Minister for a large loan that, to their great sorrow, the Concordat forbade any alienation of the property of the Church, and contented themselves with giving expression to their patriotism by offering an alms of 200,000 florins for the care of the wounded.

Hungary remained immovable upon the old standpoint of demanding for herself constitutional laws and a responsible ministry, before the granting of which she would not assist in fighting against Prussia. Deák complained that Hungary was for the time dead, and could be awakened to life only by the imperial recognition of her Constitution.

In the remaining crown-lands the Government

summoned all the people to arms. Tyrol thereupon furnished a few thousand men; but otherwise the summons were met only by violent protests from the people. The capital city, Vienna, established, it is true, a corps of volunteers, in which the tramps and vagabonds that had flocked together in the town were put under military discipline; and for the protection of person and property a civil guard of 20,000 householders and officials was established, who, however, to leave no doubt about their sentiments, sent their burgomaster to the Emperor to implore him that the open city of Vienna might not, as the result of an obstinate resistance, be exposed to the horrors of a siege, and followed this soon after with an urgent exhortation that the patriotic enthusiasm of the Austrian peoples might be revived by the restoration of their constitutional rights.

All this did not promise well for the project of engaging in a mortal struggle. Napoleon, too, urged a speedy termination of the war. Gramont, indeed, represented to him most importunately that Prussia was entirely defenceless in the west, and that accordingly, he might, by a slight demonstration on the Rhine, dictate the terms of peace to his own liking. But the Duke received no reply to this; and, on the 16th, his colleague, Benedetti, came at the orders of the Emperor to Vienna, to present fresh monitions to conclude a peace.

So far as Prussia was concerned, Bismarck, by reason of the constant interruption of the Bohemian

lines of telegraph, received the news from Paris by no means so quickly as did Gramont, and through him Mensdorff. Since Benedetti's arrival, Bismarck had had daily conversations with him concerning Prussian moderation and French good-will. With regard to the proposed Prussian annexations, Benedetti allowed it to be understood that Napoleon would probably make no objections to the incorporation of Hanover and Hesse. When Bismarck, however, then further inquired whether Napoleon would in turn seek for compensation, and what this would be, the ambassador assumed an icy reticence, which he also maintained when Bismarck manifested great willingness to comply with such demands, provided that France should not seek to enlarge her borders upon German soil, but in other directions (in Belgium or French Switzerland), and should arrange the matter alone with Prussia, without the intervention of other Courts. Benedetti's silence had at the time a sufficient explanation in his utter ignorance of Napoleon's views upon this matter; but Bismarck, who hardly believed in the probability of such ignorance, saw therein a disagreeable sign of reserve in the French policy.

On the 15th of July, the day upon which Gramont was able to lay before the Vienna Cabinet Napoleon's peace-programme of the 14th, Bismarck received his first news from Goltz concerning his conversation with Napoleon on the 11th. In the telegram there was not only no word about Prussia's desires in the way of annexation, which were then unknown to Goltz,

but the ambassador also mentioned that Napoleon had misgivings about the exclusion of Austria from the German Confederation, and that if Prussia's demands were too great, a French declaration of war might be possible. All this made the success of French mediation seem to the Minister very doubtful; and as he was determined to resist undue pressure at any risk, he returned to the idea of trying to come to some understanding with Austria directly and without French coöperation.

Just at this time the possibility for an unofficial communication offered itself. The burgomaster of Brünn was Dr. Giskra, a talented and experienced man, who had once been the deputy to the Frankfort Parliament, and since then a member of the Austrian Reichsrath, and who had in the Cathedral of St. Paul as persistently defended Austrian interests as he had in Austria advocated the German standpoint. Bismarck sent for this gentleman and asked him if he would go to Vienna and there help, if possible, in preparing the way for negotiations of peace.

"Count Bismarck," said Giskra afterwards in public,<sup>1</sup> "especially emphasized his willingness to conclude a peace, and to conclude it in Brünn, upon the basis of the following essential conditions: that with the exception of Venetia the territorial possessions of Austria should remain intact, that no war-indemnity should be exacted, that in Germany the Main should form the boundary of Prussian ambitions,

<sup>1</sup> In the session of the delegates January 30th, 1871.

that South Germany should be left quite free, and that Austria might enter into such connection with the latter as she chose—all this, however, under the one stipulation that in the conclusion of the peace any intervention or mediation on the part of France should be excluded.”

Giskra was perfectly ready to comply with Bismarck's request; but since it was impossible for him to undertake the journey on account of his official business, which was doubled by reason of the Prussian occupation of the city, he delegated, with Bismarck's consent, the president of the Brünn Board of Trade, Baron Herring, to perform the mission in his stead; and the latter immediately set out for Vienna. Bismarck's hopes of a successful issue increased, when, on the 17th, a telegram from Count Goltz brought the announcement that although Pfordten declined a separate negotiation over the Prussian scheme of Confederate reform, Austria intended to open direct communications with Prussia, and had notified Pfordten to this effect, whereupon the latter was about to proceed to Vienna.

Then, on the same day, the 17th, a further telegram from Count Goltz came into Bismarck's hands, containing the basis of peace which had been settled upon by Napoleon and Goltz on July 14th. In this, the exclusion of Austria from the German Confederation was, indeed, accepted; but it was a matter of great astonishment that in spite of the despatch of July 9th there was again no mention of the annexations desired



by Prussia. The King was exceedingly annoyed. He approved in every way of what was expressed in Napoleon's programme, and commanded that it be accepted *en bloc*. But that the very best was wanting in it aroused his whole store of displeasure. Since he had at Bismarck's suggestion given up the idea of a hegemony over all Germany, his wishes for Prussian extension of territory had increased, though not in definite form.

The great number of conquered adversaries offered a large choice of desirable acquisitions. Hitherto he had not meditated the complete deposition of any sovereign German House; but he thought that the chief enemy, Austria, might cede a few pieces of Bohemia, and Saxony, the real instigator of the war, might give up the districts of Leipzig and Bautzen; that from Bavaria the ancient Hohenzollern lands, Anspach and Bayreuth, might be demanded, and from Hanover East Friesland and the eventual claims to the succession in Brunswick; and that Hesse should give up as much as was necessary for the connection of the two halves of the Prussian state. He was also inclined to return frequently to the plan of requiring the abdication of the hostile sovereigns in favor of their heirs-apparent. Bismarck observed that these latter would be quite as hostile as their predecessors, and that Anspach and Bayreuth would be unreliable provinces of Prussia, since she could not always protect them at that distance. He urged in general, that the bow should not be stretched too tensely in the face of Europe. But he had a hard task, especially on account of the military

environment of the King. The generals, knowing no bounds in their victorious pride, went farther in their demands than the King himself. Bismarck's nervous, overwrought temperament often led to exciting scenes. It was exceedingly beneficial to him that the Crown Prince with his calm equanimity often stood at his side to smooth away the difficulties.

It was then necessary, on the 17th of July, to bring up openly in response to the French programme the question of the annexations. With the consent of the King Bismarck telegraphed to Count Goltz: "As a *basis of peace* the contents of your telegram of the 14th are not sufficient. The annexations already spoken of have become a necessity, if the Prussian people are to be appeased; and in the programme of your despatch there is no reference whatever to such acquisition. If Napoleon will promise to support us in this matter in the peace negotiations, then, trusting to him, we can lay the programme of the 14th at the basis of a *truce*, and recommend the acceptance of the latter in Florence, so soon as Austria shall accept that programme, and the necessary military conditions shall have been fulfilled. For this we will allow five days, and accordingly, from the moment when the assent of France to the above is announced to us, be ready to refrain from mutual hostilities for the period of five days. This important military sacrifice which is involved in an armistice of five days we make only for the sake of gratifying Napoleon."

In a second despatch, Bismarck spoke more definitely

on the subject of the annexations. "It is a requisition of France that in the federation to be established South Germany shall be free from the control which Prussia seeks to acquire in North Germany. We are ready to assure her of this. We can suspend entirely our connections with South Germany, or we can establish without Austria the old confederate relation with South Germany which experience has shown to be so loose. *Our chief concern at present is the annexation of three or four million inhabitants of North Germany.* Further details will be settled of themselves by means of the parliament, and it is in any case more a matter of internal concern to Germany, with regard to which, however, we can give to France a binding promise to abstain from South Germany."

Finally Bismarck conveyed to the ambassador a confidential piece of information that he might well hope would produce an excellent impression upon Napoleon; namely, that in view of the situation of things in Paris he and Moltke were agreed in the policy of not going to Vienna, and hoped to gain the King's consent; it would, however, be indispensably necessary to advance as far as the Danube and thus threaten Vienna, in order to overcome the enemy's inclination to continue further fighting, which was strengthened by the hope of French help.

The diplomatic decision, while the troops were still marching uninterruptedly towards the south, was now awaited with no little suspense. It came very naturally first from Vienna.

Benedetti had there used all the means of persuasion in his power to incline the Austrian Government to accept Napoleon's programme and, in general, a peace policy. We have seen how many motives were urging the Imperial Court in this direction. Mensdorff had already in that declaration of his on the 12th of July allowed it to be understood that the demand for Austria's withdrawal from the German Confederation would not, like a proposed cession of territory, be an insurmountable obstacle. Sympathy with the German Lesser States had in consideration of their achievements in the war sunk far below freezing-point. Prussia might then arrange her Northern Confederation as she pleased; the course of the campaign allowed no more opposition to be brought up on that matter. In connection with this, Benedetti mentioned the annexations projected by Prussia.

On the 18th of July, the Ministers Mensdorff and Esterhazy met in final conference with Benedetti and Gramont. Concerning Napoleon's programme there was no longer any difference of opinions. With regard to the Prussian annexations Mensdorff would make no binding avowal; but what he said removed from the ambassadors' minds all doubt but that the Vienna Cabinet would assent to Prussia's wishes, provided only that the independence and territorial possessions of the Kingdom of Saxony, the only state that had stood faithful and active at Austria's side, should remain undiminished. Hereupon Benedetti, certain of success, decided to return on the 19th to Nicols-

burg, whither the Prussian Headquarters had just been removed. Gramont was to send him the official declaration of Austria, so soon as it should be drawn up.

Side by side with these French negotiations, Baron Herring had also been busy. What he had to offer went far beyond Napoleon's proposals of July 14th in being favorable to Austria; beside the omission of the war-indemnity appeared the possibility of regaining in concert with the Southern States a strong position in Germany by the side of Prussia's increased power. It was, in a word, an invitation after an honorable contest to renew the old friendship, now that by the overthrow of the Confederate Diet the source of all enmity had been stopped up.

In fact, as Giskra reported, Herring's message was "at the first moment received by His Imperial Majesty, who was much gratified and agreeably surprised at the unexpected offer, very graciously and indeed with enthusiasm over this unlooked-for turn of affairs. If spontaneous action had followed this spontaneous impression, the peace would most probably have been concluded within twenty-four hours. For Napoleon the blow would have been fearful; yet after all his unreliability and vacillations of April 8th, June 12th, July 5th and 11th, he would hardly have had any reason to complain. The true interests of France, indeed, would not have suffered, had the Austro-Prussian alliance been effected in 1866 and the war of 1870 been thus prevented. But it was to be otherwise; and

Germany's future was to be led through severe sacrifice to purer results.

That first exulting impulse in the breast of the Emperor was followed by considerations of prudent diplomacy and of suspicious hatred of the Prussians. Count Moritz Esterhazy, who at that time exerted a strong influence upon the foreign relations, received Baron Herring very coolly; one may perhaps believe that he informed the Duke of Gramont of the circumstances. At any rate, Gramont, who was naturally from his office and tendencies compelled to be a direct antagonist of the proposals presented by Von Herring, shows in his book that he was in every particular acquainted with their contents. He then observes: "If Austria had fallen into the trap, then Bismarck would have attained his object of bringing her thoroughly into collision with France, of holding her in that position for a while by delusive negotiations, and finally, very likely with the excuse that Italy's assent could not be obtained, of breaking these off and then of directing from north and south the 'blow at the heart' of the isolated Empire."

We need not even remark that this insinuation was as groundless as it was malicious. But yet it was impossible for the Vienna powers to make up their minds to manifest a full measure of confidence; and after Herring had waited almost three hours for an answer, he finally received from Esterhazy the evasive declaration that if Prussia wished to send a formal invitation to Austria to enter into negotiations of

peace, the latter was ready to send a plenipotentiary; but she could not do so in response to the present, more private request, since it was not desirable nor possible to expose herself to the danger of having such an ambassador fail of being received at the Prussian Headquarters.

Herring thereupon on the 19th of July rode two horses to death in order to arrive at Nicolsburg in time. But as he presented himself to Bismarck, the latter received him with the words: "You have come an hour too late. An hour earlier the negotiations would have taken another course. We can now no longer refuse the mediation of France, because it has already been agreed to." Benedetti had anticipated the Brünn President.

After Gramont had on the 20th of July announced the official acceptance of Austria, Bismarck made the proposition to the Duke to have the truce begin at twelve o'clock noon on the 22d, because the news could hardly reach the leaders of the separate sections of the troops before that time. When Archduke Albrecht had announced his assent, the appropriate orders were sent, some that very evening and some the next morning, to the commanders of the armies and of the corps.

Nevertheless, the last hours of this eventful campaign were to witness a sharp encounter, honorably contested by both sides. Until that time the Prussian troops had continued everywhere their rapid advance. The First Army and the Army of the Elbe had reached

the plain of the Marchfeld, famous in battle, from whence their advanced posts could see across the river the towers of St. Stephen. The Second Army had left its 1st corps behind at Olmütz, and with the remainder followed its comrades hurriedly down the valley of the March. From Prague came the militia Division of the Guards; and the militia Division of Bentheim with a number of 4th battalions was on the march hither from Dresden and Lusatia. The supreme commander was very certain of having within a few days, after providing sufficiently for the defence of the military roads, a force of 194,000 men collected on the Danube, which would after a short interval be reinforced by 46,000 more. In order to gain, if possible, an important place for crossing the river, Prince Frederick Charles had sent the 7th and 8th Divisions under the command of Fransecky from Marchegg against Pressburg. With the capture of the city, not only would a stationary bridge over the Danube be gained, but the hostile army would also be forced to take a still more circuitous route by way of Komorn.

Meanwhile for the defence of the city there was at hand only Mondel's brigade of the 10th corps, which took up a strong position at a distance of two hours' march in front of Pressburg between the Danube and the last foothills of the Little Carpathians, at the village of Blumenau. Archduke Albrecht as well as Benedek, however, had already noticed that this point was threatened; and the 2d corps of the Army of the North under Count Thun, which was at the time



stationed the nearest, had already received orders on the 18th of July to hasten to Pressburg in four forced marches, the last of which was to be accomplished in wagons. On the evening of the 21st the 1st brigade of this corps under Colonel Schütte actually arrived in the vicinity of Pressburg and immediately joined Mondel's brigade at Blumenau: so that there were now fourteen battalions stationed there ready to make the defence.

General Fransecky, who had in the course of the afternoon observed the strength of the enemy's position, determined not to attempt an attack in its front but to capture it by circumvention. To this end he had General von Bose, early on the morning of the 22d, march with six battalions over almost impassable mountain and forest paths around the right flank of the enemy so as to strike at the rear of their brigades, while he himself with thirteen battalions would open a desultory skirmish with Mondel's front. At about ten o'clock he received the news that hostilities were to cease at noon. But since he was every moment expecting Bose's attack, which would mean the certain annihilation of the enemy and the opening of a clear road to Pressburg, he could not resist the temptation to make the best use of the remaining hours and continued the engagement.

Bose had meanwhile after great exertions reached the point designated, but found himself in the presence of new enemies, since in the mean time the three remaining brigades of Count Thun had also arrived.

Consequently, as Bose threatened Colonel Mondel in the rear, so he on his part was exposed to an attack in the flank and rear from Thun's brigades. The result would have depended upon whether he could have succeeded in breaking through the enemy's position at Blumenau more quickly than the others, his superiors in number, could have come up with him.<sup>1</sup> This question, however, was not to be decided. Noon had arrived, and upon all sides the signals sounded for a truce. Mondel's troops filed out of Blumenau on their way back to Pressburg past the battalions of Bose. The day had cost the Prussians 200, the Austrians 470 men, killed and wounded.

A few hours after the thundering of the cannon at Blumenau had ceased, the work of peace began in the Prussian Headquarters. On the afternoon of July 22d<sup>2</sup> the Austrian negotiators came to the castle of Nicolsburg, consisting of the ambassador Count Karolyi, the privy councillor Baron Brenner, and for the military arrangements General Count Degenfeld. At the very first interviews an unexpected change in the attitude of France was manifested. As late as the 15th of July, Napoleon had expressed to Count Goltz his astonishment at the rumor of direct negotiations between Austria and Prussia, saying that that would be derogatory to his dignity as a recognized mediator, and that he certainly hoped that both of his ambassadors, Gramont and Benedetti, would at least

<sup>1</sup> This situation was similar to that of Richepanse at Hohenlinden.

<sup>2</sup> The publication of the Prussian staff gives the date July 21st, incorrectly.

be present at the conferences. Only a few days afterwards Drouyn de Lhuys, inwardly angry at the course things had taken, presented the Emperor a note in which he contended that it lay in the interest of France not to take a too active part in the negotiations, lest she should thereby forfeit the right to oppose possible consequences of the treaty; but that the part taken by the representative of France should rather be confined henceforth to that of a friend of both parties, who should endeavor to smooth away any difficulties by his personal influence and not to decide as an umpire or take immediate part in the decisions; and that therefore the ambassador should not sign the preliminaries and should, in his intercourse with the negotiators, avoid delivering any notes or other writings and official communications.<sup>1</sup>

This was done. France, it is true, retained in this way the liberty of criticising afterwards the peace that was now about to be concluded; but on the other hand she lost all right to object to any future change in a treaty, in the conclusion of which she had taken no share.

This passivity of France made no difference with the course of the transactions. The behavior of Italy, on the other hand, seemed to make trouble, although it was conducive to good results. There had not yet been any great military successes gained by the Italians. On the contrary, just as La Marmora had fared at Custoza, so had Admiral Persano, a man in every

<sup>1</sup> Rothan, *La politique française*, p. 263.

way like in mind and equal in worth to La Marmora, been thoroughly beaten on the 20th of July on the heights of Lissa by the vigorous attack of Tegetthoff.

But this made the Italians only the more zealous in reaping the benefits of the Prussian victories. Venetia had now been occupied without a battle, the frontiers of the country had been already crossed on two sides, and they now demanded besides this province the cession of the Italian-speaking portion of the Tyrol also, and were as annoyed at not receiving propositions of peace directly from Austria as they were vexed at Bismarck for having agreed upon a five days' truce without the consent of Italy.

Bismarck did not allow himself to be troubled by these uneasy ebullitions. "We have," said he, "neither concluded peace nor truce without the consent of Italy, but only granted a five days cessation of hostilities in order to be able to talk about both of these things. Moreover, if our troops rest for five days, that is nothing more than what the Italian army did for weeks after Custozza." He then demanded repeatedly and expressly that Count Barral, who had come to Headquarters a few days before, and Govone, whose arrival was announced, should be provided with instructions for taking part in the transactions. This was done at once; but Bismarck, who knew that according to the contents of the treaty of alliance he was now, in view of the perfectly certain cession of Venetia to Italy, free from any further obligations to this Power, did not let himself be prevented from going forward. On the

Austrian side, however, this Italian zeal for war and Cialdini's gradual advance, added, as they were, to the doubtful conditions of the Army of the North and the threatening situation of internal affairs, served to increase in a high degree the desire for peace.

Bismarck brought forward on the 23d of July, as the basis of the first consultation with Karolyi and Brenner, an outline of preliminaries which he had drawn up the day before. The first three Articles repeated the principles of Napoleon's programme: the preservation of the integrity of Austria, excepting Venetia, with the promise of the withdrawal of the Prussian troops after the definite conclusion of the peace, dissolution of the German Confederation, recognition of the North German Confederation to be established by Prussia, agreement that if the states south of the Main united into a union, its national connection with the northern confederation should be a matter to be settled by the two between themselves (here the two clauses stating that the southern confederation should have a national and independent rank was omitted), and finally, the cession of all Austria's rights in Schleswig-Holstein to the Crown of Prussia, with the understanding that North Schleswig should be returned to Denmark, if the people desired it.

Concerning all this there was already an agreement of opinion without further discussion. But a sharp dispute arose over the fourth Article, which according to Napoleon's scheme assured to Prussia the reimbursement of a part of the expenses of the war. Bismarck

demanded for Prussia an indemnity of a hundred million thalers, half of which, that is, fifty, should fall upon Austria. Fifteen of this sum, however, would be subtracted from this as the indemnity to be paid Austria by Schleswig-Holstein for the expenses of the war of 1864, so that only thirty-five millions should be paid to Prussia in cash. This was only a demand to start with and by no means the last word to be said. Bismarck himself had designated in his outline not fifty but forty millions as the aggregate sum. The Austrians, too, raised most lively remonstrances, and, indeed, considering the melancholy state of their finances they had most urgent grounds for strenuously protesting. Bismarck made a trial of whether they might not like to purchase a reduction of the money-payment by ceding a small strip of land in Austrian Silesia, say four hundred square miles with a population of 100,000 inhabitants. But even then, resting their refusal upon the ground of the first Article, they emphatically objected. The matter was reserved for further consideration, and the fifth Article, the question of Prussian annexations in North Germany, was taken up. More than one difficulty arose concerning this point. To understand them more fully, let us first bring up to this stage the negotiations that had been held with France since the 17th of July.

On the same day, the 17th, Goltz had had a detailed conversation with Drouyn de Lhuys and also with Napoleon concerning Prussia's wishes, so far as he understood them from Bismarck's despatch of the 9th.

The Minister expressed his misgivings, alleging that if after such extensive annexations Prussia, grown so large, should form the proposed Northern Confederation with only a few small states, the union would utterly lose its federative character. The Emperor, on the other hand, said that all that was for him a matter of indifference, concerning, as it did, the internal organization of Germany, and affirmed that his programme of the 14th did not exclude the possibility of such connections. He repeated this assertion on the following day, when Goltz informed him of the intention of the Prussian leaders to renounce the march upon Vienna. He also expressed his full confidence in Prussia's sentiments and his good wishes for Prussia's interests.

On the 19th of July the ambassador laid before the Emperor and his Minister Bismarck's telegrams of the 17th, in which the annexation of a population of between three and four millions was demanded as Prussia's condition for a truce and peace. Both statesmen were well pleased by the offer of a five days' armistice which came with this, and raised no objection to the proposed annexation. Napoleon termed the discussion of the latter a matter of detail, with which the remaining negotiations should not be complicated. However satisfactorily all this sounded, Bismarck considered it by no means sufficient. He demanded not simply the passive making of no opposition, but positive recognition and indorsement on the part of France, if not by a formal and

official act, at least by an express declaration of the Emperor.

He accordingly telegraphed on the 20th to Goltz: "The King has only after great hesitation and out of consideration for the Emperor Napoleon consented to this [the truce], and moreover with the definite proviso that in the peace a considerable acquisition of territory shall be assured to Prussia. The King regards the formation of a North German confederate state of less importance than I do, and accordingly lays the greatest stress upon annexations, which I also, to be sure, consider a necessity by the side of the reform. . . . I would further say that the French propositions, aside from an additional understanding with Austria concerning the regulation of the frontier, would satisfy us as preliminaries of a separate peace with Austria, if Austria wishes to conclude such a one: but they will not be sufficient for a peace with our other adversaries, especially in North Germany.<sup>1</sup> To them we must make special conditions; and the mediation of the Emperor, which they did not ask for, concerns only Austria."

After the receipt of this telegram, Goltz drew up a corresponding additional Article to the programme of July 14th, and laid it before the Emperor on the 22d for his examination and approval. In this, after he had designated, in keeping with Napoleon's former

<sup>1</sup> This despatch, which was intercepted somewhere, is printed in *Oesterreichs Kämpfe*, IV., p. 149, with various mistakes. At this place, for instance, the word is *South Germany*, incorrectly.

Telegraphic communication between the Prussian Headquarters, and Paris, and from Paris with Florence, was held during the negotiations by way of Vienna.



observations, the organization of North Germany as an internal matter and one that did not concern the question of the European balance of power, and had then mentioned Prussia's right to make separate negotiations and to acquire territorial accessions, Goltz closed with the clause, that the Emperor would accordingly in the peace-negotiations not only not oppose the annexation of four million North Germans, but would indorse the proposition and recommend it as equitable.

Napoleon agreed fully to this, although he thought that Austria could not be expected to refer her allies at the very outset to negotiations that they must make for themselves. He therefore proposed to the Count to omit the first clauses, and simply signify his willingness to support the proposition to annex a population of four millions. "Only," he added, "let the Kingdom of Saxony not be overthrown." Goltz replied that did not lie in the intentions of the King, although he wished to annex the districts of Leipzig and Bautzen. "Against that," responded Napoleon, "I have nothing to say."

The annexation of Hanover and Hesse-Cassel was expressly recognized by the Emperor as being desirable. He would even further grant to Prussia a large piece of Thuringia also, which he pointed out to the Count upon the map. "In view of the loyal attitude of those states," said Goltz, "we should not demand this." "But," answered Napoleon, "you want to annex the Darmstadt territory of Upper Hesse; for that you ought to give to the Grand Duke the Bava-

rian Rhineland." Goltz declined to express an opinion upon this point, as he was ignorant of the relations between Prussia and Bavaria. He judged, however, from a passing remark of Napoleon, that in this last proposition the Emperor had in mind a modification of the frontier, which he would demand before the final conclusion of peace.<sup>1</sup>

After Goltz had called upon Drouyn de Lhuys, that the latter might confirm the declarations of the Emperor, and had received not the least discouragement from the Minister, he telegraphed immediately to Bismarck the promises which he had been authorized by the Emperor to make.<sup>2</sup> Of Napoleon's disfavor toward separate negotiations and of his intended demand for a modification of the frontier, the telegram mentioned not a word.

Now let us turn back to the conference of July 23d.

Bismarck, having gained, from his conversation with Karolyi and Benedetti the day before, the impression that Austria would have no objection to make to the annexation of Hanover and Hesse, laid before the imperial ambassadors in the conference the following simple Article: "His Majesty, the Emperor of

<sup>1</sup> This representation of the matter, taken everywhere from Goltz's reports, shows that the story started in Paris, and repeated countless times, was wholly founded upon air. This rumor was to the effect that Goltz had requested from Drouyn de Lhuys the indorsement of an annexation of three hundred thousand souls; but that when the Minister expressed some misgivings about it, Goltz had gone behind his back to the Emperor, and there, by (Heaven knows what!) trickery, he had succeeded in gaining from the Monarch, taken unawares, his assent to the annexation of three million.

<sup>2</sup> Bismarck received the despatch on the 23d of July, before the session.

Austria, pledges himself to sanction the arrangements to be made in North Germany by His Majesty the King of Prussia, including territorial changes."

Karolyi, although at heart assenting to the principle involved, demanded two limitations. The first concerned the Kingdom of Saxony. Austria considered it a matter of honor to secure for this only one among all the German states that had proved herself to be an active ally and ready to make sacrifices, the inviolability of her territory and her independence. This conflicted as sharply as possible with the sentiments that prevailed in the Prussian Headquarters. The King, irritated at Beust's long-continued agitation against Prussia, which had been kept up for years, insisted upon the cession of at least two districts; others, and very influential men, saw no reason in the world why the Saxon Government should deserve any other treatment than the Hanoverian. The discussion of the question in the conference was very lively, but led to no result.

Then again, Karolyi explained further that Austria by the treaty of June 14th had pledged herself to subscribe to no peace without consulting Bavaria, and said that Baron von der Pfordten had come to Vienna to call attention to this fact; and therefore Austria was not in a position to conclude the peace without Bavaria's participation. It lay naturally in Prussia's interest to insist upon holding separate negotiations with the different German states; but so far nothing definite about it had come up for discussion and decision. Certainly,

it was quite a concession on the part of Austria's Government that she based her interest in Saxony only on their brotherhood-in-arms, and in Bavaria only upon their special relations by treaty, utterly abandoning to their fate all the other German states in spite of all the precepts of the old German Confederate laws.

Bismarck therefore thought it best to show in this affair with Bavaria a certain amount of compliance, especially since this would be giving to the Emperor Napoleon a new proof of respect. He accordingly proposed a sixth Article, which included the King of Bavaria in the peace, if the latter would agree to pay the sum of ten million thalers as his share of the war-expenses, and (Napoleon's idea) to indemnify the Grand Duke of Hesse for the territory lying north of the Main, which should, according to the new arrangement of North Germany, be ceded to Prussia. Karolyi made no objection to this.

Inasmuch as no instructions had yet arrived from the Italian Government giving full powers to Count Barral, a further Article was agreed upon, in which Prussia took it upon herself to obtain Italy's consent to the preliminaries of peace and the truce, so soon as Venetia should be delivered to her by Napoleon. The next session was appointed for the 25th of July, in order to keep the next day free for deliberation and informal consultation, and especially for making reports to the two Monarchs and receiving their decisions.

After all that has hitherto been mentioned, King William by no means found all his wishes satisfied in the principles laid down on the 23d; and the result of the whole negotiation was likely to prove doubtful, if the Monarch persisted in his demands to their full extent. So much the more, however, did Bismarck strive to bring things to a speedy conclusion. The thought of renewing the old friendship with Austria, as he had expressed it upon the battle-field of Königgrätz, and as he had intimated to the Emperor Francis Joseph through Baron Herring, stood unshaken and firm in his heart. He consequently wished in the conclusion of peace to spare as much as possible the feelings of the conquered opponent. Then he looked, as we know, with continual anxiety for an announcement of French desires for compensation; and everything would in that case depend upon his having beforehand come to a settlement with Austria. On the morning of July 24th, a new motive arose in the same direction: a short telegram from Count Redern in St. Petersburg brought the information that the Emperor Alexander urgently desired the convention of a congress of the Great Powers, inasmuch as the pending questions interested the whole of Europe and could not be settled without Europe's consent. Now, if this expression of a wish received an official stamp before the signing of the preliminaries, then the already-achieved results would all be reopened to question, and Prussia's fate would be exposed to the incalculable chances of a general European discussion. It was therefore neces-

sary to hold fast to the last free moment with quick decision. After all that had been said by word of mouth during the past few weeks, Bismarck considered it fitting to lay before the King in a written document covering the whole ground his own opinion about the situation. He wrote as follows:

“Your Royal Majesty is most humbly requested graciously to allow me to present respectfully the following considerations concerning the negotiations held with Austria concerning the basis of a peace.

“It seems to me of the very greatest importance that the present propitious moment be not neglected. By Your Royal Majesty’s declared acceptance *en bloc* of the proposals of His Majesty the Emperor of the French, the threatened danger is removed, that would arise if France should take sides against Prussia, which from being a simple diplomatic pressure might easily be transformed into active participation. In consequence of the instructions sent at the orders of Your Majesty to Count Goltz, it has been possible to gain more than this from the Emperor Napoleon in the form of a definite promise, which Count Goltz announced by telegraph on the 23d inst., to the effect that His Majesty will not only suffer the direct annexation of four million inhabitants of North Germany, but will himself recommend it; nor was there at the same time any mention made of any compensation for France. The vacillations of the Emperor during the last few weeks, and the pressure of public sentiment in France, give room, however, only too decidedly to the fear that,

unless the momentary concessions are converted into actualities, a fresh change of his mind may take place.

“The support of more extensive or *even only of these* Prussian demands cannot be counted on from the other Great Powers. Your Majesty has seen from the letter of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia, with what anxiety His Imperial Majesty is watching for the conditions that Prussia will impose. His Minister also, Prince Gortschakoff, has expressed his desire to know these conditions, not only to Your Majesty's ambassador in St. Petersburg, but also to Baron Oubril in Berlin. The connection and relationship between the Russian Imperial House and the German dynasties occasion concern lest by further negotiations the sympathies thus called forth should weigh heavily in the balance. In England, public sentiment begins to turn towards Your Majesty's successes in the field; but the same cannot be said of the Government. It can only be presumed that the latter will recognize accomplished facts.

“By Austria's declaration that she will withdraw from the Confederation and sanction a reconstruction of the same without her participation and under the guidance of Prussia, and that she will recognize everything that Your Majesty may deem desirable to do in North Germany, she concedes all the essential points that Prussia has to demand of her. The preservation of the Kingdom of Saxony is the common wish of Austria and France. If Austria, in consideration of this, is willing, as it appears, to sacrifice entirely her other

allies in North Germany, then it seems wise to let this wish have weight; and for political ends and requirements a convention with Saxony that places all the forces of the Kingdom at the disposal of Your Royal Majesty upon some such conditions as those established for Schleswig-Holstein on the 22d of February 1865 might be sufficient. The exclusion of Austria from the Confederation, together with the annexation of Schleswig-Holstein, Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Upper Hesse, and Nassau, and such a relation between Saxony and Prussia as that mentioned, may be regarded as a goal more worth attaining than any that could ever have been set up at the outbreak of the war.

“If the attainment of this goal can be assured by a speedy settlement of the preliminaries upon this basis, then it would be in my most humble and respectful opinion a political mistake if we, by the attempt to gain from Austria *a few more square miles* of territory or *a few more millions* for the war-indemnity, should cause THE WHOLE RESULT to be again brought into question and exposed to the uncertain chances of a prolonged war or of a negotiation from which it would be impossible to exclude foreign interference.

“The appearance of the cholera in the army, and the danger lest an August campaign in this climate might cause the breaking out of pestilence, are also arguments against the continuation of operations.

“In case Your Royal Majesty condescends to grant your royal approval to this conception of the situation, it will be my respectful duty to beg for Your Royal



Majesty's authority to bring before the Parliament the necessary bill concerning the enlargement of the boundaries of the monarchy by the incorporation of Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, the Grand Ducal Hessian territory of Upper Hesse, and Schleswig-Holstein, and then to present the whole acquisition as *un fait accompli*, which, inasmuch as it has received the sanction of Austria and the recognition of France, cannot be attacked from any dangerous quarter.

"I consider it to be my duty to Your Royal Majesty thus to present most respectfully this memorial in writing and officially, since the importance of an immediate decision is in my judgment incalculable. I feel the full measure of my responsibility towards Your Royal Majesty for the advice which I am called upon to offer; so that although I shall dutifully represent in the negotiations every condition demanded by Your Majesty, yet everything that shall for the sake of accessory gains hinder the accomplishment of a speedy settlement with Austria will take place contrary to my respectful proposition and advice."

The King took the memorial into consideration, at first with very great reluctance and opposition. On the 25th of July he gave his Minister his answer. We can perceive the course of his thoughts from the marginal notes which he appended to Bismarck's paragraphs. "Certainly," he wrote, "this is a result that could *never* have been anticipated, and which the Congress-idea will make problematical again." He agreed with Bismarck's observation that it would not do to

bring such a result in question for the sake of unimportant accessory demands. "But," he added to this, "it depends upon how much money or territory *can* be gained *without* risking the whole." In other respects he confirmed the correctness of all the premises in his Minister's memorial, and concluded with the acknowledgment that if, in spite of Bismarck's faithful advocacy of the Prussian claims, all that the army and the people demanded from the *conquered* could not be obtained without endangering the chief end in view, then there was no other way than for the *conqueror* to restrain himself even before the gates of Vienna, and leave the verdict to posterity.

It is hardly likely that posterity will pass any other judgment than that such a relation between monarch and minister, such a union of the consciousness of victory and the exercise of moderation, such an exhibition of genius and self-control hand in hand, has seldom been seen in all human history.

The course of the last two conferences on the 25th and the 26th of July was determined already by the foregoing. Where a disputed point arose, the policy was to endeavor to adjust the matter until the line had been found wherever everything had been gained that could be, without endangering the whole.

In the question of the expenses of the war, Bismarck came down from fifty to forty-five and then to forty million. From this fifteen million had to be subtracted for the provisioning of the Prussian troops until the conclusion of the definite peace, so that

the cash payment was reduced finally to twenty millions.

So far as Saxony was concerned, Bismarck gradually allowed not only the demand for annexation but also for the cession of territory to be given up, and was ready to subscribe in the treaty to the preservation of the integrity of the Kingdom. But when then Karolyi, resting in this point also upon French support, brought forward the proposition that Saxony should unite not with the Northern Confederation but with the Southern States, — then the limit of Bismarck's compliance had been reached. It was in order for him to display for once the intensity of his passionate patriotism. He threw his chair back, and rising to his full height he declared that the maintenance of this demand meant the renewal of the war. Even if His Majesty the King should accede to it, he himself would lay down his office, that he might not be forced to sign such a treaty. This had its effect. For Austria was as little anxious as Prussia for any further bloodshed. So it was at last decided that Prussia should promise to allow the territorial extent of Saxony to remain intact; while on the other hand the regulation of her share of the war-indemnity, and the future position of Saxony in the North German Confederation, should be reserved to a separate treaty with King John. In return for this it was to be Austria's duty to sanction all of Prussia's other arrangements and territorial changes in North Germany.

The Articles relating to Bavaria were erased. In

the course of the day, Baron von der Pfordten, coming in haste from Vienna, had arrived at Nicolsburg, but had received a hardly friendly reception from Bismarck. After the last exchange of telegrams with Paris, Bismarck had allowed the Berlin newspaper to circulate the representation that Bavaria preferred to fight in company with Czechs and Croats against Prussia rather than to join with Prussia in keeping at a distance foreign interference in the affairs of Germany. Bismarck now received the Minister (who had forced his way past the outposts unannounced and without Prussian passes) with the words: "Do you know that I might have you arrested as a prisoner of war?" and then acquainted him with the conditions under which Bavaria might be free to come into the treaty. Pfordten, greatly overcome and exceedingly angry, hastened to pour out his complaint to his Austrian friends, but found from them only little comfort. Very soon he decided to give up seeking for assistance here, and in common with the other South German states to try his fortune in a separate negotiation with Berlin. For in the latter case he certainly could not experience anything worse, and possibly something better. Who could tell?

Yet Austria, however unfavorable might be the judgment she passed upon the military achievements of her South German allies, at least so far concerned herself with their interests as to insist upon their being included in the truce that was at once to be settled upon. The beginning of the truce, inasmuch as no

word had yet been received from Italy, was fixed for the 2d of August; and the forbearance from all hostilities in Austria was to be continued until then. The conditions of the armistice in Western Germany were to be agreed upon between the Commander-in-chief of the Prussian Army of the Main and the separate states, just as was done at the present time for Austria by means of a special agreement between Degenfeld and Moltke.

Finally, no objection was raised to Bismarck's motion that a new Article be inserted providing for the ratification of the peace-preliminaries within two days, and for the settlement of the definite peace in a further convention of the plenipotentiaries to be held immediately afterwards. It was soon to be evident why Bismarck was in all these points so urgent for the hastening of the final settlement.

Unanimity of sentiment now prevailed, and steps could be taken on the 26th July toward the formal drawing up and signing of those preliminaries of peace which should, after the raging of a war that had lasted seven weeks, open to Germany the prospect of a new future of prosperous growth.

Just then Benedetti presented himself to the Prussian Minister in order to lay before him a despatch from Drouyn de Lhuys dated the 23d of July, the contents of which — we shall return to this later — were that France had not wished to render more difficult the course of the negotiations in Austria by making new propositions, but would now observe that her sanction

of the Prussian annexations presupposed a fair indemnification to France, and that the Emperor would confer with Prussia concerning this, so soon as his rôle as mediator should be at an end. Bismarck replied with great friendliness that he was ready to consider with the ambassador the proposals that France intended to make. Benedetti then suggested that it would probably concern certain strips of territory on the left bank of the Rhine; whereupon Bismarck interrupted him by saying: "Don't make any official announcements of that kind to me to-day," — and turned to sign the preliminaries.

Thus, on the one side the Russian proposal for a congress, and on the other the French demands for compensation! But just at the very moment when these became visible on the horizon, peace with Austria was assured. Never had sharper insight or a firmer hand "taken Fortune by the forelock!"

## CHAPTER IV.

### CAMPAIGN OF THE ARMY OF THE MAIN.

As in Bohemia, so also at the same time were the Prussian arms in South Germany victorious.

Immediately after the capitulation of the Hanoverians, General von Falckenstein had set his Divisions, which now received the official title of the Army of the Main, in motion towards Eisenach. Detailed instructions, which Moltke, as we have seen above, had signed on the 26th of June, designated as the chief aims to be kept in view: above all, for Falckenstein to attack the strongest of his opponents, the Bavarian army, which he would find if he searched for it on Bavarian territory; and then, in order to prevent the union of the two hostile corps, he should direct his march first to Fulda, and from there against the Bavarians in the vicinity of Schweinfurt.

For the accomplishment of this task, Falckenstein accordingly started from Eisenach early on the morning of the 2d of July in two columns: Beyer's Division upon the road towards Hünfeld, Göben's on the one towards Marksuhl and Lengsfeld, and Manteuffel's corps a day's march behind the latter. So soon as on the night of the 2d, Göben's patrols and outposts fell in with Bavarian scouts; and according to the reports of

the prisoners a strong body of Bavarians was advancing from the direction of Meiningen and Wasungen. There could be no doubt but that it would be necessary for the Prussians to protect their own march against a threatened attack on the left flank.

In fact, almost the entire Bavarian army, very much against the will of its leader, had been at that time sent off to the Upper Werra. At first scattered along the northern frontier of their state from Schweinfurt to Hof, it had, after the advance of the great Prussian armies into Bohemia, been set upon the march towards the west, in order to meet the Hanoverians, perhaps in Hesse-Cassel. In the mean time Prince Charles received the news on the 23d of the advance of the latter into Thuringia, and on the 24th the official telegraphic announcement from the Ministry of Meiningen and from the Bavarian deputy to the Confederate Diet, that King George had been surrounded by Prussian troops and forced to surrender.<sup>1</sup>

Prince Charles now thought that the victors would not delay in starting out from Thuringia and falling upon the nearest hostile country, which would be the Bavarian province of Franconia. He therefore issued orders at once to all his troops to hasten to assemble by rapid marches in a position not far from Kissingen, between Neustadt and Königshofen. On the 26th of

<sup>1</sup> Consequently at the Bavarian Headquarters no confidence was placed on the 25th in the assurances of Superintendent of the Archives Klopp, that the King had declared to him on the 23d that he would never agree to a capitulation. But even then an attempt to relieve the Hanoverians would have come too late, since, at the very quickest, the Bavarian army would have taken four or five days in reaching Gotha.



June he had a personal interview with the commander of the 8th Confederate corps, Prince Alexander of Hesse, and proposed to him that he should also lead his Divisions, partly upon the railway from Frankfort to Gemünden and partly on foot by way of Hanau and Fulda, to the Franconian Saale, and there unite with the Bavarians.

Prince Alexander fully admitted that nothing was more important than the union of all the forces, but felt obliged to observe that neither the Confederate Diet nor the sovereigns of Nassau and Darmstadt would consent to the withdrawal of the corps to Franconia, which would leave unprotected the capital of the Confederation and the neighboring regions. It was also considered a matter of certainty that the Prussian attack would not be directed from Gotha upon Würzburg, but from Cassel upon Frankfort and from Coblenz upon Nassau; and therefore it was earnestly requested that the union of the two army-corps might not take place upon Franconian soil but in Hesse-Cassel, for instance at Hersfeld.

As Prince Alexander remained immovable, Prince Charles, that the union might not altogether fail of being accomplished, yielded to his desire, and a plan of march was drawn up, according to which the common movement should begin on the 30th of June — the 8th corps would not be ready to march sooner — and the Bavarians should reach Fulda upon the 2d of July and Hersfeld on the 7th, while at the same time the 8th corps should from the west of the Vogelsberg approach

the same points by way of Friedberg, Grünberg, and Alsfeld.

Without doubt, the plan of Prince Charles would have corresponded better with the circumstances; yet by an immediate execution of the Hessian proposition the union of the two corps would also have been possible. For, after the occupation of Fulda on the 2d of July, the Bavarian army would have stood between the Prussian and the 8th corps and Falckenstein would have had no longer any means on his part of forcing himself between his two opponents.

But it was fated that in this war the cause of the Guelphs should not only perish, itself, but should bring evil also upon its associates.

Hardly had Prince Charles made his first arrangements for the march to Hersfeld, when there came on the 27th and 28th of June despatch after despatch, from Frankfort, from Munich, and from Vienna, that the Hanoverians had not capitulated, that they could hold out another week, and that they had gained a great victory over the Prussians. The Emperor of Austria telegraphed twice that everything must be done to succor the Hanoverians. How could Prince Charles do otherwise? With a heavy heart he gave his Divisions orders on the 29th of June to start, not in a north-westerly direction for Hersfeld, but north-easterly towards Gotha. He sent only his cavalry-reserve, consisting of six regiments, over to Fulda to establish some sort of a union with the 8th corps. On the 30th, his Headquarters reached Meiningen on the

Werra, and his advanced troops went ahead as far as Wasungen and Suhl. There he was met with the news that the Hanoverian army no longer existed, and that he had undertaken a wild-goose chase.<sup>1</sup>

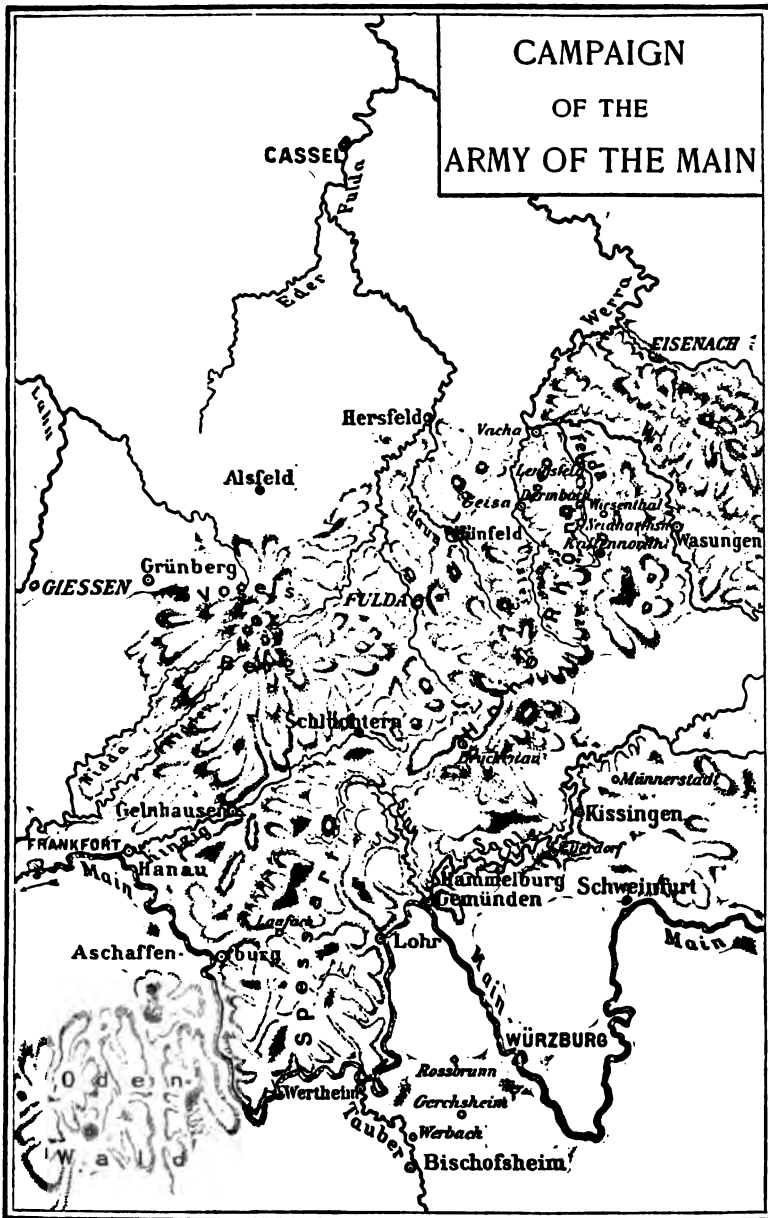
He was now forty-six miles from Fulda and nearly eighty from the nearest troops of the 8th corps. Moreover, the danger was imminent enough lest he should be obliged to fight alone with the victorious enemy. A quick resolve was necessary. There was no longer any use in thinking of undertaking to march to Hersfeld, in view of the nearness of the Prussians: it would be a matter of rejoicing if he could reach Fulda uninjured. Accordingly the order was hastily sent to Prince Alexander (Prince Charles had been invested with the supreme command over both corps on June 27th) to make a general turn of his Divisions to the right and likewise make for Fulda, while the Bavarians would turn to the right with the same point in view. The Field Marshal also added to the order the observation, that if his own march was disturbed or hindered by the enemy, he should return to his original idea of uniting both corps at Kissingen.

Moreover, aside from the danger of being exposed to Prussian attacks, the march from Meiningen to Fulda was no comfortable undertaking. For, as is known, between the valleys of the Fulda and the Werra lies the mighty mountain-range of the Hohe-Rhön, from which several scattering chains running north and

<sup>1</sup> From these data it is perfectly certain that the responsibility for the Hanoverian catastrophe can in no shape be placed upon Prince Charles.

south extend even into the neighborhood of Hünfeld. The highest and steepest masses rise upon the right bank of the Felda. Then follows the valley of the Ulster, shut in on the east by lower ridges; and after that the valley of the Fulda. Both of the latter are small tributaries of the Werra. On both banks run well-built highways from Eisenach to the Main; so that for a passage from north to south there was ample provision. But at that time the cross-roads over the mountains from east to west were not at all so convenient; and these were just the important ones for the Bavarians at this moment. Passable crossings were few in number, and all of them better adapted to the travel of ox-carts than for cannon and military wagons.

In the first place it was a matter of importance whether a certain road, which led around the Rhön mountains on the north, from Wasungen by way of Dermbach and Geisa to Hünfeld, was still free from the enemy. Upon this road the Division of Hartmann advanced on the 3d of July to Wiesenthal; and it was the vanguard of this Division that Göben's patrols fell in with. The three other Divisions, starting on the same day from Meiningen, reached the valley of the Felda, and then, advancing in the direction of Dermbach, took possession of Kaltennordheim, Zelle, and Neidhardtshausen. So far as the remaining forces of the Confederate army were concerned, the Bavarian cavalry-reserve stood that day in Fulda with an outpost in the vicinity of Hünfeld; the 8th corps had executed its movement to the right, and the front





lines of its columns had pushed ahead to within nine or ten miles of Fulda. For the union of the two corps, marches of three days at least were necessary, under the most favorable auspices, whether the point at which this union was to be accomplished should be chosen upon the east or west side of the Hohe-Rhön.

The news that General von Falckenstein received on the afternoon of July 3d specified the position of the four Bavarian Divisions in the main correctly. But the General considered that an advance of the enemy in earnest to Geisa and Hünfeld was hardly probable. He thought only about solitary detachments that might disturb the Prussians in their southern flank during their march to Fulda; and to these he intended to give a speedy and sharp lesson, without allowing himself to be disturbed in his plan respecting Fulda, after it had been once undertaken.

Accordingly, he ordered Beyer's Division to proceed to Hünfeld, as already prescribed, while Göben was to make a vigorous sally against the Bavarians both in Wiesenthal and in Neidhardtshausen, and, breaking off the fight at the right time, was then to retire and follow the Division under Beyer as far as Geisa. Inasmuch as Manteuffel's corps was about a day's march in the rear, and the four Bavarian Divisions might have united within a few hours, the single Division of Göben might very easily have been put to severe straits; and it cannot be denied that Falckenstein's arrangements were not free from a certain amount of presumption. What the Commander-in-chief here risked had to be

made good by the incomparable strength of his Westphalian regiments, and, more than all, by the excellent leadership of Göben, which was at once prudent and intrepid.

This talented officer was filled with a passion for daring adventure and venturesome undertakings, that had driven him in the time of peace into the uncertain fortunes of the great Carlist war, and which found a vent for itself in quiet times in the most foolhardy games of chance. At ordinary times, careless about his dress and manners as he was, with a heavy pair of spectacles before his eyes, he hardly gave the impression of being a soldier, but rather a pedagogue that had happened by chance to be dressed up in a uniform: especially since in conversation with strangers he was embarrassingly reserved, although among his friends he overflowed with wit, information, and worldly-wisdom. But so soon as a serious and dangerous task presented itself to him, he seemed to be utterly transformed. Erect and with a dignified demeanor, he considered the advantages and the obstacles, and held with an iron calmness a firm rein upon his inward impulses, until the right moment came and the ardor of his own enthusiasm led on the troops to an irresistible attack; and he was then again able at the right moment to command to himself and his men an inexorable *halt!*

At this time, on the 4th of July, Göben himself, with three battalions in reserve, remained at Dermbach, where the road of the Felda valley meets the one to



Geisa and Hünfeld. From there he ordered General von Wrangel with six battalions to march eastward against Hartmann in Wiesenthal, and General von Kummer with the same number to advance to the south against Zoller's Division in Neidhardtshausen and Zelle.

The course of events was the same in both cases. The advanced sections of the enemy's troops were driven from their positions, the ground was now brilliantly maintained against the main bodies which then advanced, and finally, when in course of the afternoon the Bavarian attacks grew weaker, the orders were given, first to collect carefully all the wounded of both sides on the battle-fields, and then in strict order to begin the retreat to Dermbach and Geisa. This took place without any disturbance from the enemy, since almost at the same hour Prince Charles had also given his troops the order to retreat. Falckenstein, now certain beyond any doubt of the presence of the entire Bavarian army, summoned on the 5th of July Beyer's Division from Hünfeld back to Geisa and brought up Manteuffel's corps likewise into the vicinity of the same point.

What Falckenstein must have desired more than anything else, the isolation and conquest of his adversaries separately, was offered to him here by a favorable fortune. He needed only to take hold and make the attacks. So he calculated, then, on the 5th of July, to push onward into the Felda and the Ulster valleys, and thus force the Bavarians into a decisive battle. But soon the scouts that had been sent out before day-

break came back, all bringing the same report, that at every point the Bavarians had disappeared; only in front of Kaltennordheim had a few of their outposts still been seen.

Then again the question was raised, whether the Bavarian army had not wholly withdrawn, and only the last remnant of their rear-guard remained behind in Kaltennordheim; whether it would then be possible to reach the enemy upon this road; and whether an attempt to do so would not be merely blows into the air, which indeed might most seriously endanger the chief object of the operations, namely the disjunction of the enemy's troops.<sup>1</sup> Suffice it to say, Falckenstein returned to the old leading of his heart, to the march to Fulda. General Beyer arrived there on the evening of the 6th, without having found any enemy. For the Bavarian cavalry-reserve, greeted on the 4th at Hünfeld by a few Prussian cannon-balls, had fled in wild panic from Fulda back as far as Brückenau and Hammelburg. The troops of the 8th corps, as we shall soon see, had received orders to another destination. Thus Falckenstein had reached his first goal: he believed now quite surely that he stood with his army between the two Confederate corps.

Unfortunately he had deceived himself again this time with regard to the situation of things quite as thoroughly as he had in the pursuit of the Hanoverians.

His nearest opponent, Prince Charles of Bavaria, was an old, steady soldier, not brilliant intellectually, but

<sup>1</sup> Göben, *Gefecht bei Dermbach*, p. 48.

thoroughly sensible, zealous, and prudent, and rather heavy in his deliberations and movements on account of his pedantic punctuality. He had no inclination whatever to risk himself, before uniting with the 8th corps, in the chances of a great battle; and when the Prussians had crossed over the Werra, he made up his mind to seek this union, no longer to the north, but to the south of the Rhön. Only he did not wish simply to run away in the face of the enemy; but rather should his soldiers before their retreat to the south test their strength and confidence in a few skirmishes.

This was done in the battles of July 4th; for the Bavarian troops of course knew nothing of Falckenstein's dispositions, and consequently attributed the final retreat of the enemy to their own bravery. Their leader then concentrated all their forces in a narrow compass at Kaltennordheim on the 5th, in order to be ready for a fresh attack, and then as soon as possible to begin in good order the retreat to the south, to the Franconian Saale. He entertained no thought of marching directly to Fulda over the very worst mountain roads of the Hohe-Rhön; but, on the contrary, sent on the very morning of the 5th an order to Prince Alexander to withdraw likewise towards the south and to join the Bavarian army by way of Brückenau and Kissingen. Accordingly, Prince Alexander instructed three of his Divisions to begin the march to Schlüchtern on the 6th of July. From this city, about eighteen miles south of Fulda, a tolerable road led over the southern foot-hills of the Rhön to Brückenau. Now,

since none of these troops were stationed at a distance of more than twenty-four miles from Schlüchtern, the Prince could have, before the evening of the 7th, 25,000, or perhaps 30,000 men collected there.<sup>1</sup>

On the Prussian side, as we have seen, Beyer's Division reached the city of Fulda on the evening of the 6th, and the two other Divisions not until some time in the course of the following day. Even if Falckenstein had gained information of Alexander's dispositions (which was not the case), still there is no doubt but that it would have been wholly impossible for him to hinder the march of the 8th corps from Schlüchtern to Kissingen. On the 5th of July he might have been able to meet the Bavarians separately; but his march to Fulda, far from keeping the enemy apart, left the path free for their union.

Yet a favorable fortune spared to his troops the bitter consequences of this mistake. The German people were to be left in no doubt concerning the rottenness of their Confederate Constitution, and the necessity of the reform proposed by Prussia was to be presented palpably before their eyes. At the very critical moment the highest authority of the Confederate military system overthrew by a sudden interference the important order of the Confederate Commander-in-chief, and issued commands exactly the opposite of the Bavarian orders: instead of the union, the utter dispersion of the troops of the Confederate army.

Since the beginning of the war the garrisons of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Preussisches Generalstabswerk*, p. 591.

Cologne and Coblenz had received instructions to annoy the districts of Nassau and Rhenish Hesse with small detachments of troops composed of the militia, and thus perhaps to divert the attention of the enemy from the operations of the Army of the Main. The governor of Mayence called for reinforcements; and the Duke of Nassau demanded back his soldiers from the Confederate corps, that they might defend Wiesbaden. Prince Alexander, to protect Upper Hesse-Darmstadt, sent the whole Baden Division to Giessen, where far and near no enemy was to be found. Just now again there came alarming news about Prussian incursions in the lower valley of the Lahn: Prince William of Baden considered that his flank and perhaps his rear was thereby threatened, and hence withdrew in haste on the 5th of July to within a very short distance of Frankfort. There the news was received of Königgrätz and of French mediation. The great war seemed to be decided, and the chief business now to be to protect the Confederate capital and the several Fatherlands as much as possible from hostile insults until the conclusion of the peace.

The Confederate Military Committee consequently, on the ground of Article XLVII. of the Confederate Military Constitution, telegraphed to Prince Alexander instructions to make necessary arrangements for the defence of the severely threatened line of the Main, and to this end not to lead his corps to Kissingen to join the Bavarian army, but to Frankfort to rescue the Confederate Diet. The Prince, fully in sympathy

with the order, obeyed without delay, announcing to the Commander-in-chief of the army that he would henceforth cover the Mayence-Hanau line, and that he considered it advisable for Bavaria to assume the defence of the Aschaffenburg-Lohr-Gemünden line.

Prince Charles was angry, and sent at once a sharp order demanding unconditional obedience. He repeated by telegraph the command to march to Kissingen. All was in vain! The 8th corps marched straight ahead to Frankfort. But the more arbitrarily Alexander had acted towards his superior officer, the more vigorously did he suppress the independence of his own subordinate. Prince William of Baden, severely reprovved on account of his retreat, was again made to advance to Friedberg; for Friedberg was, indeed, one of the Fatherlands to be protected. After all this Alexander was gratified by receiving gracious letters of gratitude from the King of Würtemberg and the Grand Duke of Hesse. But when on the 9th of July he besought the Emperor of Austria for the approval of his conduct, he had to put up with the cool reply: "Harmonious action with the 7th Confederate corps desirable and to be aimed at. Criticism of the operations not possible from here." Not even in Austria was the old sympathy and reverence for the Confederate Diet and the Lesser States to be found!

Meanwhile Falckenstein, after the Confederate army had so utterly disappeared from his sight, undertook with zeal the march to Schweinfurt marked out for him. He planned to execute it in two columns:

Beyer's Division should advance on the great Frankfurt road as far as Schlüchtern, then turning from there to the east should reach the Franconian Saale at Hammelburg, nine miles south of Kissingen; Göben's Division should proceed on the straight road from Fulda to Kissingen by way of Brückenau; and finally, Manteuffel's corps should cross the mountains a day's march behind Göben, and then at first remain as a common reserve in the vicinity of Brückenau, and send only a few battalions to Waldaschach, to the north of Kissingen.

The troops, especially Göben's and Manteuffel's, were obliged to pass with endless labor and privation one of the wildest and most inhospitable portions of the Hohe-Rhön. Falckenstein himself joined Beyer's Division; probably, however, because he believed that here in the south the strongest opposition would be likely to be met; for he had also given orders to Göben in such a case to threaten the enemy at Hammelburg in the flank. In reality, the situation of the forces was just the reverse: not upon Beyer, but again as at Dermbach, the brunt of the fight was to fall on Göben, and, indeed, on Göben alone.

Prince Charles had gone back in prudent *tempo* from the valley of the Felda over the watershed into the valley of the Franconian Saale, with the intention, in view of the absence of the 8th corps, of bringing together for a great defensive contest his whole army in a well-chosen position at Poppenhausen, about half-way between Kissingen and Schweinfurt. Upon this

march Hartmann's Division had already passed Kissingen; Zoller's Division had reached Kissingen; and the Divisions of Feder and Stephan were still somewhat to the north at Neustadt. Then it was announced to Prince Charles that only a portion of the Prussian army had crossed the mountains and taken possession of Brückenau. There was every reason to believe this, since it seemed very probable that another portion of the enemy had followed after the 8th corps.

Therefore the Prince changed his plan, and resolved not to abandon the crossings over the Saale without a struggle, to an enemy that he believed to be weaker than himself. He accordingly sent a brigade of Zoller's Division to Hammelburg with the whole of the cavalry-reserve, and Hartmann's Division to Euerdorf, seven miles up the river; again, four and a half miles farther to the north, Zoller occupied Kissingen with eight battalions; General Feder marched to Münnerstadt twenty-four miles north-east of Kissingen, and retaining for this place a reinforcement of three battalions, committed to three others the defence of Hausen, an hour's march above Kissingen, on the Saale; finally, Stephan's Division was to guard the bridge at Waldaschach, somewhat farther up the stream, with one battalion, and to station the remainder at Münnerstadt as a general reserve. As will be clearly seen, it would be possible in the event of an attack directed against Kissingen to collect within a few hours no less than three and a half Divisions. Thus there was awaiting Göben's Division, for the



present entirely isolated, a hot and perhaps very dangerous encounter.

When Göben arrived in the vicinity of Kissingen on the forenoon of July 10th, he advanced one battalion to cover his right flank upon the road to Euerdorf, and two others under Colonel Goltz upon the road to Hausen as a defence on the north. General Tresckow remained behind with three battalions in reserve. Thus the Brigadier-Generals Wrangel and Manteuffel retained only ten battalions with twenty-five cannon for the attack upon the town, which was protected by the deep and rapid river. For some considerable time they fired upon the enemy from across the river, but at last, somewhat below the town, a foot-bridge was found, only half-destroyed, over which the troops crossed the river and then from the south forced their way into the city in a vigorous assault.

The Bavarians fought with desperate courage. For every house and street-corner, for the possession of the avenues in the gardens of the famous watering-place, and about the graves in the cemetery, a fierce and bloody struggle ensued. Although Feder's battalions also gradually took part, yet the more rigorous discipline and more versatile tactics of the Prussians gained the day, though with heavy losses: at two o'clock Kissingen and a host of prisoners were in their hands.

The Bavarians withdrew to the east, climbing the slope of the Sinnberg. There in a woody hollow lies the village of Winkels. Scarcely were they drawn up

here, before they were again attacked by the pursuing Prussians, harassed upon their flanks from the wooded heights above them, and again compelled to retreat. But again Wrangel and the reserve, which was now also advanced, followed uninterruptedly after them. The crest of the Sinnberg was stormed; and another village, Nüdlingen, at the foot of the hill on the opposite side, was defended by the Bavarians and finally taken by the Prussians.

But here they were checked by the strict orders of Göben to cease the pursuit and to take up a position upon the crest and the road on the summit of the Sinnberg. Göben was afraid of exposing his flanks by further pursuit; and we have seen above, how much cause there was for prudently keeping together. Falckenstein, it is true, had sent in the morning to General Manteuffel instructions to march to Kissingen to Göben's support; but the orders did not come into the hands of the General until ten o'clock, so that the latter, hastily riding over to Kissingen himself, was obliged to announce to his associate that his corps could not arrive before late in the evening. His advance-guard had already captured Waldaschach and Hausen, but could render only slight assistance in covering Kissingen. In the main struggle Göben was left to depend upon his own strength.

At the serious turn in the fight at Kissingen, Prince Charles had appeared there in person and sent command after command to Hartmann and also to Stephan to hasten thither and take a decisive part in the contest.

But the messenger service in the Bavarian army seems to have been no better organized at that time than among the Austrians; for General Hartmann on the 10th of July received all sorts of commands, none of which agreed, until he finally believed, not that he was to hasten to Kissingen, but to take up a position to the south, on the road to Schweinfurt.

Stephan's Division, however, came towards evening with nine battalions to Nüdlingen. They found there the troops of Zoller and Feder badly in confusion and thoroughly exhausted; but they, on their part, advanced with fresh courage to attack the Sinnberg, and, completely surprising their foes, took the Prussian position in its whole extent. Wrangel sent word in haste down to Kissingen, begging Göben for assistance, but he received the answer that with his eight battalions he was strong enough to hold the position against the whole world. "Good Heavens!" cried Wrangel upon receiving the reply; "the position is already lost." Nevertheless he made a resolve of desperate boldness. He could stay where he was; and to retreat was forbidden him. So he gave the thundering signal proclaiming a general advance, and stormed up the heights again. This time it was the Bavarians, so sure of their victory, that were surprised. They were driven back to Nüdlingen, and then ordered by Prince Carl to withdraw to Poppenhausen. The day was everywhere won for the Prussians; for at Hammelburg also Beyer's Division had without great loss forced the enemy, only half its own in number, to retreat.

By quickly following up these advantages, great results might have been secured, since the army of the Bavarians had in retiring become widely dispersed. Those that had fought at Hammelburg had withdrawn upon the road to Würzburg, while Hartmann's Division had gone to Schweinfurt; the defenders of Kissingen, on the other hand, in order not to expose themselves to an attack upon their flank, marched farther to the east by way of Lauringen to Hassfurt, and from there intended to go down the left bank of the Main again to Schweinfurt. Hence a speedy and energetic attack upon Schweinfurt would have opened the prospect of fully overthrowing the Bavarian army. Falckenstein, too, had received from general headquarters on the 10th of July, in answer to a former question of his, a telegram in which great weight was again placed upon a victory over the Bavarians. "The countries north of the Main," it was said, "will be ours without our going into them." Falckenstein telegraphed back at once a short report of the advantages gained that day, and closed with the words: "Tomorrow advance against Schweinfurt." Inasmuch as Göben had constantly been the pioneer of the army in the contests, Manteuffel was ordered to the front and Beyer to his immediate support.

But as there was the greatest uncertainty about the lines of march taken up by the Bavarian troops, the hours of the forenoon of the 11th were consumed in preliminary reconnoitring; and just as Manteuffel was getting ready to move upon Schweinfurt, deliverance

came to the Bavarians in the shape of a *deus ex machina*, the telegram already mentioned, sent at Bismarck's instance on the 9th of July. The despatch, in cipher as it was, could be only partially understood; but the last sentence: "Actual occupation . . . lands north of the Main in view of prospective negotiations based on the *status quo* now important from political considerations" seemed to exclude every uncertainty: the command was to occupy Upper Hesse, Frankfort, and Nassau as speedily as possible, and, in spite of all the dictates of military logic, to give up the prospect of the utter overthrow of the Bavarians.

Accordingly: "About face!" "Forwards to Frankfort!" It was the old longing of Falckenstein; and it was now finally to gain full satisfaction. He straightway sent word to Moltke that he should enter Frankfort on the 17th. But even more did the new turn of affairs rejoice the heart of General Göben, who had just been placed in the rear and now saw his Division again at the head of the march. And if he was still thirsting for dangers, Falckenstein again did his part this time in contributing to gratify such a wish to its fullest extent. He marked out for him the direct road through the Spessart Mountains from Lohr to Aschaffenburg and on to Hanau, had Manteuffel follow him at a distance of two days' march, and instructed Beyer, quite separated from his associates, to march by way of Hammelburg and Rieneck to Gelnhausen. Thus Göben with his 13,000 men was for two days exposed to the attacks of the whole of the 8th Confederate

corps, that is, of an almost fourfold superior force. It would have been impossible to indicate more plainly an most absolute contempt for the enemy than by this entirely unnecessary dispersion of the forces. But, as things were, the result was to justify this reckless presumption.

On the side of the enemy, Prince Charles did not receive certain news of the sudden departure of the Army of the Main until the 12th of July, and then was left some time without any definite knowledge of its aim or the direction it had taken. By reason of the scattered condition of the Bavarian troops, distributed, as they were, over a distance of more than thirty miles, there could be no thought of an immediate pursuit; and on the 13th a telegram arrived from Minister von der Pfordten, saying that negotiations were going on, and that further hostilities, if possible, were to be avoided. The more decided then was the Prince in his resolve to tarry upon Bavarian soil, and, moreover, south of the Main, and to wait and see whether the 8th Confederate corps, which he had by an order of the 12th summoned to Uffenheim in Central Franconia, would yield any better obedience than a week before.

As a matter of fact, the news of the Bavarian misfortune on the Saale, and immediately afterwards of the march of the Army of the Main towards the west, had at one stroke opened the eyes of Prince Alexander to the error of his former tactics. So late as the 9th of July he had declared to the Confederate Diet that there was no cause for anxiety about Frankfort, but

now besought that its dignified, although no longer numerous, heads might be transported into safety at Augsburg. He himself issued on the 11th and 12th hasty orders to collect at Frankfort the troops scattered around at Wiesbaden, Friedberg, and Gelnhausen, that they might then be led through the Spessart to the Bavarians at Würzburg. On the 13th, the Darmstadt Division was drawn up at Aschaffenburg. The Austrian brigade under Hahn was to arrive in the evening; Badeners and Würtembergers were to follow them on the 14th. The Prince hoped to see his whole corps of 49,000 men united on the 15th at Aschaffenburg. The Hessians had instructions to cover with all their strength this important crossing-place over the Main, to throw forward some companies upon the Spessart road, and to gather exact information, but to let themselves be drawn into no engagement.

Towards these hostile masses Göben went with his Division, and, as ever, at a rapid pace. Having started from Kissingen on the afternoon of July 11th, they had reached Lohr late in the evening on the 12th. Early in the morning at five o'clock on the 13th they began to climb. The ascent was made in two columns, separated from each other by the distance of an hour's march, with a vigorous gait, that they might as soon as possible cover the fourteen miles to the watershed and the routes down the other side of the mountain. But it was a cruel march in the glowing heat, with no breeze stirring, in suffocating dust, up-hill and down-hill, without shade and without water! In silence, slowly and more slowly, the companies dragged along.

Then at three o'clock orderlies from the vanguard galloped up: an hour's march ahead were the enemy! New life now came into the tired limbs. Wrangel's brigade reached the place at about four o'clock. There was at first not much to do. The outposts of the Darmstatters withdrew, in accordance with their orders, after a few shots; and Wrangel's troops began to get ready their quarters for the night in and near the villages of Laufach and Fronhofen. But meanwhile the Hessian commander, General Perglas, had received several telegrams sent shortly before from Laufach, reporting that exhausted and scattered Prussian companies were wandering about the Spessart. These he thought he might now without much trouble fall upon in Laufach, and accordingly gave his Division orders to advance.

At the appearance of his vanguard, Wrangel gave his five battalions orders to establish themselves firmly in covered positions. The Hessians came on in close columns over a broad open slope. The brigades, first one and then the next, were attacked from close quarters with an annihilating, rapid fire, and, almost defenceless, were overcome and broken in a short time. With ancient Hessian courage they attempted several assaults with the same ill success. Finally they had lost tenfold as many as their adversaries, and came back at midnight faint and dejected to Aschaffenburg.

There General Neipperg had shortly before arrived with the Austrian brigade under Hahn, and now undertook to keep watch of the enemy. His second



brigade, the troops from Nassau, had, at the urgent request of their Duke, been despatched to Wiesbaden, and could not be back again with the army for several days; Neipperg moreover hoped for the speedy arrival of the Badeners and Würtembergers; but in this calculation he was to be doubly disappointed.

Göben, naturally unacquainted with these things, followed the simple idea that the faster he advanced, the better prospect he had of meeting the enemy separately and of defeating them. At six o'clock on the morning of July 14th he set his troops in motion towards Aschaffenburg, on the right Wrangel's brigade and on the left Kummer's. The Austrians, beside two battalions and one battery of Hessians, had taken possession of the immediate vicinity of the town upon the east side; and the combat began with great energy all along the line. Very soon after its commencement, General Perglas considered it proper—whether from lack of confidence in the firmness of his troops who were beaten the day before, or from his own pusillanimity—to withdraw very quietly with the main body of his Division down the river and bring himself into safety at Stockstadt upon the left bank of the stream: so that Neipperg with his nine battalions had to bear alone the Prussian attack. At about ten o'clock the fate of the day was decided. At all points the energetic assault of the Prussians overcame every resistance; and while Wrangel on his side was reaching the first houses of the city, Kummer, rushing forwards close to the river, got possession of the bridge over the

Main, so that all of the enemy that were left in the city fell as prisoners into the hands of the victors. Neipperg suffered a loss of 480 killed and wounded, besides more than 1,900 taken prisoners, whereas on the Prussian side there were only 27 killed and 150 wounded.

Prince Alexander had meanwhile, late on the evening of the 13th, received orders from the Commander-in-chief of the army to lead his corps to Uffenheim, that is, not through the Spessart, but farther to the south through the forests of the Odenwald, to a union with the Bavarians. Accordingly, he had on the 14th sent ahead the Würtemberg and Baden Divisions by the railway *via* Darmstadt to Dieburg and Babenhäusen, thinking that to this march the position of the Hessians and Austrians in Aschaffenburg would serve as a protection of the flank. For the defence of this city these two Divisions would have come in any case too late; and now they were, on the contrary, to be joined by the beaten Austrians, and with them, and the Hessians and Nassauers, to begin the night's laborious march through the Odenwald.

Göben let them depart unhindered, and continued on the 15th his march to Hanau. Then on the 16th Falckenstein, at the head of the Division rich in laurels, held his triumphal entrance into Frankfort. From here he issued a manifesto, in which he assumed the government of Upper Hesse, Frankfort, and Nassau (the Princes thus ousted had fled to Munich). He levied at the same time upon the city of Frankfort, a

contribution of six million florins, provided abundantly for the care of his troops, and sent word to the King, "All the territory north of the Main lies at the feet of Your Majesty."

On the same day he received a royal commission dated July 11th, releasing him from the supreme command of the Army of the Main and appointing him Governor-general of the Kingdom of Bohemia. To his former office General von Manteuffel was appointed, being the corps-commander longest in the service.

However full of honor his new commission may have been, Falckenstein's removal called forth a great storm of public sentiment. The surprising and brilliant successes of the Army of the Main had procured for its leader an extensive popularity, as also his personal vivacity, his open and unreserved manners, his care of the soldiers, and his clemency toward the inhabitants of a hostile country, produced everywhere an excellent impression.

Of his successor it was known that he stood high in royal favor; but a host of old officers, whom he as head of the military cabinet had removed from the army on account of their partial or total inefficiency, thoroughly hated him. So the rumors flew about that Manteuffel had always objected to being a subordinate under the grand old officer, and had at last achieved his fall by secret accusations to the King. Now, not a single word of all that was true. Manteuffel most punctually obeyed every instruction of his Commander-in-chief. That he was angry with him on account of being con-

stantly placed in the rear is entirely a fabrication. His position was the natural result of his being obliged to make a longer march than his associates, in coming from Altona to Hanover and Thuringia; and it was not Falckenstein's fault that on the 11th of July Mantuffel did not get a chance to fight. Falckenstein was removed, not on account of any intrigue that feared publicity, but because the authorities in the General Headquarters were exceedingly displeased with his conduct of the war: he had, as we have seen, more than once taken things into his own hands and neglected or entirely disregarded instructions from Headquarters (on the 21st as also on the 27th of June), and Moltke was not inclined longer to let such things pass. Out of respect for the other valuable services of the General this was not spoken openly; and Mantuffel would have been the last person to defend himself against the malicious slanders that were heaped upon him to the detriment of his former superior officer.

The first duty incumbent upon the new Commander-in-chief as an inheritance from his predecessor was not a pleasant one; namely, to execute Bismarck's order directed to Falckenstein to exact from the city of Frankfort a contribution of twenty-five million florins. Frankfort, as the seat of the Confederate Diet, had always been loyally Austrian, and during the last few years had at every opportunity made a great show of her anti-Prussian sentiments. In spite of Bismarck's circular that Prussia should consider every vote for the

motion of June 14th as a declaration of war and act accordingly, this free city had voted for it; and although she had, to be sure, prudently kept her battalions of the line at home, she had, nevertheless, when the Confederate Diet in the last few weeks summoned all loyal Confederate states to form a militia to assist the army, with zeal obeyed the call. So Bismarck's new measure was from the standpoint of international law perfectly justifiable, though it was undoubtedly extremely severe and was followed by a general protest in Frankfort and by lively disapproval from abroad. Manteuffel considered it best by issuing mighty threats to make any violent action unnecessary; but he let the matter drag along by applying for instructions several times. He was assisted in the accomplishment of his duty by the fact that Bismarck, although intending to read a sharp lecture to the Frankforters for their former conduct, was very much inclined, so soon as the Prussian annexation of the city might be regarded as assured, to let them off with the scare.

During this extension of the Prussian military power in the west of Germany, the Minister of War had not been idle in filling up and reinforcing the victorious Divisions. Without cessation the dépôts at home had been providing equipments. A large number of 4th battalions had been formed, many troops of militia had been collected on foot and mounted, and the contingents of the North German Confederate allies set upon the march. Thus the Army of the Main was brought up to the number of 50,000 men,

while about 10,000 men remained behind to secure the territories of which Prussia had taken possession.

At the same time there had been in Saxony, in response to a royal order of July 3d, the date of Königgrätz, a second reserve-corps of 25,000 men drawn up under the leadership of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, who were to march from there by way of Hof and make incursions into the eastern provinces of Bavaria. The Grand Duke began his march on the 20th of July, while General Manteuffel took up operations against the Confederate army again on the 21st. The two corps of the latter were, indeed, now united, and against the 50,000 men of the Army of the Main they could bring no less than 80,000, with a twofold superior number of cannon. But there was not a single man in the Prussian camp, that would not, after the success already achieved, have gone into the unequal contest with unhesitating confidence.

In fact they went now from conquest to conquest. The practised bravery of the soldiers and the tireless energy of the leaders were the same as before, only the latter was somewhat less mixed with the risk of adventurous chance than was the case with Falckenstein. Justice towards the South German troops demands just here the remark, that during the last week of the war political interposition was continually staying their arm, and in spite of the great courage of individuals the resistance as a whole was doomed to be ineffectual. The South German Courts felt that they were conquered; and they were exceedingly anxious not to

sacrifice their troops further for a lost cause. Such a sentiment must of course make the victory not a little easier to be won by a zealous adversary.

Manteuffel knew that the Bavarians, after the departure of the Army of the Main, had collected at Würzburg; but that the 8th Confederate corps had gone through the Odenwald to the Tauber river. He could not prevent their union south of Würzburg. The question was, whether he had better, turning back through the Spessart, fall first upon the Bavarians or follow the tracks of the 8th corps through the Odenwald. Without doubt the latter would be the boldest, since in the event of a mishap the retreat might be attended by dangers and difficulties. Yet for that very reason it would certainly surprise the enemy, especially since, if all went well, it would lead directly upon their rear and cut them off entirely from connection with their homes. Nor was it a matter of small consequence to the impending peace-negotiations that in this way considerable portions of Baden and Würtemberg territory would fall into the possession of Prussia. So Manteuffel quickly made up his mind. In three days — it had taken the Confederate army six — his troops traversed the Odenwald, and after an insignificant skirmish between the Coburg-Gotha regiment and a Baden brigade at Hundheim, stood on the 24th of July along the Tauber from Wertheim to Bischofsheim face to face with the Divisions of Prince Alexander.

While Manteuffel had been acting, the enemy had

been taking wise counsel. News was expected every day of the conclusion of peace or a truce. It was supposed that the Prussian Commander was detained a long time in Frankfort by political business. It took a long while to determine whether it would be better to go after him there or to await his attack, and when it was finally decided to act on the offensive and make an attack, it was for a while a matter of doubt whether the march should be made through the Odenwald on the south side of the Main or on the north side through the Spessart. At a conference between Prince Charles and Prince Alexander on the 19th the latter course was chosen. It was found, however, that, on account of the present position of the bodies of troops, the operation could not be undertaken before the 24th of July; so that the two corps could not be united at Aschaffenburg before the 28th. On the 21st Alexander learned the news of the approach of the enemy to the Tauber and at once notified Charles.

But the latter had just heard of the appearance of Prussian troops at Lohr (Manteuffel had sent thither a battalion and a few hussars to mislead the enemy), supposed that the main body of the adversary could be met there, and hence had the largest part of his forces march northwards towards Lohr and Gemünden, about thirty-six miles distant from Alexander's position on the Tauber. So that at the very moment when the hostile blow struck the imperial army, the old disjunction of the two corps had been fortunately brought to pass.



In this situation Prince Alexander hesitated as to whether he should engage in the fight in front of or behind the Tauber, tired his troops, already in poor condition from insufficient supplies in the Odenwald, with marching back and forth several times, and finally took possession of the two crossings over the river, at Bischofsheim and at Werbach, five miles below, with small companies of troops, for whose immediate support he stationed the Baden Division at Werbach and the Württemberg Division at Bischofsheim, drawing up the Darmstadters, Austrians, and Nassauers farther to the east from Bischofsheim as a reserve.

Manteuffel, whose chief aim was to keep his two adversaries as far apart from each other as possible, had sent the Division of Flies, of the corps that had formerly been commanded by himself, to Wertheim, where the Tauber empties into the Main. This point the General found abandoned by the enemy, in consequence of the latest movements of the Bavarians, and accordingly crossed the Tauber without opposition, and advancing somewhat farther to the east protected the flank of the army against the Bavarians.

Against the 8th corps Manteuffel had determined to make an attack, and, breaking through with superior numbers at Werbach, to drive them to the south and thus remove them farther from the Bavarians. Accordingly, he led against Werbach Weltzien's brigade (composed of troops from Oldenburg and the Hanseatic towns) of Göben's Division and the whole of Beyer's Division, while Göben had for the time at his disposal

against Bischofsheim only Wrangel's brigade, since Kummer would not be able to reach there before evening. So that here again the heaviest burden was laid upon his shoulders. But he did not lose heart any more than at Kissingen.

Bischofsheim lies upon the west bank of the Tauber, in a hollow surrounded on all sides by commanding heights. From these the little city was first bombarded by a Prussian battery and then taken by storm. The enemy were pursued over the bridge, and possession taken of the nearest houses and gardens on the other side. Here the hard work of the day began. First the Würtembergers, then the Austrians and the Nassauers, supported by the fire of about forty guns, undertook one assault after another in trying to regain the bridge; but each time they fell back with heavy loss under the murderous fire of the needle-guns.

Five Prussian battalions and five guns here held their ground unflinchingly against two Divisions of the enemy. Soon after six o'clock Prince Alexander received word that the Baden troops had evacuated Werbach after a slight resistance<sup>1</sup> and had withdrawn seven miles away on the road to Würzburg. He saw that his flank was thus exposed, and broke off the fight, allowing his troops to go into bivouac four or five miles behind Bischofsheim. The line of the Tauber had been won by the Prussians, and Manteuffel ordered for the next day, the 25th of July, a vigorous continuance of the offensive. The Division of Flies

<sup>1</sup> They lost 80 men; the Würtembergers, 670.

along the Main was again to cover the left flank of the army against the Bavarians, and Beyer, starting out from Werbach by way of Neubrunn, was to threaten the position of the 8th corps on the right, while Göben advancing directly from Bischofsheim should attack the same in the front. This would have completed the separation of the two portions of the hostile army.

Meanwhile, Prince Charles had no longer been able to close his eyes to the fact that large masses of the enemy had reached the Tauber, and there was no more use in thinking of his projected offensive movement from Lohr to Aschaffenburg. He therefore commanded his troops to collect as rapidly as possible at Rossbrunn, seven miles east of Würzburg and the same distance from the camp of the 8th corps. Thence, on the 24th of July, the Divisions of Stephan and Prince Luitpold (formerly Zoller's) went forward in a south-westerly direction into the vicinity of Helmstadt, and General Stephan had his advanced-guard occupy Neubrunn, only an hour's march from the Baden camp.

Of these movements of the Bavarians the Prussian leaders knew nothing, and so General Beyer was utterly surprised when he reached Neubrunn towards noon and saw the Bavarian helmets. The continuance of his march against the 8th corps was under these circumstances out of the question. But the more boldly did he take hold of the new adversary; and soon he forced Stephan's vanguard to retire to its main body.

General Stephan, on his part, determined to attack

the enemy with all due energy; but, wishing to execute a manœuvre as correct technically as possible, drew out for the attack upon a wide arc curving to the north. This roundabout way cost him from three to four hours; and General Beyer, whose skirmishers were already in an engagement with the troops of Prince Luitpold, made such a skilful use of this time that he entirely defeated the Division of the Prince; and then, towards evening, when Stephan finally approached, the same bloody fate awaited him before the darkness came on. Thereupon, Prince Charles withdrew the discomfited Divisions to a position close by Würzburg, and then stationed in Rossbrunn and vicinity the troops of Generals Feder and Hartmann, who had during this time been coming on from Lohr and Heidenfeld.

But the Confederate cause seemed to be in a still more hopeless plight with the 8th corps. During the last twenty-four hours the Princes Charles and Alexander had exchanged several very unpleasant letters, the essential contents of which were mainly that each requested the other to come to his assistance and help chase away the enemy. The result was that Alexander led his corps during the forenoon of the 25th four miles and a half farther back to Gerchsheim, where, a few hours later, he was attacked by Göben with two brigades. He had 40,000 men against 10,000, but contented himself with having his artillery fire upon the woods which the Prussians had taken possession of directly in front of his position. In the evening Gen-

eral Wrangel appeared upon his left flank with Göben's 3d brigade, while upon his right a confused throng of flying wagons and carts of the defeated Bavarians streamed past, and the two commanders of the Hessian and Würtemberg Divisions announced that their troops were so utterly exhausted that they were in no condition to fight. Then he gave the signal to retreat into the vicinity of Würzburg, whereby in the darkness of the night a great many of the regiments fell wholly into confusion and were broken up.

Then, on the 26th of July, the Bavarian Divisions of Feder and Hartmann had a sharp encounter at Rossbrunn with Beyer and Flies, at the close of which their cuirassiers also found an opportunity by brave assaults to wipe out in some measure the hateful stain of Hünfeld. But here, too, the day was finally gained by the Prussians; and after the distinguished 8th corps, without saying anything to anybody, had passed by the city of Würzburg and sought safety on the northern bank of the Main, Prince Charles also, on the 27th, forced by necessity, followed their example. Within three days Manteuffel had driven the almost twofold more numerous Confederate army before him across the Main, and cut them off from their homes and countries.

During this time the 2d reserve-corps, almost without meeting any resistance, had reached Nuremberg by way of Hof and Bayreuth. All paths stood open to them: either to make a triumphal march into Munich, or in concert with Manteuffel to annihilate the Confederate army. At this point came the news of the

Nicolsburg truce, which was greeted with rejoicing throughout the whole South. Manteuffel, as we know, was to arrange the definite terms with the separate South German states: of the North German states nothing was to be said. The Confederate corps disbanded: each of its sections returned by a different road into its own home. Lower Franconia, Darmstadt, Mannheim, Heidelberg, and Mergentheim remained for the time in Prussian keeping.

That was the first and last war that the most distinguished German Confederate Diet had to wage. What would have become of Germany, had she been obliged to undergo a war with France or Russia under the leadership of that institution!

BOOK XX.

*FOUNDATION OF THE NEW EMPIRE.*





## CHAPTER I.

### END OF THE PRUSSIAN CONSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLE.

As after a violent tempest the waves continue boisterous for a long time, and at certain points of the coast the breakers may be still more dangerous than at the height of the storm, so did it happen on the sea of German and European politics, when on the 26th of July the tempest of armed strife had been allayed. Firm ground had indeed been gained at the decisive point; but everywhere the different elements were in ceaseless fermentation. At more than one point it was necessary to offer a vigorous resistance to the swelling waves. Those were busy days for Bismarck at Nicolsburg, that followed the signing and ratification of the preliminaries of peace.

In spite of the decided repulse which Baron von der Pfordten had received, the conquered princes now pressed to the Prussian Headquarters, begging for peace and declaring their good-will. Already on July 24th the Grand Duke of Baden, who had, to be sure, entered the struggle only under compulsion, had written to his royal father-in-law, asked for an armistice, and offered his mediation between Prussia and the Southern States. As a proof of his feelings he dis-

missed two days later his Minister, Edelsheim (who still declaimed against the peace) and formed a ministry of distinctly Prussian tendencies, announcing at the same time in Augsburg his withdrawal from the Confederation. He was also the first that severed the connection of his troops with the 8th Confederate corps and called them home.

King William, as may well be supposed, met these advances cordially. His feeling toward the old Duke Bernhard of Meiningen was, however, different. He had been formerly one of the most obstinate enemies of Prussia, but on the 22d of July applied for admission into the North German Confederation. An answer was sent to the Duke on the 29th to the effect that his request would be complied with, if he would abdicate in favor of his son: otherwise he might negotiate with Prussia in the same way as the South German states, and send a plenipotentiary to Berlin for that purpose.

King George of Hanover, after a short sojourn in Thuringia, in spite of the urgent representations of his more prudent counsellors, had taken up his abode at Hietzing near Vienna. He was at first received with enthusiasm, but had now become a burden to the Austrian Government; so that he decided to open negotiations with Prussia. On the 28th of July one of his adjutants appeared at Nicolsburg bringing a letter from his Sovereign to King William. But he received the reply that His Majesty was not in a position to receive the communication.

In Stuttgart, Queen Olga, trusting in her brother

the Czar, had opposed the beginning of peace-negotiations; but King Charles, in view of the unhappy retreat of the Confederate corps beyond the Main, had decided on sending to Nicolsburg a deputation, consisting of his cousin, Prince Frederick, and the Minister, Von Varnbüler. These gentlemen arrived at Nicolsburg on the 29th of July, — unfortunately just at the moment when the King was starting on his return journey and consequently no longer able to receive the Prince.

On the following day appeared the Darmstadt Minister, Von Dalwigk, who, as we know, had been hitherto, next to Beust, one of the most active and bitter opponents of Prussia's policy. Now, however, he was overflowing with patriotic confederate goodwill, desired, as Varnbüler had done, to be received into the North German Confederation, and declared that the Grand Duke would consider no conditions too severe for the fulfilment of this wish. We shall see later at what other point he hoped to obtain easier conditions for himself. For the present, Bismarck praised the disposition of these gentlemen to make patriotic sacrifices, but expressed regret that considerations respecting France made it impossible to receive them yet into the Confederation; and that he could therefore for the time only refer them to the negotiations which were to be carried on with the states separately at Berlin.

On the return journey, in which Prague was the first stopping-place, whither Bismarck followed a few

days after the King, the Minister at last spoke with Senator Müller from Frankfort on the Main, whom the King had summoned to Headquarters. The subject of discussion was the profoundly agitating question of the two war-contributions that had been imposed upon the city, of six, and of twenty-five millions of thalers. The first was almost paid up; the discharging of the second was repeatedly declared to be absolutely impossible. Bismarck now announced to the ambassador the King's decision, that the second contribution would be dispensed with, and that further, the first should be paid back if the town would of its own accord ask admission into the Prussian monarchy. Müller's instructions did not give him power to agree to this, and so Bismarck observed: "Then the contribution remains in our treasury and Frankfort continues a conquered city."

While favor and coolness were being meted out in well-calculated measure to former enemies, decisive steps were taken in the sphere of internal Prussian politics.

The 3d of July had brought the Prussian Government, not only the overwhelming victory over Austria, but also a telling success against the Opposition at home. At the same time that the Prussian battalions were annihilating the Austrian army, the Opposition suffered such losses in the elections to the Parliament that the Government, whose party in the years of the constitutional struggle had at times melted away to ten or twelve members, carried through their candi-

dates for nearly half of the Lower House. With such a combination of political and military triumphs how many of the great conquerors of ancient or modern times would have resisted the temptation to break in pieces the hostile empire without, and to propose to themselves the overthrow of all constitutional restraints within.

But Bismarck was made of other stuff. He was not striving for world-dominion nor for boundless power, but for the means to secure and strengthen his Prussian Fatherland. So much acquisition of power and of territory as was necessary for this he laid hold of with iron grasp — so much and no more. The intoxication of victory never disordered his judgment, nor got the mastery over his fixed principles of moderation.

On the battle-field of Königgrätz his first thought had been the restoration of the old friendship with Austria. And now in the same way he sent from Horschitz to the Minister of Finance, Von der Heydt, an answer of hearty approval to the proposal that, now that the parliamentary elections had resulted so favorably, steps should be taken towards ending the constitutional dispute. The thought of France strengthened his conviction on both these points: behind the conclusion of the present war he saw further dangers looming up which he wished Prussia, and it was to be hoped all Germany, to encounter in a solid phalanx and in healthy unity.

But in this matter also, the great statesman was not destined to gain his point without a struggle. Since

the war had been decided, it had been his intention to seek from the new Parliament indemnity for the budgetless financial management of the past year, and to announce this at the very beginning in the Speech from the Throne. On the 18th of July appeared the royal order summoning the Parliament to convene at Berlin on the 30th; and on the same day the consideration of the Speech began in the Ministerial Council.

But when in the Council the Minister of Finance read the part that concerned himself and at the conclusion promised to bring forward a bill of indemnity, bitter opposition arose among the majority of his colleagues. They had been for four years constantly asserting that the course taken by the Government was entirely constitutional, and hence required no indemnity; therefore, to ask for such a thing now meant to confess that the Government had been wrong in the four years' conflict and that the complaints of the Opposition had been well-founded. In the present position of the Government they thought there was no sort of reason for its thus humiliating itself; but on the contrary, they hoped that the stubborn Opposition would now be easily controlled. These discussions continued on the 19th of July. Von der Heydt's view was still supported only by Baron Werther, formerly ambassador at Vienna, who for the time was managing, as Bismarck's representative, the business of the Department of Foreign Affairs at Berlin. This gentleman was addressed after the session in a friendly way by Eulenberg, with

the remark that he seemed very decidedly to have adopted the standpoint of the Party of Progress.

The King was much disturbed by the report of these proceedings. Bismarck, however, succeeded in quieting his anxiety. "How is it possible," said the Minister, "to see in a proposal for indemnity a rueful confession of guilt? Just the contrary is the case. If we propose an indemnity, we call upon the Parliament to declare that we have done right in acting as we did. Hitherto the Lower House has disputed the fact that our proceedings were forced upon us by reasons of necessity. If it now grants us an indemnity, that means an admission that these reasons were before either not understood or their validity not allowed, and that now the House recognizes them and therefore gives an *ex post facto* approval to the action of the Ministry. How this can involve a humiliation of the Government is not clear!"

The King, who, as well as his Minister, desired internal peace, allowed himself finally to be convinced. The passage in question in the Speech was approved. But the right and duty of the Government now as before to rule without a budget, if a financial law was not passed, was also asserted; although the illegality of such a state of things and the necessity of a financial law approved on all sides was at the same time fully recognized.

Nevertheless, the opposition in the Ministry continued. In the session of July 28th Count Lippe especially spoke with vehement indignation against the

request for an indemnity: saying that it placed the Ministry in the position of criminals who were begging for pardon. The Minister of Finance replied that the attitude maintained by the Ministry up to that time was not in the least belied by the request: this attitude was perfectly proper and in accordance with their duty, and yet at the same time it remained true that only a budget arranged by agreement with the Parliament could be legal, and that consequently an *ex post facto* approval by the Parliament was indispensable. He then wrote to Bismarck that the royal determination in this matter would decide the question of his own continuance in the position of Minister of Finance: he must cling to the principle, however inconvenient he might make it for the other gentlemen by so doing.

Bismarck stood by him with unflinching firmness. The opening of the Parliament had to be postponed; but on the 3d of August, Bismarck, having followed the King to Prague, brought the revision of the speech to a conclusion. He himself wrote the passage about the indemnity in accordance with marginal observations noted by the King upon the original outline. He then sent the document to Berlin with the express word that the King would permit no further discussion about it. To his wife, however, he wrote: "We can manage with our enemies, but our friends! They almost all wear blinders and can see but a scrap of the world."

In addition to these constitutional questions at home, European politics demanded the Minister's



attention continually. Almost at the very time when King William ratified the preliminaries of peace there arrived at Nicolsburg on the 27th of July a telegram from Herr von Werther saying that the Russian ambassador, Herr von Oubril, had now brought forward officially the proposition of a congress, as having been approved by Prussia before the war, and reported that the proposition had been made simultaneously also in London and Paris. Then on the following day, July 28th, while the ratifications of the peace-preliminaries were being exchanged, Count Goltz telegraphed that Napoleon had asked him confidentially the day before whether at the final settlement of German affairs France could not receive Landau and Luxemburg: saying that this would only give strength to the French defensive position without in any way affecting the security of Germany, and that public opinion in Paris was very much aroused and threatened the dynasty, if France should go away entirely empty-handed.

Danger was thus approaching on both sides. Bismarck made a formal report to the King on the subject just before the latter's departure from Nicolsburg, and at once received his assent to the view that both of these suggestions from abroad were to be rejected most unhesitatingly. So far as France was concerned, he decided to do nothing till Benedetti should have made the formal communication he had promised on July 26th. As to the Russian proposition he telegraphed immediately to Werther on the 29th that Prussia had in May entertained the idea of a congress

for the purpose of avoiding the war, but that after being obliged to wage war at the risk of her very existence she could not allow the advantages so dearly bought to be dependent upon the decision of a congress. She could therefore only consent to such a congress, if some basis were previously fixed that would assure to her these advantages. The King, it was added, expected from the sense of justice and the friendship of the Emperor Alexander that the latter would be deterred from taking further steps in the direction of a congress, without first coming to an understanding with Prussia.

The contrary of this expectation, however, seemed to be fulfilled, when on the 30th of July the military plenipotentiary at the Russian Court, Herr von Schweinitz, reported that Russia insisted on the congress, and, what was an element of especial importance, had received the approval of France. If such an understanding had actually been arrived at between Paris and St. Petersburg, the anxious thought suggested itself that then Austria also was not a stranger to it, and in that case the step from the preliminaries to the definitive peace might be imperilled.

Accordingly Bismarck took a determined stand towards all parties. On the 31st of July a telegram (approved by the King) was sent to Schweinitz, to the effect that he was to make it clear to the Emperor in a cautious and friendly way that it would be wholly impossible for the Prussian Government, without provoking a revolution in Prussia and Germany, to renounce the fruits of a victory that had been won at

the risk of existence or to make the settlement of Germany dependent upon the resolutions of a congress. "The King," the despatch continued, "is absent. I can, however, only advise His Majesty, if interference with our affairs from abroad should take a more defined form, to let loose the whole national strength of Germany and the bordering countries in a manifestation of resistance."

These were significant words; and the reference to "the bordering countries" might give the rulers of Poland and Hungary cause to stop and think. Hitherto Bismarck had taken less interest than Usedom and Moltke in the formation of a Hungarian legion; but now he gave instructions that so far as possible attention should be given to strengthening the same.

A corresponding telegram was sent at the same time to Count Goltz at Paris. "The assertion," said the despatch, "that France has agreed to Russia's proposal without putting herself in communication with us is a surprise to me. Your Excellency will leave the Imperial Cabinet in no doubt but that, if there is any attempt to deprive us of what has been promised, we will pick up the gauntlet; and that, if we do not receive quieting assurances, we shall at once seek to conclude a new compact with Italy with further objects in view; and further, if France does not keep her word as pledged us, that we shall not hold ourselves bound to the line of the Main." A copy of the telegram sent to Schweinitz accompanied this.

Fortunately, it was soon seen that such sharp

measures would not be necessary to avert Russian interference. On the same day, the 31st, Count Bernstorff could report from London, after a conversation with Lord Stanley, that although the strengthening of Prussia was regarded in Russia with aversion and mistrust, it was accepted in England with lively satisfaction; that England did not desire the congress, and would be glad if Prussia refused it; that, indeed, no one had wished for a congress after the territorial changes of 1859; and that, moreover, a negative answer from Napoleon was probable, as he would have no desire for a congress in which for the first time he would not play the leading *rôle*. This suspicion was immediately afterwards confirmed by the French rejection of the congress. And this rejection was very natural after Napoleon had once adopted the design not only of not hindering Prussia's acquisitions, but also of demanding a corresponding gain for himself; for the congress would at most have been an available means only for the first of these ends, and would certainly not have furthered the other.

Thus the Russian plan of a congress came to a speedy end a few days after its birth; and in vain did Prince Gortschakoff seek to recall it to life a few weeks later in a less pronounced form. The Emperor Alexander, on the other hand, gave a friendly reception to Bismarck's very first despatch of July 29th. He said to Schweinitz: "The King desires that I should take no further step before coming to an understanding with him. Well, I ask nothing better. To

be sure, such a thing does not work well in letters, but with genuine satisfaction would I receive any person who enjoys the King's confidence and could enlighten me as to the actual intentions of the Royal Cabinet."<sup>1</sup>

This expression of the desire for an envoy-extraordinary made it seem as if Alexander was anxious to lay the foundation for an honorable withdrawal. For it would be said later, that this envoy had brought such convincing assurances, that Russia could without hesitation give up the idea of a congress and announce her recognition of the Prussian annexations. Bismarck at once selected General Manteuffel as the proper person; and after the King had announced his consent at Prague on the 3d of August, the General, who was at that time at Frankfort-on-the-Main, was summoned as speedily as possible to Berlin.

King William could therefore on the 4th of August leave Prague with a lighter heart. General Headquarters were transferred by way of Görlitz to Berlin. Bismarck accompanied the King; and the latter on his arrival was received by the people with unbounded enthusiasm.

On the very same day the first step was taken toward the realization of the North German Confederation. In a circular-despatch Bismarck informed the states that had been invited to join on the 16th of June that, with the exception of Saxe-Meiningen and Reuss (elder line), the acceptance had been universal. He also laid

<sup>1</sup> Report of Schweinitz, Aug. 1st. Also Werther's report of a communication from Oubril.

before them, on the basis of the correspondence that had taken place in that connection, the outline of a compact of alliance, requesting them to communicate their decision as quickly as possible. The compact designated as the object of the alliance the maintenance of the independence and integrity, as well as of the domestic and foreign security, of the states that were to be a party to it. This object was to be definitively settled and established by a confederate constitution on the basis of the Prussian outline of June 10th, 1866, with the co-operation of a parliament to be summoned by the states in common. The troops of the confederates were to be under the supreme command of His Majesty the King of Prussia. The elections to the Parliament were to take place at the same time with those in Prussia on the basis of the imperial law of 1849. Plenipotentiaries from the states were to meet at Berlin to prepare the constitutional draft that was to be laid before the parliament in accordance with the principles declared upon June 10th.

In this document there appeared again, and most unmistakably, the characteristics of the Prussian policy at that time: firmness and moderation, and the policy of achieving limited but lasting results. Nothing could be clearer than that at that moment Prussia possessed the power to impose upon all the smaller states her arbitrary will. But such thoughts were far from both the King and the Minister. Not one syllable was changed after the great victories, in the offers and promises that had been made before the war.

So it was already settled that the factors of legislation should be a confederate diet and, by its side, a parliament chosen by the general vote of the people and by secret ballot. The functions of these bodies would extend to the army and the navy, to diplomacy, and matters of trade, tariff, and commerce; but the internal administration of justice, and of affairs relating to religion and education, would be left to the individual states.

So far as the executive power in the new confederation was concerned, neither the circular of June 10th nor that of August 4th contained any definite provision for this. The natural conclusion to be drawn from this fact was that it would remain without change in the hands of the confederate diet, that is, of all the Governments together, it being understood that this should be under the leadership of the King of Prussia, who would in any case, as confederate commander-in-chief, take a position that had not hitherto existed in the Confederation, and who would also, as president of the confederation, receive in the future confederate constitution very much more extended privileges than had obtained under the old system. The real depository of the sovereignty in the new state would be, however, not the president of the Confederation, but, as heretofore, the confederate diet. This was the essential point of contrast between these new proposals and the resolutions of the Assembly in the Cathedral of St. Paul. Then an assembly without power had voted the German princes out of the government of the state.

Now a powerful victor restored to them their full share in that government, although subject to his own vigorous guidance. That the new confederation would act neither despotically within, nor on the offensive without, was placed beyond a doubt by these fundamental principles. The people felt convinced that they saw in the popular parliament and in the Prussian leadership firm bulwarks of future unity.

On that same 4th of August a friendly hand was reached out, not indeed by the Prussian Government, but by a great assembly of influential notables, to secure a practical union with their southern brethren beyond the Main.

For the moment, the war had torn asunder the bonds which had held together since the compacts of 1864 the German Tariff-Union. Everywhere the immediate restoration of the same was looked upon as certain, and everywhere the feeling was abroad that in this connection also the blessings of the new era would make themselves effectually felt. Like the old Confederation, the former Tariff-Union had been smitten with sterility, chiefly because decisions on weighty questions could be decided, not by a majority, but only by a unanimous vote. Now this would have to be, and could be, otherwise.

There met at this time in Brunswick, for common consultation, the most distinguished representatives of these interests and the men most familiar with them: the committee of the German General Board of Trade (*Handelstag*), the committee of the Political Economy



Congress (*Volkswirtschaftlicher Congress*), the committee of the National Association, and in addition a considerable number of those who were acquainted with the subject and of those in sympathy with the movement. A leader of the Nassau Liberal Opposition, Karl Braun of Wiesbaden, proposed a resolution that while the tariff agreement should be kept up with the states outside the confederation, the control of tariff-union matters should nevertheless be unconditionally vested in the central power of the confederate state and the confederate parliament should be empowered to legislate thereon; also that deputies from the southern states, chosen for this special purpose in proportion to the number of the inhabitants, should have a voice in that parliament.

All present agreed in the one main object that Braun had before him: the recognition of the material interests of the South, which imperatively demanded the continuance of the Tariff-Union without reference to that line of separation drawn by France along the Main. But various members held that according to Braun's proposal the pressure exerted upon the southern states would not be strong enough; and it was agreed to give expression to the unanimous opinion that the arrangement suggested by Braun should hold good only until 1870 at the latest, and that then the South Germans should be left the choice between entering the confederate state without reserve or withdrawing from the Tariff-Union. No one then suspected that the limit of time thus set would receive from another

quarter a decisive significance in connection with the future of Germany.

While the establishment and the limits of the confederate state were thus being simultaneously discussed, King William's Government was putting its hand also to the most important preliminary of the German renaissance, the restoration of internal peace between the Crown and the popular representative body in Prussia. The opening of the Parliament was fixed for Sunday noon, August 5th, in the celebrated White Hall of the royal palace; and it can easily be imagined with what intense suspense the appearance of the King was awaited. Every one said to himself that the old struggle over the organization of the army had been ended upon the battle-fields of Bohemia: whoever might still have wished to dispute the intrinsic value of that creation of King William's would have exposed himself to everlasting ridicule. But who knew what further use the King would make of this triumph? The men of the *Kreuzzeitung* Party threatened, and those of the Party of Progress feared, that now a budgetless rule would be proclaimed to be the only proper system, and any further opposition would be put down by a dictatorship that had become all-powerful. The whole existence of the Constitution seemed to tremble in the balance.

Accordingly, on the 5th of August, every one that could offer any claim whatever to the right to enter the palace sought to gain admission. All the galleries and boxes around the Hall were filled to overflowing,

and the members of the two Houses were present in unusual numbers. Soon after twelve o'clock the royal procession arrived; and at the appearance of the King the excited state of public feeling manifested itself in tremendous cheers.

The King, with the Heir Apparent on his right and the Ministers on his left, took his place in front of the throne and began with a loud voice, amidst the breathless stillness of the audience, to read the Speech. The first clause expressed thanks for God's gracious guidance; and accompanying the especial mention of the heroic deeds and terrible sacrifices of the nation in arms came the admonition that a harmonious co-operation of the Government and the popular representation might bring to maturity the fruits whose seeds had been so bedewed with blood. The state of the finances, the King continued, was brilliant; it had been possible, without extraordinarily burdening the people, to bring the great war to a glorious conclusion. During the last year or so, indeed, an agreement as to the budget had not been arrived at. The public outlay during that time had therefore lacked that legal authorization, which, as was often admitted, the Department of Finance could receive only from the law passed every year and agreed upon between the Government and the representatives of the people. Under these circumstances, the Government had felt itself obliged, without such a law, to make such disbursements as were indispensable to the maintenance of the State; its conduct had been the result of an

unavoidable necessity, such as a Government, in the interest of the country, could not and might not seek to evade. It was, however, to be hoped that in view of recent events the indemnity which the Government was about to move would be readily voted; and that thus the conflict that had been kept up hitherto would be terminated for all time; all the more surely was this to be expected since it was believed that the political condition of the Fatherland would permit an enlargement of the boundaries of the State and the establishment of a unified confederate army under the leadership of Prussia.

Though the satisfactory contents and the warm tone of the Speech had already occasioned more than once an expression of approval among the hearers, at this point the inward, inspiring sense of freedom from anxiety that was felt by the immense majority of the spectators burst forth in loud and renewed applause. So there was to be no *coup d'état*, no overthrow of the Constitution! The prospect was held out of the restoration of internal peace, not by military authority, but by a simple harmonious settlement: the Lower House recognizing on its part its error in judgment, now so clearly proven, with regard to the new organization of the army, and the Crown on its side recognizing anew and confirming the right of the House to determine the budget. The heaviest burden was thus removed from the bosoms of thousands of patriotic men. Now let a foreign disturber of the peace dare to cross the frontier!

The King concluded his Speech with these words,

which he had added on his own account to the original draft:—

“Gentlemen! You feel, and the whole Fatherland feels with me, the great importance of the moment which has brought me back among you again. May Providence as graciously bless Prussia in the future as it has visibly done in the immediate past. God grant it may be so!”

According to custom, the President of the Upper House answered the royal Speech with a thrice repeated *vivat* for the King, in which the assembly joined with a veritable storm of enthusiasm. All hearts were touched. And who could have resisted the impression of the power and the benignity that were stamped on the countenance of the aged ruler?

That the Lower House would not reject the hand that was proffered to it was evident at the very opening of its sessions. During the whole continuance of the constitutional struggle, the President had been Grabow, a man by no means of radically democratic tendencies, but passionately excited by the violation of his sense of right. He had frequently from the presidential chair given violent expression to his convictions concerning the unconstitutional course pursued by the Government. He now with noble self-abnegation expressed to the House his desire that his re-election should not be considered, so that his name might not be an obstacle in the way of reconciliation.

Thereupon, Von Forckenbeck, the candidate of the parties that had hitherto constituted the Opposition,

was elected by 170 votes against 186 of the Conservatives and 22 of the Old Liberals. There was therefore now, as before, no ministerial party with a certain majority; but, nevertheless, the election of Forckenbeck proclaimed the victory of moderate tendencies and conciliatory principles even in the circles of modern and advanced Liberalism. For in the very beginning of the constitutional struggle Forckenbeck, by bringing up motions for amendment and for conciliation, had stood in marked contrast with the purely negative attitude of Waldeck and his associates. The election of such a man was the first symptom of a new formation of parties with a tendency at once liberal and national.

Violent and bitter as the feeling had been during the conflict, it was no longer possible not to see that the Government and the Liberals were pursuing the same object, and that for the normal establishment of the German State the power of the Government was quite as needful as the general agitation of public sentiment. Whoever was in earnest on the subject of German Unity was bound to declare himself, willingly or unwillingly, an ally of the Government in the question which controlled the whole life of Germany; and, consequently, whoever was in earnest about the practical realization of liberal ideas was bound to make up his mind to co-operate actively with the Government, in order not to leave the new arrangement of the German State entirely to his political opponents. For four years the constitutional struggle had united the great

mass of the Liberals with the Radical Democrats, and had thus cut off the former from any share in the furtherance of the German cause. From the moment when circumstances rendered possible the settlement of that constitutional struggle, this unnatural alliance began to be dissolved. Independent of the Radical groups there arose once more a Liberal party, now brought upon the side of the Government by the German question, but at the same time independent in its principles, and soon to grow largely in numbers and in influence.

## CHAPTER II.

## FRENCH AND RUSSIAN INTERVENTION.

THE Government of King William was not, however, suffered to pursue undisturbed the work of peace in Prussia and Germany.

The danger threatening from Russia did, indeed, seem to have been happily averted. But on that very 5th of August, which by reason of the King's Address was a day of rejoicing for millions, new anxieties of the most serious sort gathered about the head of his great adviser. In the course of the forenoon Bismarck had received a private communication from Benedetti in which the latter conveyed to him those demands for compensation hinted at by Napoleon on July 26th, with the request that the Prussian Minister should weigh and discuss them. It was a difficult matter, and one that gave Bismarck much food for thought. Not, indeed, the question of acceptance or rejection; on that point his soul had never entertained a doubt any more than had the King. But there was all the more reason for deliberating on the possible consequences of a refusal and the necessary preparations for meeting them.

Let us once more cast a glance backward at Napo-



leon's behavior since the beginning of the German complications.

The Emperor had always desired a good understanding with Prussia, and had declared the subjection of North Germany to be the worst error in the policy of his uncle. He had encouraged the dispute between Prussia and Austria, especially on account of Venetia. So late as the spring of 1866 he had repeatedly said that he would burden himself with no German Venetia. But then he was influenced by the storm that Thiers let loose in the Parliament against him and against German Unity, and was vexed because Bismarck would not help him to quiet France by even a small readjustment of the frontier. Thus, under pressure from all sides, he made with Austria the unfortunate compact of June 12th.

The thunder of Königgrätz had once more made clear to him at one stroke the foolishness of this policy. On July 11th he abandoned every thought of annexation. "After all, it is best," he said, "for France to desire no compensation." It was without doubt the inmost conviction of his heart that he expressed in these words: "It would be a miserable gain to win a little strip of territory that would arouse against me the national wrath and hatred of all Germany." This was consistent with his whole policy since 1859, with his support of nationalities struggling for unity, and at the same time with the efforts he had constantly made to draw near to Prussia. Had he persisted in this, how much sorrow and blood would he have spared his people!

Unfortunately, however, in these views he was alone at Paris: there all parties were at one in demanding that either Prussia's growth and German Unity must be prevented or that in the course of the transactions a solid advantage must accrue to France. About the extent and the choice of the French acquisitions there were differences of opinion. Moreover, some wished to force Prussia into concessions by threatening demands; others hoped to attain their object by a friendly understanding with Berlin. All agreed, however, that Prussia, after making her own annexations, must offer to help France to a corresponding increase. This claim had been so often repeated, that now it was announced daily as perfectly natural, as the "legitimate demand" of France, and as "the indemnity or compensation due" to France.

Two formulas, equally fine, were employed to substantiate this claim. According to one, without such sessions of territory the safety of France would be too seriously endangered by German Unity, a theory which did not testify to great national pride, since Germany<sup>1</sup> at that time, as well as France,<sup>2</sup> numbered something over thirty-eight millions of inhabitants, of which Prussia united only twenty-nine in the North German Confederation, and since France had besides, in the event of war, the advantage over Germany in possessing a mighty fleet, greater riches, and a stronger centralization. German Unity could therefore become

<sup>1</sup> Not counting Austria.

<sup>2</sup> Not counting Algeria.

a source of danger to France only on the supposition that the latter was inferior intellectually or morally.

In fact, such anxiety was not really felt. The actual fear was not for the safety of France herself, but for her hegemony over Europe. Soon after this a popular French author wrote: "Napoleon, in his policy of friendship toward Prussia, did not sufficiently bear in mind the Thirty Years' War, which was the decisive epoch of our history because it elevated France and ruined Germany. He forgot the Peace of Westphalia, which condemned Germany for two hundred years to impotence and made it possible for us to carry the war into her territory and there to meet and overcome the European coalitions."<sup>1</sup> "We can understand," the author added, "that Germany should seek to raise herself from such an unworthy position; but that a French sovereign should quietly look on and let her do so is incomprehensible."

The other claim which France considered as entitling her to demand German soil was Prussia's obligations to thankfulness, because French policy had not interfered with her victories. On this basis England and Russia would have had an equal or better claim to cessions of territory, for these Powers had from first to last remained strictly neutral. France, on the other hand, had since the beginning of June sought to hamper Prussia as much as was possible without exciting open hostilities, had issued the letter of June 11th against Prussia's Confederate Reform, had on June 12th con-

<sup>1</sup> Rothan, *Luxembourg*, p. 59.

cluded the secret compact with Austria against Prussia and Italy, had published the *Moniteur* note on July 5th and urged Italy to desert Prussia, and had finally by her mediation prevented the Prussian march upon Vienna, and the entry of South Germany into the new Confederation. Under these circumstances, the fact that the cession of territory on the Rhine was regarded in Paris as a debt of gratitude owed by Prussia cannot be accounted for on actual grounds, but must be looked upon as arising from the still popular and widespread traditions handed down from the times of Louis XIV.

However this may be, Rouher and Drouyn de Lhuys now rivalled each other in urging daily upon the Emperor the necessity of French annexations. As long as he had been a mediator, they said, he could not, of course, bring forward this demand; but that consideration being now out of the way, it was time to set about the matter. The Emperor did not show any very great zeal in responding to these admonitions. They then directed his attention to the tone of the Press, of the Chambers, and, what produced an especial effect, of the army, and to the general feeling of bitterness which would be a source of danger to the dynasty, if France should withdraw from the game empty-handed.

Rouher declared, just as Drouyn de Lhuys had done on the 4th of July, that the matter would be attended by no danger and could easily be managed. He referred to Bismarck's remarks in the beginning of

June to Govone and Benedetti, implying that he personally could bring himself to give up a strip of Rhine country along the Moselle, though he had, indeed, added that the King was quite immovable on this point. Count Goltz had, however, lately showed a very favorable disposition on the subject and had frankly declared the claim of France to be justifiable, thus encouraging the expectation of the best results, if the negotiations should be properly managed. Unfortunately, Goltz did not tell the French Ministers that though he personally was ready for cessions, he had no authority whatever on the subject, and had received no answer from Berlin to any hints in regard to it. .

The constant and unremitting pressure exerted by his confidential advisers could not but have an effect upon the Emperor, who was never very decided and who, moreover, had at that time become ill. He did not indeed make up his mind definitely to possess himself at all events of a piece of the Rhineland; but he said to himself: "Considering the excitement in France, it would be a fine thing if the King should do me a favor of this sort. Everything taken into account, why should he not? We are such good friends now!"

So it came about that, in spite of the conversation of July 11th in which the Emperor had repeatedly deprecated any desire to acquire territory, Goltz learned from Prince Napoleon on the 13th that his Sovereign did certainly wish a change in the frontier, and would be forever grateful for the same. Within twenty-four

hours, therefore, the wish, formerly suppressed, had once more sprung into life.

A week later, further progress in this direction followed in like manner. On the 22d of July Napoleon had, as we know, approved and recommended the Prussian annexations without condition or limitation; and then on the 23d he permitted Drouyn de Lhuys to write to Benedetti that the official recognition of the aggrandizement of Prussia could be considered only in connection with the question of compensation for France; Benedetti was to open communications with Bismarck on the subject, and would receive further instructions. Thus once more within twenty-four hours a secretly cherished wish had developed into the announcement to Prussia of an openly expressed demand.

Now the question was: How much and what should be demanded? And on this again parties were divided. Rouher advised that the demands should be confined within moderate limits, since there was no means of enforcing them. More, he said, could be grasped later, if Prussia should stretch out her hand towards the South German states. His opinion was that for the present the boundaries of 1814 (Landau and Saarlouis) should be requested, which would get rid of the consequences of Waterloo, and that Prussia should be invited to advocate at the Hague the cession of Luxemburg to France. This was the tendency, as we have seen above, of Napoleon's confidential conversation with Count Goltz on July 27th; and the answer

received from the latter was that an understanding on the subject would not be impossible. "In that case," the Emperor added, "the Grand Duke of Hesse might be indemnified with the remaining portions of the Palatinate."

But it was not long again before the line that had been marked out was once more overstepped with increasing covetousness. The Empress believed that no half-measures should be adopted, that everything should be demanded or nothing, expressing very strongly her feeling that all hesitation must be put aside. Drouyn de Lhuys also added the emphasis of his opinion to the views of the Empress.

On July 27th Napoleon had gone to Vichy to seek relief there for his sciatica and bladder troubles. He never had much power of resisting bodily pain; and when suffering he was strongly affected in mind and will. While he was at Vichy, Drouyn de Lhuys appeared on the 29th with the outline of a compact, according to which Prussia was to restore the territory ceded to her by France in 1815, was to induce by fitting compensations Bavaria and Darmstadt to resign to France their possessions on the left bank of the Rhine, and was to abandon all arrangements connecting Luxemburg and Limburg with the German Confederation, as well as the Prussian right of maintaining a garrison in Luxemburg. The Emperor, prostrated by severe pain, had the proposal read to him together with the accompanying telegram to Benedetti.

He made some alterations provisionally, but rebelled

against the acceptance of the whole. When the Minister then persisted in the advocacy of his proposals and began to enlarge upon the excellence of certain particular points, the Emperor at last cried out in his distress: "Do what you please; only leave me in peace."<sup>1</sup> The Minister is reported to have then said to those outside: "There is no longer any one here with whom I can discuss anything."<sup>2</sup> At any rate it is certain that in that cry of Napoleon, Drouyn saw the approval of his plan, and on the 29th of July communicated the same by telegraph to Count Benedetti.

A few days later, in order to prevent any misunderstanding, the additional message was sent that among the possessions of Darmstadt on the left bank of the Rhine was included also the former Confederate fortress of Mayence.

Benedetti entirely agreed with Rouher that France must, as King Victor Emmanuel expressed it, have something to eat. But the amount desired seemed to him questionable; and when finally Mayence was supplementarily demanded, he recollected what Bismarck had said to him two months before: that rather than cede Mayence he would vanish from the stage of politics. The ambassador therefore feared a repulse, perhaps in a dangerously curt form, and accordingly asked whether he might come to Paris for further consultation on the matter. He received the answer

<sup>1</sup> The affair has often been related thus, and these circumstances also explain the letters of Napoleon to La Valette, dated August 12th, and of Drouyn de Lhuys to the Emperor on October 12th.

<sup>2</sup> Rothan, *Politique Française*, p 374.



on the 4th of August that he should come, but not until after he had learned how Prussia took the proposal. He was therefore obliged, willingly or unwillingly, to make up his mind to the disagreeable duty. He sent word to his chief on the 5th of August that he was convinced that only the greatest firmness and decision in this matter would accomplish the desired object; he should therefore reject all modifications, and insist that a refusal of the proposal by Prussia could only result from a complete disregard of justice; if she did refuse, Prussia would by so doing show the exact measure of her ingratitude. The ambassador added that he had moreover at once laid the outline of the agreement before Count Bismarck in writing, in order not to be present himself to witness the first impression that the matter made upon the irritable temper of the Prussian Minister.

Bismarck, in a later speech in the Reichstag, related that Benedetti had approached him with an ultimatum in his hand — either Mayence or war — and that he naturally had at once answered: war. For this he has been accused by Benedetti and other French writers of having perverted history. It is true that his statements, as a description of the actual course of things, were not exact, inasmuch as Benedetti did not indeed have the outline of the agreement in his hand nor did he make use in so many words of the expression “ultimatum.” Nevertheless Bismarck represented the essential character of the negotiation quite correctly; for Benedetti did carry out his intention of demanding

Mayence, etc., with the greatest firmness and decision, rejecting any modification and hinting at Prussia's injustice and ingratitude; that is, as Bismarck put it immediately afterwards in an official account, he made his communication in almost threatening language, so that it was impossible to avoid making the reply: that if a refusal of the proposal would be a *casus belli*, then Prussia would wage war.

Bismarck made this weighty declaration, as was always his custom, with calm demeanor and in a courteous tone, giving at the same time his reasons for it. "Such cessions of German territory are impossible for us," he said; "the restoration of the boundaries of 1814 would clash with the wishes of the inhabitants, whom the King would not thrust out from Prussia against their will. We place no value on Luxemburg; but the whole affair confuses our idea of the purposes of Napoleon and threatens to shake our confidence in him. We had supposed that Napoleon valued the friendship of Prussia, strong in North Germany and independent, more than such an acquisition of territory. If we should find ourselves mistaken in this, every reason would be removed for confining our desires to North Germany and for not completing the programme of German Unity by taking in the Southern States."

In spite of all this, Benedetti remained firm and decided in his demand, and finally begged that it might be laid before the King, whose reply he would await on the evening of August 7th. Naturally, the

King's sentiments were not different from those of his Minister: the feeling of the nation being such as it was, not an inch of German soil could be ceded.

This interview was followed by another discussion between the two statesmen, which lasted several hours. Bismarck finally summed up the matter: "Why," said he, "will you play such tricks on us? You must know that the cession of German territory is for us an impossibility: if we should yield to anything of the sort, we should be shipwrecked, in spite of all our triumphs. Perhaps other ways might be found to satisfy you; but if you persist in this, we shall employ — do not deceive yourselves — every means: we shall not only arouse Germany in its entirety, but we shall also make peace at once with Austria on any conditions, shall leave to her the whole of South Germany, and shall even submit again to a Confederate Diet. Then we shall cross the Rhine in a united body, with 800,000 men, and take away from you Alsace. Both of our armies are mobilized; yours is not. You can imagine the consequences yourself."

The impression made by these words was the stronger from the fact that they were spoken in a calm and friendly way. "How!" cried Benedetti. "You think Austria would make peace with you, if we were to confront you?" Bismarck responded: "It is no new idea which I have just expressed to you. Immediately before the war we discussed it; and I assure you, Austria would conclude the peace to-day. So when you get to Paris, do all you can to avert a war

which might easily become very serious." "How gladly would I do that," said the ambassador. "But my conscience compels me to tell the Emperor at Paris, that if he does not obtain the cession, he and his dynasty will be exposed to the dangers of a revolution." "Call the Emperor's attention," said Bismarck in conclusion, "to the fact that a war arising from just this cause might, under certain circumstances, be accompanied with revolutionary movements; but that, so far as revolution is concerned, the German dynasties would be found to be on much firmer foundations than that of the Emperor Napoleon."<sup>1</sup>

The discomfort which this refusal caused the ambassador was decidedly increased on the following morning by the news that Manteuffel had been despatched to St. Petersburg. Benedetti inferred that the General was commissioned to lay the French demands before the Czar, in order to make any more intimate relations between France and Russia impossible.

How utterly was he upon the wrong track! Not only had Manteuffel's mission been arranged before Benedetti's proposals were made known, but even afterwards no syllable in regard to them was communicated to the General for the simple reason that it was wholly in Prussia's interest not to appear as a petitioner seeking help in St. Petersburg. Benedetti, however, thought of the future with anxiety, when he arrived on the 10th of August at Paris, uncertain whether Napoleon, in view of Prussia's attitude, would decide for peace or war.

<sup>1</sup> From Bismarck's memoranda and despatches at that time.

Bismarck also watched the passage of the crisis anxiously, since at the same time with the French difficulties a new complication was developing in Italian affairs. King Victor Emmanuel had not learned of the conclusion of the Nicolsburg preliminaries without sore distress. All his people were indignant at La Marmora's wretched management of the war, at the French intervention, and at the long inactivity of the army. His troops had just now finally occupied not only Venetia, but also a part of Istria and the Italian Tyrol, and would have been able, if Prussia had continued the war, to extend these conquests at pleasure. And then came the news that Prussia had signed the treaty and had secured only Venetia, not the Italian Tyrol, to her ally.

The Florentine Cabinet did, indeed, recognize without reserve the good reasons that had impelled Bismarck to end the war quickly. It approved, too, on its part, on the 25th of July an eight days' armistice, which was soon after extended to August 1st, in order that the conditions of a permanent truce might be arranged in the interval. But difficulties arose in these negotiations that came near occasioning renewed bloodshed. The Italians, who were anxious to acquire the Italian Tyrol in the peace, wished on that account to let their troops remain there during the truce: for Austria, they said, had conceded to the Prussians free quarters on Austrian soil during the armistice. In Vienna this argument was received with a shrug of the shoulders. The difference between Custozza and

Königgrätz was kept clearly in mind; and the Italians were told that Prussia did not think of founding on her temporary occupation of Bohemia a claim to the cession of the country, and that precisely because Italy's designs on the Tyrol were known, her troops could not be suffered to remain there during the truce.

Austria's demand as the condition of the truce was the evacuation of all Tyrolese and Istrian soil and the withdrawal of the Italians beyond the political boundaries of Venetia. When General Cialdini, supported by the ever-bellicose King, refused this, Archduke Albert, with quick determination, set three army-corps in motion against Italy, so that in the course of a week 125,000 men were again ready for battle; and he at once sent a declaration, on the 5th of August, that he should take the offensive, unless the Italians should have evacuated Austrian territory by the 11th.

Naturally, a telegram was at once sent from Florence to Berlin asking for aid in accordance with the treaty of alliance; and immediately afterwards Goltz sent word that on account of this new complication Napoleon had broken off his stay at Vichy and was hastening back to Paris. What Bismarck had so long and hitherto so successfully tried to avoid, a war with France and Austria at the same time, seemed now to be an imminently threatening danger. If Italy did not withdraw within the Venetian frontier, and if at the same time Prussia did not cede the Rhineland to the French, just what likelihood would there be of an active alliance between the two Imperial Courts?

Bismarck's thoughts were exercised upon the question whether Italy could be expected to yield to the harsh demand of her enemy, and above all, whether in case of a breach in that quarter, Prussia ought also to take up arms, even in face of the danger of a declaration of war from France.

On such points Moltke was especially the one to be consulted. On the 8th of August the General presented two memorials and stated in them that it was clearly important to conclude speedily the definitive peace with Austria, in order to have free hands towards the east and west. Then there would be no occasion to fear France. It would not be difficult to secure the alliance of the Southern states against the realization of Napoleon's desire for territory on the Rhine. Moreover, the state of things at that time was so unfavorable for a French war against Germany that Napoleon would hardly venture it without an alliance with Austria.

Now then, in this other case, if France and Austria should be allied, how would things stand? Moltke showed that half of the Austrian army would in that event be once more occupied with Italy. Four army-corps would be sufficient to maintain a firm defensive against the remaining half in the region of Prague. And to face France more than 200,000 North Germans and 80,000 South Germans could be assembled by the beginning of September between the Main and the Neckar. In this quarter, also, he said in conclusion, the war would have to be conducted on the defensive;

but it would certainly not be desirable to shun it, since the very least voluntary cession of territory to France would make Prussia's leadership in Germany impossible.

This expression of opinion determined Bismarck's resolution. Certainly there should be no cession of territory to France, but on the other hand no encouraging of Italy to engage in war. "Moltke's plan," he said, "is, then, for the defensive in Bohemia and for the defensive on the Rhine; this might keep up a long time and bring still other interventions down on us; if Moltke had proposed first to finish up Austria thoroughly and then to drive out the French, even if in the mean time they had reached Berlin, I could have understood it better; but played on defensive lines the game is too high for me; we will try to make peace."

He sent an urgent message of warning to Florence not to haggle about the line of demarcation at the armistice: that, he said, was not an object for which Prussia could recommence the war, however definitely she was willing to guarantee to the Italians the possession of Venetia; the best thing would be for Italy, with or without an armistice, to negotiate for peace at Prague in common with Prussia. The Italian Government was satisfied with this, withdrew its troops from the Tyrol and Istria, and on the 11th of August concluded the armistice. The final settlement of matters was not procured by this, as we shall see; but the immediate danger of war was averted.

At Paris, too, the knot was more easily loosened



than Benedetti had feared. Napoleon had no desire whatever to reap fresh laurels in war. He had accordingly not neglected to advise peace at Florence as well as at Vienna, and sent a special message of thanks to the Prussian Government for having acted with similar moderation. He himself was still out of health, and the reports of his Minister of War, Randon, who had formerly been ready (on July 4th) to send 80,000 men to the Rhine, now expressed, after the Austrian war, serious misgivings about a passage at arms with Germany. In general, the army lacked horses, especially for the artillery and the baggage-trains. 80,000 men were yet in Mexico and required the incessant transmission of recruits, ammunition, and stores of all sorts. Finally, the manufacture of breech-loaders was still greatly in arrears. In view of all this, it might perhaps be six months before France could reasonably think of carrying on a great war.<sup>1</sup>

Thus everything worked for peace, the inward wish of the Emperor and the inefficiency of the army. When Goltz, on the 11th of August, laid before the Emperor the above-mentioned arguments against a cession of Rhenish territory, the latter declared that that proposal had been a misunderstanding in which he had been entangled during his illness by Drouyn de Lhuys. He said that the acceptance of the proposal would, of course, have been agreeable to France, but that the refusal should not for that reason interfere with his friendly relations with Prussia; he should persist in

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Prussian Military Plenipotentiary, Colonel von Loe.

the policy he had hitherto announced, and would officially recognize the Prussian annexations, so soon as they should be completed.

On that same day Goltz sent word that the danger of war had disappeared. Immediately afterwards Drouyn de Lhuys presented his resignation and only continued to administer the business provisionally until his successor entered upon his duties. Benedetti, on his return to Berlin, was charged to inform the Prussian Government that the proposal of July 29th was to be regarded as not having been made.

The sky now seemed for the time to be clear in that direction. Yet, even if the proposal of July 29th was entirely abandoned, there was no certainty that another of the same sort would not appear.

Furthermore, Manteuffel's work in St. Petersburg, in spite of all the Emperor's personal graciousness at first, did not go on so smoothly as might have been expected from Alexander's remarks to Schweinitz. The European congress was given up; but the criticism of the Prussian successes had not on that account grown any more favorable.

On the 7th of August Manteuffel had received instructions to emphasize the power of public opinion in Prussia, which demanded so vehemently a fitting reward for the sacrifices made, that not to yield to it would mean the endangering of the vital interests of the monarchy. "There had at first been thoughts," he was to say, "of requiring from Saxony, Hanover, and Hesse-Cassel considerable cessions of territory; but it

had become evident that these states, which had existed for fifty years, would prefer being incorporated to being dismembered. Hence it had been decided to allow Saxony to remain entire and to annex the two other states bodily. Darmstadt, in consideration of her Russian connections, should receive in South Germany ample compensation for the cession of Upper Hesse; Saxony should retain its territory as a member of the North German Confederation, but should give up her military supremacy to Prussia. From Würtemberg, on account of her connection with Russia, no cession of territory should be demanded." Bismarck added to this on the 9th of August, that if Russia should express any wishes about being freed from the conditions imposed upon her by the Peace of Paris with regard to the Black Sea, Manteuffel was to treat them favorably, and say that Prussia had no interest in the continuance of such limitations.

In a thoroughly warm and cordial letter, which Manteuffel was to convey from the King to the Emperor, the former explained that the prestige of the Prussian Crown among its subjects, the last bulwark of Monarchy in Germany, would be irrecoverably forfeited, if the just demands of public opinion were not considered.

Thus equipped, Manteuffel reached St. Petersburg on the 9th of August and had a short conversation with Prince Gortschakoff, who told him that he hoped Bismarck would prove to be no meteor, but a fixed star, and therefore advised moderation. On the same

evening the General was summoned to Peterhof to an audience with the Emperor. Alexander received him graciously, but was very serious. He appreciated the recognition of his high position in Europe as evidenced by this special mission of the General, and expressed his affection and friendship for the King. When, however, in answer to his inquiries concerning the details of the conditions of peace, the General read to him the instructions drawn up by Bismarck, he seemed unpleasantly impressed. He recognized with pleasure the consideration shown to Würtemberg and Hesse-Darmstadt. But the complete deposition of whole dynasties, he said, filled him with terror: that was not a strengthening, but a weakening, of the monarchical principle, for these dynasties rested on the same basis of divine right as did the Royal House of Prussia. He disliked the Italian alliance and expressed fears of revolutionary dangers that might arise from the German parliament that had been recently announced.

Manteuffel suggested that Bismarck had already shown that he knew how to get along with parliaments. "I have no doubt of his good intentions," cried the Emperor; "but the word 'parliament' has put the whole of South Germany in a ferment, so that Baden and Darmstadt are already talking of their desire to enter the North German Confederation, since Bavaria cannot support them and Austria is to be allowed to exert no more influence in Germany." In reply to this Manteuffel pointed out that the more

satisfactory the results obtained by Prussia, the more firmly would Prussia's Monarch hold the reins of control in his royal hand.

The discussion of South German affairs led the Emperor to speak of France. Manteuffel reported on this subject to his Sovereign: "I explained to him my idea concerning Napoleon's ulterior purposes in his mediation. The Emperor said to me that, according to his information, Napoleon wished to demand the boundaries of 1814. He thinks and feels about Napoleon exactly as does Your Majesty. I have rarely seen such coincidence."<sup>1</sup>

On dismissing the envoy Alexander remarked once more: "The complete dethronement of entire dynasties troubles me."

On the following day, Manteuffel had a long conversation with Gortschakoff, who had just come from an interview with the Emperor. It began with a repetition of what he had heard the day before: the Emperor rejoiced in the elevation of Prussia; if King William did not now overthrow whole dynasties and sap the dignity of Saxony's Sovereign by taking away his military supremacy, and assured a permanent existence to the South German states, he would win a position of great power and obviate the danger of any fresh conflict with France; the latter could venture to

<sup>1</sup> Taken, like the preceding, from Manteuffel's report of Aug. 11th to the King. Before sending this off Manteuffel laid it before the Emperor and the latter made small emendations.

It will be seen that neither Manteuffel nor the Emperor knew of the French proposal of July 29th.

demand no cession of territory, if the King, by sparing the dynastic hereditary right, found himself in harmony with Europe in its former shape.

More interesting for Manteuffel, who was inwardly susceptible to the Emperor's views, was an utterance of Gortschakoff with regard to the future. "Russia," said the Minister, "desires to-day neither the Danubian Principalities, where things seem to be getting into better shape, nor Galicia, where the trouble has been removed by the Peace Preliminaries; nor does she desire the setting aside of the Peace of Paris, the two offensive points of which must indeed be got rid of, though they will die out of themselves. When the moment arrives for burying them, the Emperor hopes that he can count on Prussia's friendly support." Gortschakoff did not believe that at that time secret arrangements existed between France and Austria which might again bring up the Galician question.

When Bismarck on the evening of August 10th received a telegraphic *résumé* of this conversation, Gortschakoff's amiable wish to see him advance to the rank of a fixed star was not able to counterbalance his vexation at the fault found with the Prussian annexations. He was perfectly ready to show friendly consideration to Russia as a friend, but as little disposed to concede to her as to the French the right of interfering in important matters connected with the German question.

On the very morning of the 11th, even before he had received the message of peace from Count Goltz in

Paris, Bismarck telegraphed to Manteuffel: "We are as good as agreed on the subject of granting favorable conditions to Würtemberg and Darmstadt, out of consideration for Russia. If this is not sufficient to secure to us at least Russia's forbearance with respect to the annexations of Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, and Nassau, then we will not conclude the proposed arrangements with Stuttgart and Darmstadt. Pressure from abroad will drive us to the proclamation of the Imperial Constitution of 1849 and to measures really revolutionary. If there is to be revolution, we should rather make it than suffer it. We cannot give any attention to scruples. If Russia desires more than a courteous salutation, then you must simply hold to the programme that we shall proclaim next Monday in the Chamber." This programme was the draft of a bill regarding the annexations.

Manteuffel received this vigorous exhortation with regret, since he shared, as has been said, the Emperor's legitimistic scruples. Nevertheless, he did to a certain extent express Bismarck's views to the Russians, and did not conceal the fact that any dangerous move might be expected from the irritable and audacious Prussian Minister. The Emperor Alexander thereupon wrote a long letter to the King, containing a theoretical essay upon conservative principles; it closed, however, with the cordial declaration that even if his words this time received no consideration, Russia would never take sides with the opponents of Prussia. He at the same time expressed a wish that the Prus-

sian programme of annexation might not be laid before the Parliament until after the arrival of this letter.

Moreover, the Emperor, as well as Gortschakoff, now enlarged more particularly than the day before on the offensive points in the Peace of Paris of 1856, speaking also this time, not as if they wished to take any special action at once, but with an evident desire to seek from Prussia some binding promise of help for the future. This was a marked symptom of a determination to remain on good terms with Prussia.

Bismarck readily agreed to postpone laying before the Parliament the plans for annexation until the Emperor's letter should arrive; and on the 14th of August, after France had withdrawn her demands, he communicated the negotiations that had passed on the matter to General Manteuffel, who had at once no other thought than of replying to such shamelessness with a declaration of war. The Russian opinion of the value of Prussia's friendship rose, however, as a result of the energy with which Bismarck had rejected the suggestions from Paris. Although not a little irritation was felt against Bismarck on account of his responding at once to Russia's representations with the threat of a German revolution, Gortschakoff's attitude became more and more friendly, more and more favorable. Several times did Manteuffel hear hints about the desirableness of a Prusso-Russian alliance, in regard to which, however, Bismarck contented himself for the time with a friendly understanding involving no binding compacts.



Thus the independence of Prusso-German politics was asserted with equal emphasis toward both the east and the west. Each of the two Emperors had substantially withdrawn his demands in such a way that he could profess to see in the rejection of them no breach in existing friendly relations. To be sure, the agreeable habit which the Great Powers had maintained, of keeping dismembered Germany in permanent impotence by their mild surveillance, was too deeply rooted in the practice of more than a hundred years to fall to pieces at the first blow. More than once we shall see repeated attempts in the same direction. But the leading German state was now possessed of strength sufficient to repel these attempts, and its Government was firmly determined to give fair consideration to friendly wishes, but always to decide in German affairs only in accordance with German interests, let foreigners think about it what they pleased.

The next thing to do was to take as a basis the Nicolsburg preliminaries and bring German affairs to a final settlement.

## CHAPTER III.

## CONCLUSION OF THE PEACE.

ON the 5th of August, the day after his arrival in Berlin, Bismarck notified the South German states of his return and called upon them to send plenipotentiaries to negotiate concerning the settlement of peace.

Without delay the respective Ministers of Foreign Affairs presented themselves: at first, Herr von Frey-dorf from Baden, and Baron Varnbüler from Würtemberg, then Baron von der Pfordten from Bavaria, and finally Herr von Dalwigk from Hesse-Darmstadt. Considering the well-known hostile sentiments of the last-named gentleman his being sent was looked upon in Berlin as unfitting; but in view of the insignificance of the state he represented he was received. Upon his arrival Pfordten at once tried to arrange common negotiations between Prussia and them all, but learned that Prussia did not favor this, and, indeed, had already begun special negotiations with Baden and with Würtemberg.

After their experiences at Nicolsburg, these gentlemen came with more or less anxious hearts. Beust had, as we have seen, already turned once to Paris in the hope of exciting there a military demonstration on

the part of France. After the events at Nicolsburg they all, with the exception of Baden, followed Beust's example so far as to apply to Napoleon for his gracious intercession with the victor. From a legal point of view, they certainly had a right to do this, and were in a certain sense bound to do so; and though it is not, according to our present ideas, consistent with honor and propriety in internal German matters to appeal to outsiders, we must remember that after the legitimized state of anarchy that had prevailed so long among the members of the German nation, it took the wars of 1866 and 1870 to make this point felt and fully appreciated by the sovereign Courts. Whether, indeed, at this time, in August, the petitions of these Lesser States served to increase the audacity with which Drouyn de Lhuys reached out his hand to the left bank of the Rhine, or perhaps rather to embarrass the French Government in its project of robbing these trustful petitioners of the Palatinate and Mayence, we must leave undecided, when we considered the changeable character of Napoleon's policy.

To most of those who had begged for protection in Paris, salvation from the utter ruin of their own supremacy depended only upon a diplomatic turn. They were all ready to make any possible sacrifices; and as a means of avoiding great loss of territory and of showing their good-will they urgently implored the Prussian Government to admit them into the North German Confederation. In reply to a declaration of that nature Bismarck was now obliged to explain to

them the impossibility of granting their request: so long as Napoleon kept his promises of July 14th, Bismarck intended not to break his own.

The negotiations with Würtemberg first came to a conclusion, at the end of only a week's time. Prussia had not demanded any cession of territory; for she cared not so much about the possible increase of the Hohenzollern land as the re-establishment of good friendship with the Court of Stuttgart. So that Russia's intercession could here be allowed to have effect without misgivings. Würtemberg expected to be obliged to pay a contribution to the war-indemnity; and the sum of 8 million florins (13½ million marks) was agreed upon without difficulty. Then the Tariff-Union compacts were again established, in such a way that each party would be allowed to withdraw six months after giving notice to that effect. There was no doubt entertained on either side as to what were intended to be the consequences of this provision: the doing away with the *liberum veto* and the introduction of binding majority-votes sanctioned by the majority of a tariff parliament.

In the first draft Würtemberg had further asked for the assistance of Prussia's influence with Bavaria concerning certain railway connections that had been hitherto refused in Munich. This resulted, after further discussion, in the adoption of an Article in which both Governments agreed, immediately after the restoration of peace in Germany, to convene commissioners that should decide upon some suitable and

liberal arrangements with regard to the building of railways and mutual communication. Lastly, Prussia proposed the mutual guaranty of the possessions of both states, the acknowledgment of the specifications contained in the Nicolsburg Preliminaries, and Würtemberg's co-operation in the same, so far as they concerned the future of Germany. This led to a discussion that involved important results.

Varnbüler had no objection to make to these propositions in themselves. But he desired an understanding regarding that one Article in the Preliminaries that concerned Würtemberg and her neighbors, namely, the Article about the South German union. He said that he could assent to this only on the condition that that clause should be understood to mean that the Southern States were to be allowed, but not obliged, to form a union. The wording of the French proposal of mediation (*Les Etats allemands situés au sud du Main seront libres de former entre eux une Union*) as well as of the Preliminaries themselves (*Oesterreich erklärt sich damit einverstanden, dass die süddeutschen Staaten in einen Verein zusammen treten*) left room for no doubt, and so Bismarck distinctly affirmed the fulfilment of the condition set by Varnbüler. "No one," said he, "will hinder your union, nor will any one force you into it."

Now, Würtemberg had not the least inclination to enter a union, which even with the very loosest sort of a constitution would limit her sovereignty in many ways, without procuring for her in return for this

sacrifice greater security against foreign oppression. Inasmuch as Baden, as we shall presently see, was of precisely the same opinion, it was quite certain that the South German Confederation would have no existence other than on paper, and that the Article in the Preliminaries referring to it would have no application. This revealed, indeed, more than ever the need of some strong defence for the South German states against foreign pressure; and so Bismarck and Varnbüler agreed to discuss further the Article about the mutual guaranty of the present possessions and to develop it into a special offensive and defensive alliance (for the present to be kept secret) according to the terms of which the troops of Würtemberg should in the event of war be placed under the supreme command of the King of Prussia. Both of these compacts, the treaties of peace and of alliance, were signed on the 13th of August.

French and Austrian critics have later pretended with great indignation to find in this offensive and defensive alliance a crying violation of Prussia's word and of special treaties. What is to be said in reply to this reproach? Inasmuch as the Southern States would not have anything to do with the proposed union, this remained an empty scheme, and the specifications concerning it were absolutely of no force. There could therefore only the one question arise, whether Prussia had entered into other obligations that prohibited her from concluding an offensive and defensive alliance with individual states. We know that nothing of the

kind had ever been mentioned between her and Austria; and so far as France was concerned, no formal compact whatever had been made: the two Powers had through the conversations between Napoleon and Goltz, only exchanged in confidence the mutual promises that Prussia would not receive any of the Southern States into the Northern Confederation and that France on her part would support Prussia's annexations in North Germany.

It cannot be denied that admission into the Northern Confederation and the conclusion of an alliance in the event of war are two wholly different things, and that consequently the prohibition of the one does not prevent the performance of the other. The members of the Northern Confederation subordinated their military dispositions, their commerce, their means of communication, their foreign relations, and a great portion of their financial arrangements, to the legislation and administration of the Confederate authorities; whereas in the case of Würtemberg nothing of all that was thought of. The latter's treaty with Prussia merely contained the promise of mutual support against foreign enemies in time of war.

This may well have been more vexatious to the French Cabinet than any blending of peaceful interests in the two states; but it could by no means offer an occasion for complaint on the score of illegality or of being the violation of a treaty. No one has ever yet regarded the conclusion of a war-alliance as involving the sacrifice of political independence. Indeed, Napo-

leon himself told Count Goltz on the 13th of July that he placed special stress upon the independent right of the South German group of states to form alliances and to carry on war. And it has always been considered a matter of course that in the time of a war waged in common, the small army of the weaker state should be placed under the control of the Commander-in-chief of the stronger one — which has in not the rarest cases been to the advantage of France.

We shall return to this point again below.

Württemberg's action was followed in a few days, on the 17th of August, by Baden. Here again nothing was said about the cession of territory. The contribution to the war-indemnity had been fixed by Bismarck at 6 million florins (somewhat over 10 million marks). King William, who was heartily well-disposed towards his illustrious son-in-law, was inclined to favor a reduction of the amount, inasmuch as the Baden Government had taken part in the war only reluctantly and under pressure from the people. But Bismarck carried his point by merely responding that the contribution would, of course, not be paid by His Royal Highness, but by just the very guilty party, namely, by the people, who could pay it, too, without great inconvenience.

Then followed in the treaty the specifications about the Tariff-Union and about railways, with which we became acquainted in the Württemberg negotiations. With regard to the Article about recognizing the Nicolsburg Preliminaries, Herr von Freydorf made an



even more extended explanation than Varnbüler had done before him, asserting that nothing in the Article could be construed as obliging the formation of a South German confederation, nor as preventing Baden from entering into any political or international relations with Prussia or the North German Confederation. He begged Bismarck to inform him whether Prussia shared this view; and the Prussian Minister replied without delay in the affirmative.

Finally Freydorf gave expression to Baden's desire to enter into a military convention with Prussia, by which the army-corps of Baden should be firmly united with the Prussian army, and her further wish, for the sake of securing her frontiers, that a Prussian garrison might be placed in the formerly Confederate fortress of Rastadt. Bismarck, however, thought that it would be inadvisable for the present to accede to this, out of consideration for Prussia's relations with France. Hence he proposed to Baden in its place the same offensive and defensive alliance that had been offered to Würtemberg, which was immediately accepted and signed by Freydorf.

The transactions with Bavaria, as well as with Hesse-Darmstadt, were somewhat more extended and more complicated.

As is well known, the Darmstadt province of Upper Hesse lay within the range of the North German Confederation, between the Main and the Lahn, where there were before the war a number of small strips of land belonging to five different states, tossed together

promiscuously. Prussia entertained the plan of incorporating all this together with Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, and Frankfort, and then of indemnifying the Hessian Grand Duke with a portion of the Bavarian Palatinate, as Napoleon had formerly often suggested. It was further thought that Bavaria might pay a heavy contribution of 30 million florins (51 million marks) to the war-indemnity, and also cede that half of the province of Upper Franconia that lay northward from the Main and had a population of more than 200,000 souls. But in the face of this came the French desire to acquire the Rhine Palatinate and Rhenish Hesse, as a result of which the Grand Duke would not only receive no indemnification for Upper Hesse, but also be obliged to part with a second province, while the King of Bavaria, too, would lose, not a portion of the Palatinate, but that whole magnificent section of country.

Bismarck, by energetically rejecting the French request became in so doing the protector of both of the threatened states. But Pfordten and Dalwigk so little suspected this state of things that they vehemently resented Bismarck's demand that the fortress of Mayence, as a defence against France, should immediately be given into the charge of a Prussian garrison. Bismarck then laid before the two gentlemen the above-mentioned conditions of peace, and by doing so put them into the most violent state of excitement. Pfordten complained that he had, indeed, made up his mind to suffer the payment of a contribution that

should not be too burdensome, or the cession of a moderate amount of territory; but that both together, and to such an extent as that proposed, meant simply *Finis Bavaricæ*. For why should Bavaria fare so much worse than Baden and Würtemberg? "You are the only ones," replied Bismarck with dry truthfulness, "that have no mighty patron; and so you may pay for the others as well as yourselves."

No less anxious and ill-natured was Dalwigk's behavior. His Grand Duke, a tall, corpulent man, of narrow prejudices, with only moderate courage, but bombastic manners, had declared: "There can be no thought of cession of territory. I rely upon the red-legs." Dalwigk consequently explained to Bismarck that for a hundred different reasons Hesse could not possibly give up her northern province, and that his sovereign's sense of honor would forbid his accepting any indemnification for it at the expense of a Confederate associate. Instead of that, the Grand Duke wished to enter the North German Confederation with all his possessions, or if that were not feasible, at least with those portions of his country lying to the right of the Main.

The fact that this was diametrically contrary to designs of France did not deter Dalwigk from persistently imploring the *chargé d'affaires* Lefebvre (Count Benedetti was at this time, for reasons well known to us, in Paris) to influence Napoleon to take more energetic steps in favor of the Lesser States than he had done hitherto, since nothing could be more dangerous

for France than the suppression of these advantageous neighbors. He conjured him by all the gods to induce Napoleon to send an army to the left bank of the Rhine, that is, into the Rhine Palatinate and Rhenish Hesse. Then the inhabitants, who had been stupefied at Prussia's victories, would at once regain their courage and join their French liberators in contending against Prussian presumption. To add force to his representations he fabricated the story out of the whole cloth that Pfordten entertained the same views upon the matter.<sup>1</sup>

How glad would Drouyn de Lhuys have been, in response to Lefebvre's report, to please Dalwigk by sending an imposing army into the Palatinate and Hesse! The only question would have been how soon his red-legs would have marched out again. Unfortunately, however, Bismarck had most distinctly declared that he intended to preserve Bavaria and Hesse from such precarious dilemmas; and so Drouyn de Lhuys contented himself with sending to Benedetti (who had in the mean time returned to Berlin) a despatch on the 14th of August, in which he warned Prussia in a rather uncivil tone to be moderate in her conduct toward the Lesser States, for whom Napoleon was known to have a very great interest.

An edifying picture, indeed! This Hessian Minister, begging in blissful ignorance for help from the French Government, which had just demanded a half

<sup>1</sup> Lefebvre's reports, as given by Harcourt: *Les quatre ministères de M. Drouyn de Lhuys*, pp. 310 et seqq.

of the Hessian state, and calling upon the powers of heaven and hell against the statesman that is laying his hand upon the hilt of his sword to emphasize in the name of Germany his refusal of the French requests. Sometimes the course of the world's history presents ironical contradictions!

The rude intervention of the French Government might very well have produced the opposite of that which was intended, and have caused Bismarck to be more severe than ever with its *protégés*. Pfordten, well acquainted with the Prussian statesman's temperament, hastened at once, upon receiving Benedetti's first communications, to call upon Bismarck and express his great regret that Drouyn de Lhuys had sent such a despatch. He laid before the Prussian Minister all his Paris correspondence of the last few weeks, which Bismarck regarded as "rather innocent," but which Pfordten himself designated as the production of a phase of the negotiations that was past.

So far as Darmstadt was concerned, a second patron now presented himself: one that desired no German territory for himself, and was a warm friend of Prussia — the brother-in-law of the Grand Duke, the Russian Emperor. The King received Alexander's letter of the 12th of August, which by its remonstrances against the utter doing away with three sovereign Houses did produce a certain impression. Yet in this matter the same well-known arguments still preponderated. It was decided to hold to the complete annexation of the three countries, and to offer to the heir to the throne

of Hesse-Cassel the county of Homburg, which was to be ceded by Darmstadt, and to the Crown Prince of Hanover the succession in Brunswick, in case both Princes would in other respects assent to the new order of things — a condition that, as we know, was not fulfilled. As to Russia's special intervention in favor of Darmstadt, there was manifested a willingness to be amicably obliging, and instead of demanding its incorporation, to be contented with the admission of Upper Hesse into the Northern Confederation. The bill for annexation, which was laid before the Parliament on the 17th of August, was accordingly limited to Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, and Frankfurt.

Yet, in spite of the clemency shown to Darmstadt, the news of this bill for annexation occasioned in St. Petersburg great displeasure and dejection. The deposed princes had besieged the Emperor incessantly with the presentation of their complaints. The Hanoverian ambassador in Vienna, Herr von dem Knesebeck, had just arrived with a petition for help from his King; and the Emperor had believed he could hold out to him some measure of hope. "What am I to answer him now?" asked Alexander of Manteuffel.

The latter gave his opinion that the position of the Emperor was rendered less difficult by the appearance of the Prussian bill: for he could now express his regret that in view of the accomplished fact Hanover's appeal had come too late. "Moreover," observed the General, "the omission of Upper Hesse from the list of annexations certainly shows how much Prussia endeavors

to pay due regard to Your Majesty's wishes." The Emperor could not help acknowledging this. King William then replied on the 20th of August to the imperial letter of the 12th in a lengthy communication, from which we extract a few sentences, because they place in the clearest light the national doctrines of Prussia.

The royal note began with warm thanks for the friendly sentiments of the Emperor, which the King most cordially returned. Then deep regret was expressed that the Courts of Stuttgart and Darmstadt, in which the Emperor took a special interest, had been numbered among Prussia's chief opponents; and the assurance was given that out of consideration for the Emperor they had been offered most favorable conditions. The treaty with Würtemberg was mentioned as having been already signed. "So far as Darmstadt is concerned," wrote the King, "I have not allowed myself to be offended by the personality of the negotiator, who has for many years kept his Court devoted to an anti-Prussian policy, but have considered only your wishes, and have consented to Dalwigk's proposals. It was exceedingly painful to me not to be able to show the same leniency towards the dynasties of Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, and Nassau; but I have felt it necessary to sacrifice my personal feelings to the welfare of the State. I was obliged to regard the sentiments of my people and my army and to adopt such measures as would insure the country against the return of a state of things similar to that through

which we have just passed. To leave to those Sovereigns a portion of their territory would have occasioned a dismemberment of the states that would have been more distressing to the inhabitants than anything else.

“You fear,” continued the King, “a German parliament and revolution. Believe me, nothing has done more harm to monarchical principles in Germany than the existence of these small and powerless dynasties, who prolong their life at the expense of national interests, who perform their duties as sovereigns very unsatisfactorily, and who compromise the reputableness of monarchical principles just as a numerous and indigent nobility bring reproach upon the dignity of the aristocracy. Public opinion is thoroughly convinced that these small monarchies naturally and necessarily stand in opposition to national interests. In the event of a fresh crisis the decadence of national institutions would have occasioned the most serious dangers. My Government was called upon to avert these by means of reforms. I shall, as ever, oppose the revolutionary spirit in Germany, and intend as little to submit to exaggerated pretensions on the part of a German diet as to those of the Prussian Parliament.”

The King closed by saying: “I hope by these words to have calmed your fears. Nothing lies nearer to my heart than the strengthening of the bonds that unite us. In none of my political projects shall Russian interests be allowed to suffer. On the contrary, I shall consider myself happy, if I may in the future



find an opportunity to prove to you that I always look upon these interests as those of the oldest and most trusted ally of Prussia."

This reference to Russia's wishes at that time concerning the Orient could not be misunderstood. From all that had gone before, the undisturbed continuance of the old understanding with the northern Power was thus assured, a circumstance especially satisfactory and important inasmuch as at this moment fresh and dangerous complications seemed to be brewing both in Vienna and in Paris. We shall very soon have occasion to speak more particularly upon this matter; but we will first briefly give an account of the conclusion that was reached with Bavaria and Darmstadt.

With Prussia's decision to abandon the annexation of Upper Hesse disappeared at once the Rhine Palatinate from the demands to be made upon Bavaria. Nevertheless, Pfordten regarded the conditions that were still maintained (the cession of one-half of Upper Franconia and the contribution of thirty million florins) as so oppressive that on the 19th of August, after he had presented in Berlin certain counter-demands, he commissioned the Bavarian ambassador in Paris, in spite of the recent conversation with Bismarck, to seek once more the diplomatic support of Drouyn de Lhuys. The latter telegraphed on the 21st appropriate instructions to Benedetti.

But when these instructions reached the ambassador, the situation had entirely changed. From the very start, Bismarck had, in the Bavarian, as well as in the

Austrian, negotiations, been opposed to the King's desire for acquisition of territory, because he feared that this would occasion, to the detriment of Germany's future, a lasting feeling of bitterness in Munich towards Prussia; and he had several times, though hitherto without success, urged this point in conversation with the King. But now, when negotiations with Austria no longer ran smoothly, and the political horizon consequently began to look lowering again, he succeeded in gaining the King's consent to give up all claims to Upper Franconia, and thus reached a conclusion that was very satisfactory to Bavaria.

Up to this time he had not mentioned the French propositions to any one of the Ministers of the Lesser States. He now invited Pfordten to call upon him, and after justifying once more the claims that Prussia had hitherto asserted, he suddenly changed his tone and remarked to the Minister, already in despair, that there was still another road to reconciliation. He informed him of the demands that Benedetti had made on the 5th of August, and of Prussia's response to them. He asked then whether Bavaria would be ready in a conflict with foreign enemies to hold fast and true by the side of Prussia, as a German with a brother German. The reply may be imagined: the two men embraced each other. And thus Bavaria, by signing the compact of an offensive and defensive alliance with Prussia, succeeded in retaining her possessions and in protecting the Rhine Palatinate against any possible repetition of the covetous desires of France.

The treaty of peace signed on August 22d contained only an utterly insignificant alteration of the frontier in addition to the contribution of thirty millions, the already-mentioned clauses concerning the Tariff-Union, railways, and the Nicolsburg preliminaries. Pfordten openly declared his acknowledgment that the treaty was satisfactory and afforded cause for gratitude.

King Louis II. on the 30th of August wrote in the sane strain to the Prussian Monarch: "Now that peace has been concluded between us and a firm and lasting friendship has been established between our Royal Houses and States, I feel impelled to give also some tangible and symbolic expression to the same by offering to Your Royal Majesty the possession in common with myself of the famous castle of your ancestors at Nuremberg. When from the turrets of this common ancestral castle the banners of Hohenzollern and of Wittelsbach are floating unitedly in the breeze, may this be recognized as a symbol that Prussia and Bavaria are both watching in harmony over Germany's future welfare, which Providence has now by the hand of Your Royal Majesty guided into new paths." It is impossible to read without emotion these lines, in which this Prince, afterwards so unfortunate, set for himself a simple and beautiful memorial of his German sentiments.

With Darmstadt matters were not quite so quickly and smoothly arranged. On the one hand, Bismarck did not honor Herr von Dalwigk with so much confidence as he did the Bavarian Minister, nor explain to

him so clearly the consequences of that French intervention which was so eagerly desired. On the other hand, however, the Darmstadt Court was well-pleased at the prospect of retaining Upper Hesse, although it was very sorrowful over the loss of Homburg, whose gaming-tables brought in a generous and constant income to the city. It was also felt that in the exchange of the Upper Hessian enclaves Prussia had gained a decided advantage.

On this point there was undertaken again a mournful correspondence with St. Petersburg. But this time Bismarck remained deaf to all complaints. It was possible to get over the grief occasioned by the moderate war-contribution of three million florins (some-what over five million marks); but a fresh annoyance was felt at the news that Prussia, as lawful successor of the Prince of Thurn and Taxis, would assume the management of the whole postal system in the Grand Duchy.

Darmstadt had herself proposed that Upper Hesse should enter the North German Confederation; and so she was obliged to appear thankful at its acceptance, however little she rejoiced at this in her heart. For all the laws of the Confederation would be enforced in that part of the state, and a portion of the Darmstadt Division of troops would be subject to Prussian command. The independence of the little country was very much like the situation of a man to whom full permission is given to go outside, provided only that his right arm remains in the room. This was the

result of Dalwigk's ambition, in the quarrel of the old Confederate Diet with Prussia, to press forward into the ranks of the champions.

The treaty of peace was signed on the 3d of September. Here there was no need of an offensive and defensive alliance.

We will now turn to the most important of all these negotiations, to the conferences of Herren von Werther and von Brenner, which were held at Prague and which were to lead to a definitive peace between Prussia and Austria.

If it had depended upon these two Powers alone, the affair would have been settled within a few days. For further than the confirmation of the Nicolsburg preliminaries, for which both parties were ready, there was nothing to be discussed except questions of form or subordinate matters about which there was no difference of opinion: such as the division of the old Confederate property, an amnesty for the political offenders of the last few years, the form in which the war-indemnity should be paid, and the renewal of the commercial treaty of 1865. As before said, all this might have been satisfactorily arranged in a few days. But again it was manifest to what great extent the German war had at the same time affected all Europe. Foreign interests and ambitions asserted themselves very prominently.

Immediately after the beginning of the negotiations, France brought up in Berlin the discussion of that Article of the Preliminaries that referred to a South

German confederation. Napoleon, in his mediatory proposition of July 14th, had said that the states south of the Main were to be free to form a South German union among themselves, which should enjoy an independent national existence, and that the nature of the connection between the North and South Confederations should be determined by voluntary mutual agreement. At Nicolsburg, however, Bismarck had omitted the words "which shall enjoy an independent national existence," doubtless in order to keep open for the two Confederations the possibility of a most intimate connection without allowing to any third party the right to make objections on the ground of a violation of the independence of the South.

Austria had consented to this omission. But now France complained of this mutilation of her proposition, which had been adopted by both of the Powers and was consequently binding upon them so far as their relations with France were concerned. However fallacious this last assumption was, that a mediator thereby acquires the right to assert any claim for himself, if the disputing parties agree to settle their difference upon the basis of his propositions, still Bismarck did not consider it necessary to discuss the question just then. Since the declarations of Baden and Würtemberg it was certain that the South German confederation would not in any case come into existence, and hence that it would be a matter of perfect indifference what rights and privileges were granted to it. So Bismarck declared himself at once ready to re-insert in

the text of the treaty the words that had been erased. Why should he grudge to France this harmless pleasure?

About a week later a second admonition came from France. Bismarck had never tried to conceal the fact that he was by no means pleased with that clause concerning the return of North Schleswig to Denmark, which had been inserted in order to gratify Napoleon's cherished wishes. When, then, during the transactions at Prague, a lively dispute arose, as we shall presently see, between Austria on the one side, and Italy and France on the other, Baron Brenner made to his Prussian colleague the offer to omit this clause about Schleswig from the treaty if Prussia would support Austria in the above-mentioned dispute. It is easy to believe that at this time the very last spark of interest for the Duchies of the Elbe had died out at Vienna. Whatever might happen there, in German or in Danish interests, was all one to the Austrian Government and people.

The two ambassadors deliberated and Werther made his report; but before any conclusion had been reached, Duke Gramont had learned of the matter in Vienna. Thereupon Count Benedetti called upon Bismarck in Berlin in order to question him about the matter and to recall forcibly to his mind the views of France upon the subject. This time the question was by no means an insignificant one; but just then, in the midst of the temporary complications, Prussia's alliance with Italy made a rupture with France especially undesirable,

and so Bismarck without offering any objections promised the ambassador that the clause should remain in the treaty.

Meanwhile the contradiction between the Austrian and the Italian purposes had from the very beginning exerted an influence upon the negotiations at Prague. As we have already seen, Bismarck at the time of the strife over the Italian armistice sent the advice to Florence to take immediate part in the work of peace at Prague. Visconti-Venosta was ready to do so; but Baron Brenner absolutely refused to sanction this, inasmuch as Austria had a host of special questions to settle with Italy alone, which lay entirely outside of the range of Prussian interests, and for the adjustment of which Austria needed the co-operation of France.

Hereupon Baron Werther declared that in that case Prussia, in accordance with the duty imposed upon her by the alliance, must demand that in the Peace, as in the Preliminaries, a clause should be inserted in which Austria should formally give her assent to the admission of Venetia into the Kingdom of Italy. This at once added fuel to the fire. The Florentine Court insisted that the cession should be made directly to the King of Italy, who would in this way be recognized as such by Austria, and that it should take place upon the ground of a general vote of the inhabitants of the province.

Austria, who by recognizing the King of Italy would be forsaking her banished Archdukes, and by recognizing the popular vote of Venetia would be abandoning her fundamental doctrines, rejected the Italian proposal



sharply and affirmed that Venetia had been ceded to the Emperor Napoleon, and any disposal he might make of it would be confirmed by Austria. To make this standpoint more irrevocable, Count Mensdorff had, immediately after the conclusion of the Preliminaries at Nicolsburg, opened negotiations with Duke Gramont with a view to fixing and regulating the cession by a formal treaty.

Now the Italians, angry over the events of June, would not listen to a continuance of French interference. "We would rather take Verona by storm," cried Victor Emmanuel, "than receive it from the hand of a French commissioner." Visconti-Venosta also brought forward again in Berlin his proposal for the acquisition of the Italian Tyrol, or at least the southern portion of it, and begged for Prussia's support of this demand, although he acknowledged that the treaty of alliance of April 8th did not oblige her to lend her assistance; but the closest friendship between the two Powers would be assured for all time, which Italy especially desired as a bulwark against French presumption.

How could any harmonious arrangement of these contradictory aims be secured?

The first suggestion was made on the 9th of August by the French Minister, Drouyn de Lhuys. His own sentiments, indeed, would have been best expressed by embracing just the Austrian standpoint. But the Emperor Napoleon's first delight over the cession of Venetia had, as we know, long since turned into its

opposite, and the influence of the Minister had, by reason of his recent defeat in Berlin, sunk to nothing. So Drouyn de Lhuys tried to devise some form of mediation, and proposed to Count Goltz to mention the cession of Venetia in the introduction to the Article only as a historical fact and then in the Article itself to say that France and Austria both assented to the incorporation of Venetia in the Kingdom of Italy, provided that the inhabitants of the province by a formal vote expressed their desire to that effect.

By such means or something similar the sharpness of the main contradiction was at last disguised. To please Austria the cession to France was mentioned, and to please Italy, the vote of the inhabitants: the satisfactoriness of this arrangement consisted in the fact that both of these circumstances were no longer made to appear as legitimate grounds for Italy's acquisition of Venetia, but merely historical facts, the correctness of which neither party could dispute.

On the 18th of August an agreement was reached with Gramont, that in the future Peace with Italy an introduction should be prefixed in the above-mentioned way; and Mensdorff sent a request to Prague, that such an Article should also be inserted in the Prussian treaty. Bismarck consented, but chose a more concise form of expression, in which the two disputed points, the cession of Venetia by France and the popular vote, were not mentioned at all, but it was simply stated that after the Emperor Napoleon had officially declared that so far as he was concerned Venetia had been

acquired for Italy, the Emperor of Austria had seconded this declaration and manifested his assent to the incorporation of Venetia in the Kingdom of Italy. Austria had no further objection to offer.

But another contested point remained which gave occasion to a controversy which at the very start was lively and which soon became intensely heated. In the conferences at Vienna between Gramont and Mensdorff the question arose, what part of the Austrian public debt Italy ought to assume in consequence of her acquisition of Venetia. France held that following the precedent of the Peace of Zurich in 1859, this should be merely the debt that was resting specially upon the territory ceded; whereas Austria demanded that Italy should assume that portion of the whole debt of the Empire that would be in proportion to the population of Venetia. Bismarck, who regarded an overburdening of Italy as detrimental to the interests of Prussia, supported the French view of the matter, and demanded the insertion of an Article to that effect in the Peace of Prague. Brenner said that he did not have the authority to sanction this, and in reply to his report Mensdorff declared in the despatch of August 18th, mentioned above, that the Prussian proposition could not be accepted: if the public debt was to be mentioned at all in the treaty of Prague, this could be done only to the effect that a proportional share of the Austrian public debt should be assumed by Italy. The difference between the two views amounted to a sum of almost fifty millions.

This was a bad prospect for the speedy conclusion of peace. Furthermore, news came from Florence that Austria, forsaking her whole system hitherto pursued, had made the proposal to the Florentine Court that direct negotiations of peace between Austria and Italy should be begun in Paris under the patronage of Napoleon, and without the co-operation of Prussia. Ricasoli looked upon this as a means of procrastinating matters until Prussia should have made peace at Prague, so that Italy should then stand isolated in the face of Austria's superior power. Yet this step might equally well be regarded as an attempt to isolate Prussia and to unite Austria and Italy under the protection of Napoleon. The situation was therefore wholly uncertain.

At this juncture, on the 20th of August, Count Benedetti called upon Bismarck, in order to lay before him a new proposal of France concerning a compensation. Nor was it this time anything insignificant that was expected of the Prussian Government. France requested in the first place an open treaty in which the old boundaries of 1814 should be re-established, involving the acquisition of Landau and the upper Saar, as well as the annexation of Luxemburg; and she further desired to be allowed, on the basis of a secret offensive and defensive alliance with Prussia, to take possession of Belgium. That is to say, in spite of the rebuff of August 7th she still asked for German territory, at the very moment when the peace-negotiations with Austria were being interrupted and the Court of Vienna was

trying to separate Italy from Prussia! And she also expected the withdrawal of the Prussian garrison from Luxemburg, which had been stationed there in accordance with both European and German treaties! Furthermore, she demanded Prussia's armed assistance in the annexation of Belgium, which meant serious hostilities and complications with England!

We have seen in what connection in February, 1866, an increase of French territory on the Belgian side was mentioned for the first time in a conversation between Napoleon and Goltz, as they were discussing all the possible means of extending the frontiers of France on the east and north. Then again Bismarck in conversation with Govone and Benedetti in Berlin and with Lefebvre in Moravia had said that he could not cede German land to France; and that therefore if she must in any case take something, she should rather confine herself to those neighbors that were of the French tongue, either Belgium or Geneva, whether the union took the form of complete annexation or of military, tariff, or railway conventions. He observed further that against anything of that kind Prussia would most probably raise no objections.

French diplomatists and historians have since then drawn the conclusion from these remarks that the annexation of Belgium by France was originally a Prussian idea, a suggestion from Bismarck, which Napoleon had long declined but finally adopted with hesitation. They might just as well have complained of England's having recommended to Napoleon the

incorporation of the left bank of the Rhine. For Lord Stanley at that time once said to the French ambassador in London, that if in view of Prussia's aggrandizement France imperatively demanded some compensation for herself she should not lay hands upon Belgium nor Constantinople, since England could not suffer either of those projects to be carried out; but she should rather take possession of German territory, against which England would most probably raise no objections. It is clear that the simple facts of the case are exactly the same upon both sides; France restlessly seeks some means of acquiring new territory, and each of these two Powers says to her with great friendliness, "Only don't disturb, I pray you, any of my possessions or interests; with this reservation, I do not grudge to you the possession of everything desirable and the gratification of all your wishes." Any idea of an armed alliance with Napoleon with the object of actively assisting in the accomplishment of the French plans was as little in the mind of Bismarck as in Lord Stanley's.

Moreover, this time it was not Drouyn de Lhuys that had urged this matter in Paris, but Rouher and his party. Nor was Benedetti to be so categorical in making his demands as he had been on the 5th of August. On the contrary, he received instructions, in case his proposals provoked too violent opposition, to give up Landau and Saarlouis, and if the complete annexation of Belgium met with serious obstacles, to exclude Antwerp from the arrangement. It is evident

that no great enthusiasm can at that time have been expected from Bismarck for the project said to have been originated by Prussia, namely, the annexation of Belgium.

Upon hearing Benedetti's communication, Bismarck at first drew himself up to his full height, and at once announced to the French ambassador again the absolute impossibility of any cession of German territory; but immediately afterwards, earnestly desiring to avoid an open rupture before the conclusion of the Austrian peace, he consented, apparently without reserve, to discuss in detail the remaining portions of the French outline; and this conversation was continued with mutual cordiality during the next two days. Bismarck proposed possible changes, observing that without the prospect of winning definite advantages for Prussia the King would certainly reject the whole, and expressed his wish that the agreement concerning Luxemburg should be united with that concerning Belgium in a secret compact. Suffice it to say, Benedetti began to hope that aside from a few additions and alterations the project would terminate favorably.

But Bismarck was filled with sentiments and impulses of an entirely different character. With the greatest conceivable alacrity, he seized upon means for preparing against every possible danger from any direction. It happened very fortunately that on that very day, just before Benedetti announced his proposals, Bismarck had made sure of peace and alliance

with Bavaria. The order was sent without delay to the Army of the Main and the 2d reserve-corps to withdraw from South Germany, and with rapid marches to assemble in Hof and Eger, so that in case Austria still put off the conclusion of peace, they might join the rest of the army in a demonstration against Vienna.

Bismarck cherished the hope that if he kept up with Benedetti a sort of *dilatory* negotiation — this expression became famous from Bismarck's use of it — and if he promised nothing, but continued to hold out prospects, he could in this way prevent France for the present from taking any part in the war, and then settle affairs with Austria in a short time. On the other hand, however, he telegraphed to Manteuffel to find out from Gortschakoff whether Russia, in the event of a war between Prussia and France, would be inclined to force Austria by diplomatic pressure to preserve neutrality. Manteuffel replied: "Gortschakoff is unwilling to make any formal promises; but at all events you can safely go ahead against France." Thus everything had been done, in case of new war-complications, to prevent at least a hostile coalition against Prussia.

Yet such prudence proved to be unnecessary this time also. For neither Napoleon nor Francis Joseph entertained the thought of supporting their wishes with the sword, — indeed, more than this, the awkwardness of the French Government made it possible for Bismarck to make the conditions in Vienna more favorable than France had intended, and thus to take



a fresh step in advance towards the accomplishment of his old aim of re-establishing friendship between Berlin and Vienna.

The men that had formulated in Paris the last instructions to Benedetti felt, as we have seen, by no means sure of success in their expectations of Prussia. Evidently there could have been no other more important means of furthering their aims than a confidential understanding with Austria. But Rouher and his associates, in distinction from Drouyn de Lhuys, had always formed an Italian party, and had now no intention of sacrificing the interests of their old friends. When, therefore, in the question of the division of the Austrian public debt Count Mensdorff declined the French suggestion, France repeated the same on the 18th of August in a more forcible, categorical manner, which left no room for further discussion.

This conduct called forth lively indignation in Vienna, and Mensdorff at once responded on the 19th with the counter-proposition "that a proper share of the Austrian public debt shall be considered as connected with the possession of the land, and that the sum for Venetia shall be determined by an Austrian and a French commissioner." Here Bismarck put in a word, and reminded the Court of Vienna anew that it would be more advantageous to deal directly with Prussia and without French co-operation. He proposed the following form of settlement: "Italy shall assume those debts which in accordance with the Treaty of Zurich *shall be recognized* as indissolubly

connected with Venetia; this shall be decided by the verdict of a neutral Power, England or Russia."

This at once produced its proper effect in Vienna. To be sure, it was still deemed advisable not positively to injure the feelings of France by calling upon some outside umpire, and the opinion expressed on the 19th was still maintained. The wording of the Prussian proposal was, however, accepted in other respects, because the words "*shall be recognized*" did not exclude the possibility of further negotiations. Since all the other points brought up at Prague had been settled long before, the signing of the definitive peace could take place on August 23d.

A great struggle, full of glory for Prussia and of good fruits for Germany, weighty in results for Europe and the world, was thus brought to an end. That which had been hitherto termed the German Question, the contest of the two Great Powers for the supremacy over the remaining German States, was settled. Non-Austrian Germany was legitimately, or as a matter of fact, united under the leadership of Prussia.

It was natural that for the moment this Peace was felt in Vienna to be a painful defeat. It was only gradually that that feeling gained ground which was set forth twenty years later in Parliament by the most talented of the Austrian statesmen of this generation and was accompanied by the manifestation of universal assent. "I know no man," he said, "that would wish to return to the position abandoned by us in Germany, for the simple reason that the power of the Monarchy,

in spite of that and, indeed, because of it, has not become weaker, but incomparably stronger.”<sup>1</sup>

It was characteristic of the sentiments prevailing in Vienna at the time of the Peace of Prague, that Count Mensdorff in his vexation over the conduct of France, did not deny himself the little satisfaction of not informing Duke Gramont of the settlement arrived at at Prague until after the latter had signed the French-Austrian treaty on August 24th. In the matter of the division of the public debt, France had accepted the Prussian formula. The nominal point of dispute with regard to the popular vote of Venetia was evaded by the arrangement that Austria should deliver the province to a French commissioner, who should then hand it over to the city authorities of Venice to make what disposition of it they chose.

On this very day, the 24th of August, in consequence of the conclusion of the Peace of Prague, the “rump” of the old Confederate Diet, which consisted of seven members, among whom were three deposed princes, and was convened in the royal palace at Augsburg, terminated its questionable existence, conquered by Prussia, despised by Austria, and already forgotten by the German nation.

Free now from the anxieties which up to this time Austria might have occasioned, Bismarck considered it advisable to bring to a conclusion the negotiations with Benedetti concerning the Belgian annexation. The ambassador had reported to Paris on the 23d of

<sup>1</sup> Count Andrassy in the convention at Pesth, Nov. 24th, 1866.

August the critical observations and hints at possible alterations with which Bismarck had accompanied his consideration of the French proposals. In reply, he received instructions on the 26th to accept these suggestions and if possible to recommend to the Prussian Minister certain other less important additions. Benedetti accordingly drew up on paper a corresponding outline of a treaty and handed the same to the President of the Ministry on the 29th, that he might lay it before the King for examination and approval. At the same time, the French ambassador gave notice that he was about to go to the baths at Carlsbad, and requested that the decision of the King might be sent to him there.

Now, Bismarck had just received a telegram from Count Bernstorff in London, reporting that Lord Stanley had said to him that Napoleon's assurances concerning the perfect security of Belgium were satisfactory in every respect. Bismarck accordingly received the outline as Benedetti desired, but surprised the ambassador with the question whether Napoleon would not make use of such transactions in order to excite distrust between Prussia and England. Benedetti reported this to his Government with proper indignation; "What degree of confidence," he wrote, "can we on our part place in negotiators with whom such considerations are possible?" He thought again of Manteuffel's mission, and believed that Prussia was rejecting the French alliance because she had succeeded in effecting one with Russia.

So far as that proper indignation was concerned, it must be noticed that Count Bernstorff further reported on the 5th of September: "Lord Clarendon said to me in his irritated way, that Prussia had advised Napoleon to seek compensation in Belgium, but Napoleon had declined such an idea with proper indignation. It seems," added Bernstorff, "as if Napoleon, in order to commend himself here, had allowed rumors of this kind to be set afloat." At all events the result was not such as had been wished for in Paris. On the 19th of September Baron Brunnow wrote to Gortschakoff: "Belgium is anxious about her integrity. Napoleon has given the best assurances in London on the subject; but who believes in them?"

So Benedetti waited at Carlsbad in vain for a telegram from Berlin concerning the conclusion of the compact. It was a very sensitive point with the French Government; but it did not yet wholly give up its reliance upon Prussia's good-will. Just at this moment Prussia's most violent opponent, Drouyn de Lhuys, definitively resigned. His successor was Marquis Moustier, formerly ambassador at the Berlin Court and at this time in Constantinople. Until his arrival the business of the Department of Foreign Affairs was conducted by Marquis Lavalette, the Minister of the Interior, who, as we know, had always been of the opinion that it was better to win Prussia by friendliness than by threats, and who now more than ever held to this doctrine, since the conclusion of a peace between Austria and Italy was still attended with many difficulties.

Under these circumstances Napoleon decided to give expression to his people of his own personal view of the situation, uninfluenced by Drouyn de Lhuys, Thiers, or Eugénie, hoping in this way perhaps to convert the excited and dissatisfied Public Opinion. Thus originated that remarkable circular to the French embassies signed by Lavalette, and dated the 16th of September.

“France,” says the circular, “cannot pursue a doubtful policy. If she is endangered by the remodelling of Germany, this must be acknowledged, and the necessary steps be taken to insure safety.

“If the reverse be true, then let that also be declared, and exaggerated judgments and over-wrought fears be silenced. The question may be decided by a comparison of the past with the future. The past, since 1815, has shown all people from the Ural to the Rhine to be united in the Holy Alliance against France; the German Confederation, comprising with Austria and Prussia a mass of eighty million inhabitants, laid as an iron girdle around the eastern frontier of France; Italy dismembered under the dominion of Austria; and for France no possibility of an alliance upon the Continent, except with the powerless Kingdom of Spain. Prussia has been neither united enough nor independent enough to cut loose from her old traditions. Austria, too busy with the preservation of her Italian possessions, has not been able to approach France.

“And now to-day! The Coalition of the three Northern Courts is broken. The new doctrine of

Europe is the freedom of alliances. All the Great Powers have again recovered their complete independence. Prussia, now grown larger and stronger, and henceforth free from every phase of solidarity, will insure the independence of Germany."

This, then, was the decisive word: to Germany, hitherto held by Russia and Austria in the bonds of the Holy Alliance and forced into hostility against France, is now opened by the aggrandizement of Prussia the possibility of establishing a firm friendship with France. This statement is not new to us. It had been made to the Emperor by Bismarck since 1864; and we saw what effect it produced upon him.

"France," continued the circular, "may not take any offence at this new independence of Germany. Proud of her own wonderful unity and indestructible nationality, she can neither oppose nor regret the work of assimilation which is now being accomplished, nor subordinate to jealous feelings those principles of nationality, which she represents and advocates before other nations. When the national impulse of the German people is satisfied, their restlessness will scatter itself and their hostility die out. By imitating the example of France, Germany will be taking a step that will bring her nearer to us and not away from us."

The circular then speaks in a similar way of Italy, and emphasizes the irresistible impulse which disposes the nations of Central Europe to form themselves into large united bodies, after the fashion of the tremendous growth of Russia and of North America. "Politics,"

it says, "must rise above the narrow and unfavorable prejudices of a former age. The Emperor does not believe that the greatness of a country depends upon the weakness of the nations that surround it. He considers that the true balance of power is to be found only in the satisfied wishes of all the European nations."

This was indeed the most decided renunciation of the policy founded in the so-called French traditions, the policy of Mazarin and of Louis Quatorze and the tradition of the political supremacy of France in all Europe. If the Emperor had possessed the power and the courage to follow out to their legitimate conclusion the principles which he thus announced, there would have been no material obstacle in the way of the Franco-Prussian alliance which he desired, it would have been impossible for Duke Gramont and his associates to kindle the War of 1870, these two great nations would not be standing opposed to each other armed to the teeth, and German Alsace would still to-day be French.

For utterly unfounded and ridiculously invidious is the suspicion that Bismarck in 1866 entertained a thought of diminishing the extent of the French frontiers. He would have been contented if Napoleon had lived up to the words of his circular, if he had followed the example of Russia and England and allowed the unity of Germany and of Italy to be accomplished without his patronizing and selfish interference. Thiers might have called that a cosmopolitan instead of



a French policy. In truth, it would have been the protection of the truest interests of the French people, of those interests which they have in common with all Europe, and which just for that reason are advanced in their own development by the advancement of the neighboring nations. It was not the cosmopolitan feature of Napoleon's policy that injured France; but it was the inconsistency with which out of false deference to old French traditions he falsified his own doctrines on the decisive points, embittered Germany by drawing the line of the Main, and Italy by the reservation of Rome, and yet never ceased to appear in the eyes of Austria and the Roman Curia as the originator of all their losses.

The circular of the 16th of September itself shows in its concluding sentences this uncertainty of basis. After censuring the desire for foreign territory, it remarks that only such annexations could be beneficial to France as would add similar elements to her present population. This might allay the fears of Germany but excite the distrust of Belgium. The circular ended with the declaration that in consequence of her new conditions, France needed an increase of her army—an observation which indeed was perfectly well founded even though peace were fully assured, but which, made in this connection, was regarded by all her enemies as a sharp contradiction of all the peaceful phrases that preceded it.

“I saw clearly,” wrote Napoleon at that time in a note that was intended only for his own consideration,

“that war with Prussia was unavoidable.” Certainly it was unavoidable, according to the sentiments of almost all French politicians, in view of Prussia’s firm determination not to allow Germany’s right to an existence to depend upon first receiving permission from France or upon a payment to be made for the same.

For the moment, it is true, the harmony between the two Courts seemed to be as undisturbed as possible; and this was manifested with the best results in the attitude maintained towards the Austro-Italian peace-negotiations.

Austria, as we saw, had from the very beginning insisted upon holding negotiations with Italy distinct from those with Prussia. For a time, Paris was recommended as the place for carrying on these transactions, but finally Vienna was fixed upon. On the 28th of August, the Italian plenipotentiary General Count Menabrea appeared there and had his first conference with Austria’s representative, General Wimpffen, on the 3d of September.

As an introduction to the treaty, it was decided to take the subject already agreed upon with France, namely, the historical mention of the cession of Venetia to France, and the consent of Napoleon to the admission of the province into the Kingdom of Italy, with the reservation that it should be sanctioned by a vote of the inhabitants. Article I. announced the restoration of peace between the two countries. Article II. promised the liberation of the prisoners of war upon both sides. Article III. proclaimed Austria’s assent to the

incorporation of the province of Venetia into the Kingdom of Italy. Articles IV. and V. determined the boundaries and extent of the ceded territory. But at Article VI., concerning the proportion of the Austrian public debt to be assumed by Italy, the difficulties began.

At Prague, the Prussian suggestion had been successful in avoiding the embarrassment by postponing the decision of this question to some later settlement. But now the time for this had come, and the opinions entertained were as diametrically opposed to each other as they had ever been before. It would not be interesting for us to discuss the legal deductions and the proposals offered on both sides. The result arrived at was always the same: Austria demanded 75 million silver florins, and Italy would grant only 26. Menabrea then proposed that the conclusion of the peace, so important for all concerned, should not on that account be longer deferred, and that as in Prague this disputed point should be referred to a special "liquidation-commission."

When Wimpffen very emphatically refused to comply with this suggestion, and demanded the immediate approval of the sum desired by Austria, Ricasoli turned once more to Berlin for assistance. Bismarck considered the Italian offer a fair one, and recommended in a peremptory tone its acceptance in Vienna, declaring that the Prussian disarmament would be postponed until after the question should be settled. The Court of Florence with grateful thanks followed this example.

Bismarck also, on the 13th of September, called upon the French Government, which had as yet taken no part in the discussion, to act in concert with them.

Lavalette was perfectly willing to do so, and on the 19th of September Duke Gramont and Baron Werther (who had been again appointed ambassador to Vienna) announced to the Austrian Minister their common support of Italy's position in the matter of the public debt. At the same time they advised Count Menabrea to manifest a willingness to comply with Austria's wishes in all other points.

This relieved the pressure. Count Mensdorff complained at Prussia's assuming at once a threatening attitude whereby the restoration of mutual confidence, so earnestly desired by both parties, would be rendered more difficult; but he made up his mind to yield. Italy also consented to make some modifications in her offer. A whole week the haggling continued, until at last, on the 26th of September, the sum of 35 millions was fixed upon, besides certain provincial debts belonging unquestionably to Venetia. Thus the main object of the peace was beyond a doubt attained. An agreement was soon reached concerning a long list of special items in regard to Venetian civil officials, military officers and soldiers, railways, commercial relations, and the pardon of political offenders. On the 3d of October the longed-for treaty of Peace could finally be signed.

Here also, the new state of things brought about by the war had received an international sanction.

## CHAPTER IV.

## INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT.

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the anxieties that were connected with its foreign policy, as above narrated, the Prussian Government was busy day after day with the care of strengthening and developing its international relations. The special questions which agitated the Prussian State at that period interest us only so far as they immediately concern the growth of a new constitution for Germany; among these were notably the difference over the budget and the accomplishment of the annexations. To these, then, we shall devote our attention for a short time as well as to the first steps towards the establishment of the North German Confederation.

There was no doubt, generally speaking, but that the victories in Bohemia and Franconia had made the Prussian Government also at home master of the situation. Throughout the kingdom there prevailed a proud and conscious satisfaction over the unexampled successes, which was increased and made more unmixed by the willingness of the Government to conform again to the normal requirements of the Constitution. In the conquered states also, such sentiments were manifested. The nobility and the Established clergy, both

of them chief supports of the fallen dynasties, everywhere set themselves to be sure against the Prussian rule: in Hanover with malevolent and violent bitterness, in Hesse-Cassel and Nassau with a disaffection that was displayed more or less for show. On the other hand the Liberals of Hesse and Nassau held quite decidedly with the Prussian party, and were undoubtedly backed by the majority of the population, whereas in Hanover the leaders of the National Association could for the present count upon a strong following only in the cities and in Old Prussian East Friesland. We have already noticed that in Schleswig-Holstein political zeal had died out for the most part before the war; the people awaited coming events with the utmost calmness, and a lengthy petition against the annexation, addressed to the Prussian Parliament by the leaders of the Augustenburg party, secured scarcely a tenth of those subscribers that had once welcomed the arrival of Duke Frederick.

Somewhat different, however, were the tendencies manifested in the Prussian Parliament from those that prevailed throughout the country. The Upper House was filled with a rejoicing consciousness of the brilliant triumph of the Ministry that had received their constant support, although they were to a certain extent annoyed at the indemnity-bill, which to most of the members seemed to be an unnecessary and even dangerous yielding to revolutionary principles. Yet on this point there could be no thought of opposing the Government.

But the Ministry was by no means so sure of a majority in the Lower House. The Conservative party had, indeed, grown to form the smaller half of the House, but it was just the smaller half and no more; so that even when united with the remnant of the Old Liberal fraction, it was not strong enough to carry its point. Everything depended upon the support of the nationally-inclined elements of the two great parties of the Left Centre and the Progressists; and these, though they were not easily found wanting at the critical moment, yet on individual questions very tenaciously went their own way, and with determined precision stated their conditions. Inasmuch, now, as the groups farther to the Left, and with them the Catholic and the Polish fractions, very zealously persisted in clinging to the Opposition, the discussions were generally inordinately prolonged, and the amendments and amendments to amendments were without end. Whoever may have hoped, from the enthusiasm with which the speech from the Throne was received, that the bills proposed by the Government would be joyfully and quickly accepted found themselves thoroughly disappointed.

Yet it could not very well be otherwise. Passions had been too long excited in the quarrel over the budget, the consequences were too deeply felt in all branches of the administration, and the unprecedented revulsion had been too sudden, to prevent traces of the old bitterness from remaining in many hearts and to make possible in so short a time the

re-establishment of universal confidence. However irresistible the impression made upon the people by the successes in war, much the more did it seem to prudent souls to be their duty just for that reason to watch with double jealousy over every parliamentary right and not to allow the influence of the popular representation to be entirely put into the shade by the brilliancy of the feats in arms.

It cannot be denied that the old weakness of a German parliament, the inclination to degenerate into parleying, was not now wanting; there were the conceit of personal opinion and conscientiousness in the very smallest detail, the zeal of the *doctrinaire* for theoretical points without regard to stern facts, and that unpractical enthusiasm for the great object, which throws aside the only possible means for its attainment. Bismarck must many times have felt that his honest countrymen might have made the burden somewhat easier for him. Yet, however often his nerves were irritated, he kept control of himself, in order not to overthrow the very foundation of his work, the firm union of Prussia. Nor did the reward fail to come. After all the wars of words, when it came to the main issue a patriotic majority almost always, as we have said, gathered about his victorious banner.

On the 18th of August the negotiations with the North German Petty States had so far been successful that the definitive conclusion of the Confederate treaty could now take place on the basis of the Articles proposed on the 4th. The two Mecklenburgs



alone were behindhand; but later, on the 21st, they declared their desire to join, although with the reservation that their Estates must first give their assent. The discussions and decrees of their common Parliament, held a few weeks later, revealed the nature of the motives that had kept them back. This Parliament sanctioned the desire to join the Confederation, but reserved to itself the right to pass judgment upon the decrees of the future Confederate parliament, and added at once a long list of wishes: the functions of the Confederate authority should not exceed the measure of the Prussian propositions, nor should the same be granted any right to exert an influence upon the constitutions of the individual states; and the question of joining the Tariff-Union should depend upon the approval of the State Parliament. The propositions concerning the right to move from state to state and concerning a common citizenship excited many misgivings; and the ideas of universal suffrage and of direct elections seemed not to be adapted to the times.

This was Individualism, or Particularism as it is called, in an undisguised form. It arose from the fear lest the feudal constitution of the state should be exposed to serious dangers by the new Confederate powers. Its appearance was greeted far and wide in Germany with vexation in some places and with scorn in others; but it was soon to be seen that in spite of all their craving for German Unity, even liberal and democratic parties might, according to circumstances, backslide into strong and ardent Particularism.

Meanwhile, the Prussian Parliament began its active labors. On the 13th of August the House of Deputies appointed a committee to consider an Address to be made in reply to the Speech from the Throne. This proved to be no light task; for no less than five different drafts from different party fractions were laid before them for consideration. The royal exhortation to become reconciled did not have much effect upon the extreme parties. They vied rather with each other in emphasizing as sharply as possible the questions at issue, each from its own standpoint.

The Conservatives applauded the King for the establishment of the military system without a law and for the administration of the finances without a budget; but they passed over the indemnity-bill as something entirely unnecessary in their eyes. The Party of Progress drew from the Speech the conclusion that never again for the sake of the pretended welfare of the State should any expense be incurred that had been disapproved by the Lower House; they deferred the granting of the indemnity until after further consideration; declared the ambition for German Unity to be hopeless, except upon a liberal basis; and complained because the Government had not proclaimed the Constitution of 1849.

In quite another tone were the drafts proposed by the Old Liberals and the Left Centre. They were both anxious not to regard the questions of the conflict period as extinguished; but they wished to consider them in the light of the peace which had already

been essentially established, and in confidence that united action with the Government would bring forth fruitful results. The Old Liberal fraction emphasized rather more strongly the national, and the Left Centre, the constitutional, view of the matter.

The Catholic fraction, at that time small, also wished to make its position known. Its proposed draft, in other respects very similar to that of the Left Centre, made manifest its sorrow at the separation from Austria, everywhere else hailed with delight, by the unambiguous phrase: "An explanation of the causes which influenced Prussia to undertake the war is now, in view of the accomplished fact, no longer in order."

Thus there was an abundant supply of individual opinions; and the committee, in which members of the Party of Progress preponderated, finally brought the draft offered by this party with only slight changes as a motion before the House. There the feeling became prevalent among all fractions that it would be a disgrace in the eyes of the people and more than all in the estimation of foreign countries, if the popular representation, divided by the sentiments expressed in five different drafts and thus thrown back into all the dissension of the conflict period, should come to no definite conclusion.

Old General Stavenhagen made himself the champion of this feeling. Taking the report of the committee into his hands he broke off the most formidable thorns, and then demanded for what was left the

support of the conservative and the democratic leaders. The committee favored his motion instead of their own. And so it came about that on the 23d of August all parties consented to abandon further discussion, and Stavenhagen's motion was accepted by an overwhelming majority against about twenty-five votes.<sup>1</sup> Only the stolid fanatic of the extreme Left, Jacoby, and the leader of the Catholic fraction, Reichensperger, spoke against it; the former, alleging that the war had been waged without the consent of the people and the popular representation, the latter, because Prussia had overthrown the German Confederate Diet, the victim of so much vile calumny, and had torn from Germany the beloved land of Austria.

The King graciously received the Address upon the 25th of August. Without giving to the deputation that presented it any well-defined official answer, he expressed his thanks for the sentiments of the House as announced in the Address; praised the new arrangement of the army without which such great victories would have been impossible; declared repeatedly his recognition of the right of the House to determine the budget, but added that inasmuch as no bill of the kind had been passed, it became his duty to intervene as he had done: thus he had been obliged to act, and should always act in the same manner, if similar circumstances should again occur. "But, gentlemen, this will not happen again!"

Thus he remained firm in his position: an adminis-

<sup>1</sup> The Poles, a few Catholics, and Jacoby.

tration based upon a budget is alone the normal order of things; but if no budget is passed, then the Government must at its own risk continue to conduct the administration in keeping with the welfare of the State, until harmony is re-established among the branches of legislation. The decisive question was brought before the Lower House a few days later, on the 1st of September.

The Government had already, on the 14th of August, sent to the House the draft of an indemnity-bill, containing the motion to grant to the Ministry of State indemnity for the expenses incurred during the years 1862-1865, a general outline of which was appended; while for the year 1866, since the state of things was no longer adapted to the establishment of a regular budget, the Government desired a loan of 154 million thalers. In the budget-committee, to whose consideration the matter was referred, it was very soon evident that a large majority favored the acceptance of the bill.

The only determined opposition came from the members of the Party of Progress, who were not able to find in the draft of the bill the necessary security for the re-establishment of constitutional rights. These, therefore, approved the loan for 1866, but wished to decline for the present the proposal about the indemnity and to leave it with the Government to make the request again after the budget for 1867 should have been fixed upon.

To this the reply was made that if the present promise of the Government to adopt the budget for

1867 were not to be trusted, then the passage and adoption of this latter could not be looked upon as a sure guaranty for the acceptance of a regular budget for 1868. The main thing, it was asserted, was the serious intention of the Government to return to the basis of the Constitution; and this determination was believed to be sufficiently indicated in the bill. The whole dispute arose, it was said, from a difference of opinion about the new organization of the army, and who could at this late day think of undertaking any essential changes in the same? For, indeed, it was very probable that if it had been possible to foresee the last war and its consequences, the House would not have thought of refusing its approval to the new military constitution. The matter of the organization of the army must be settled anew, it was argued, by a definite law; but such a law would not under the existing state of things have to be passed by the Prussian Lower House but by the North German Parliament. The report revised by the deputy Twesten in accordance with these sentiments was adopted by the committee by a vote of twenty-five to eight.

In the House the discussion was, as ever, more lively, and the views more sharply opposed to one another. The whole Party of Progress set themselves determinedly against the bill. Waldeck considered that nothing whatever had been offered that justified any expectation of more constitutional conduct on the part of the Government. Schultze-Delitzsch declared that the whole war had been carried on not only without

the consent, but even against the will, of the Prussian people; and he was *naïve* enough to refer to those melancholy addresses of peace of May and June as a brilliant proof of Prussia's careful prudence compared with the tumult of war which prevailed then at Vienna.

Virchow explained that he and his friends had known of a better way leading to German Unity than Bismarck's, namely, the way of Freedom. But as things now stood, he said, they were willing to sacrifice their wishes to Bismarck, and were willing to support his foreign policy, but must so much the more energetically defend constitutional rights. As if Benedek in June would have allowed himself to be deterred from marching upon Berlin by the fiery enthusiasm of the Party of Progress for Freedom! or as if there could have been at this time any worse foe to Bismarck's German policy conceivable than the continuance of the internal quarrel! The Professor of Catholic theology, Michelis, supplemented these remarks by the brilliant observation that Tetzels in 1517 was accused unjustly for having sold indulgences for future sins, but that this bill did indeed involve a pardon for all the future sins of the Ministry.

The Conservative party, delighted at the favorable sentiments, declared with great ardor that it would vote for the indemnity-bill in accordance with the wishes of the Government, although strictly speaking, something entirely different would be more properly in order, namely, a hearty vote of thanks to the Govern-

ment for not having taken account of the foolish behavior of the House. The mediatory position held by Bismarck and Von der Heydt also received eloquent support from the parties of the Centre. Lasker and Georg Vincke, at other times seldom to be found on the same side, and also, at the close of the discussion, Twesten, who had made the report, demonstrated with convincing force the importance of the present situation, the consequence of a continued quarrel with the Government, and the power of Public Opinion which demanded unity of action.

The final vote on the report resulted in 230 in favor and 75 against, the latter including the Party of Progress, some few members of the Left Centre, and the Catholic fraction. The Upper House followed this example on the 8th of September, after Herr von Kleist-Retzow had given vent to his regrets at the injurious compliance on the part of the Government. The vote of the Upper House resulted in the unanimous acceptance of the bill as drawn up by the House of Deputies.

Internal peace was thus secured and the four years' contest over the Constitution was ended. With good practical sense, that question which lay at the very bottom of the quarrel, namely, what was to happen if again sometime the budget should not be passed, was left to future decision; and it was considered sufficient to heal the present wound by mutually trusting to the royal word: "It will not happen again."

Since then more than twenty years have passed.



Often enough have the representatives of the people refused to pass bills presented by the Government; but they have never found any reason to doubt the loyalty of the Ministers to the Constitution. It has not happened again. And may it not happen again, that the popular representation on its part shall occasion such an urgent condition of things that the welfare of the State shall be the only law in force!

Thus Bismarck's Ministry had once more won for itself that foundation of all governments — peace at home — without which no progress in the German cause was possible. Two subjects were now taken up which, although pertaining to very different matters, were most intimately connected practically; namely, legislation concerning the Prussian annexations, and concerning an electoral law for the North German Parliament. North Germany, outside of what had hitherto been Prussian, seemed to be divided into two great groups, almost equal in size, of which one was to be fully incorporated into the Prussian monarchy, whereas the other awaited from the future Parliament the determination of its Confederate position under Prussia's leadership.

In the bill concerning the annexations, which was brought forward on the 17th of August, Schleswig-Holstein was not mentioned, because negotiations with Austria were not yet concluded, and Upper Hesse was omitted out of consideration for Russia: the bill authorized the King of Prussia to assume the government in Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, and Frank-

fort. The Ministry had chosen for the present the form of a personal union, believing that for the complete coalescence a certain transition period was unavoidable, during which the Government must be entirely free in deciding upon the necessary measures. The House appointed a special committee of twenty-one members to examine the bill, although there was no doubt about the confirmation of the annexation, and though the leader of the Democratic Opposition had greeted the idea at once with enthusiasm.

On the very same day, Bismarck took occasion in a meeting of the committee on the Address to express himself more in detail about the principles that had influenced the Government in its conduct. It is easy to understand that he did not mention the fact that the decision to make the annexations was really the consequence of the French opposition to the admission of South Germany into the new Confederation. He merely said that Prussia must faithfully keep her promise which she had made with regard to the extent of the Confederation, and thus preserve above all the confidence to be placed in her word. It was, moreover, a question, said he, whether in South Germany the desire to join the Confederation had as yet been sufficiently manifested; and for that reason it had been the more necessary to establish firmly the foundations of the Confederation in its limited form. To these belonged especially the strengthening of the controlling power of the State that was to be the leader. It had become necessary to protect Prussia forever against

the danger that had just been experienced, namely, of being, in the event of hostile complication, seized in the rear by the states that hitherto had lain between her provinces.

In this matter, he said, three methods of procedure offered themselves. The first was complete incorporation into the Prussian State; and the Government had been obliged to give the preference to this way. The second, was a division of the rights of supremacy in such a way that the country should have a military ruler and a civil ruler: a state of things that would have resulted in disadvantages equally onerous to both. It was a matter of regret that circumstances were likely to make this arrangement necessary in Saxony. The third course was the severance of the common State as it had previously existed, by which a part should be ceded to Prussia and the remainder continue under the present dynasty. The experiences, however, resulting from the division of Saxony in 1815, and the consequent bad feeling that had lasted for many years, were not encouraging. This method, said Bismarck, also would do violence to the wishes and interests of the people concerned; and so it had been decided to sacrifice the dynasties to the welfare of their respective countries, and by a careful regard for the peculiarities of the inhabitants to convert them gradually into good Prussians.

When some members of the committee regretted that more effectual means had not been taken to do away with the North German Petty States, and others

complained because the Imperial Constitution of 1849 had not been adopted for the new Confederation, Bismarck responded: "So far as our Confederate allies are concerned, we have had only few, and those were weak; yet not only our duty, but also wisdom, bids us keep our word even to the smallest. The more unsparingly Prussia shows that she can sweep her enemies from the map of Germany, the more exact must she be in fulfilling her promises to her friends. Precisely in South Germany the belief in our political honesty will be of great importance. As for the Imperial Constitution, that, too, is only one of the forms in which the problem to which I have referred will be solved. I grant that that Constitution theoretically deals with the question more exactly and more correctly than our plan of confederation does, in that it causes the princely sovereigns to be, to a certain extent, subjects and vassals of the emperor; but the former will be much more inclined to concede rights and privileges to a confederate associate, who is an official, as it were, of the confederation, than to an actual emperor and feudal lord."

· However concisely all this had been put, and although a majority of the House was certain for the enlargement of Prussia's borders, yet the committee appointed to consider the bill was still obliged to go through tedious discussions. At the very outset, and in the name of the principles of modern civilization and humanity, sharp opposition was raised against the rights of conquest upon which Bismarck had primarily

based the proposition of annexation. This was proclaimed to be the exaltation of naked force, which was antiquated in the midst of our modern enlightenment: only the vote of the conquered people could properly and legally sanction an annexation. And it was said that though perhaps in the case of a war against foreign countries such a conquest might be suffered, it could not therefore be deduced that such rights were legitimately acquired in a conflict between Germans. At all events, even if the ruling dynasty be ousted, the conquered people, it was contended, must retain their former constitution and representation, and hence before any kind of an annexation could take place the estates of the respective countries must be requested to express their wishes by a vote.

The first of these allegations, the reproach of asserting the mere right of force, Bismarck refuted with the effective observation that in this case the right of conquest was based upon the right of the German Nation to exist, to breathe, to become united; and the great majority of the committee upheld him. "So long as wars shall be waged," said he, "it will be unreasonable to try to deny the right of conquest. The much-lauded Plebiscitum is more an appearance than a reality. If a State falls, its Constitution also becomes extinct. Only private rights and their protection will not be interfered with by a fair-minded and just conqueror."

On the main question, the committee decided not only to detract nothing from the motion of the Government, but even to go beyond it. In the place of a

temporary personal union was put the immediate actual union and incorporation of the four States with Prussia. Different motives conspired to occasion this: on the one hand, the thought of the looseness and artificiality of a personal union of such extent, and the uncertainty of all relations in the event of any threatening complication with outside countries; and, on the other hand, the anxiety lest the Crown, possessing full authority in the four States, should to a large degree be removed from any parliamentary influence, and lest, in financial matters especially, this should cause the rights of the Prussian Parliament in the matter of the budget to lose considerably in importance."

But then it was deemed impossible to introduce the Prussian Constitution at once into those countries. Some sort of a transition period, such as the Government had proposed, was considered indispensable, during which the Government, by the authority of its own supreme power, should with as much carefulness and forbearance as possible make the necessary arrangements preparatory to a future definite and complete union. But the committee also thought it to be quite as necessary to fix a time at which such dictatorship should cease; and therefore made the motion that in the countries to be annexed the Prussian Constitution should come into force on the 2d of October, 1867.

The discussion in the House gave occasion to only a few incidents worthy of notice. The chief speaker this time was Waldeck, who struck with annihilating blows at the true source of the national evil, namely,

the existence of so many small states, and extolled the annexations as the most important foundation for the accomplishment of German Unity. "Our King," said he, "has created this factor; and I should like to see the man, that has the courage, as a member of the Prussian State, to oppose this factor on the ground that the hereditary sovereign Houses must be again introduced!"

Only one person accepted the challenge to display such courage. This was the orator of the Catholic party, Professor Michelis. After a vote for the Previous Question had prevented his speech, he declared as a personal explanation that he would have moved the re-establishment of the banished dynasties.

The Polish party refrained from voting, "because," said their spokesman, Zoltowski, with very good reason, "the Majority of this House, and, I believe, of all Germany, are of the opinion that in the settlement of this question that is under discussion to-day, not Prussian history, but *German* history is being forged."

Since Bismarck had already in the committee expressed his assent, the motion in accordance with their decisions was accepted on the 7th of September by a vote of 273 against 14.

Thereupon in the Upper House, the *Herrenhaus*, the examination of the bill was taken up in characteristic fashion. The question was asked whether there ought not to be granted to the new provinces by some decree a corresponding number of seats in the *Herrenhaus*

according to the respective number of their nobility and hereditary landed proprietors, etc. This was wholly consistent with the standpoint of the ruling party in the House at that period, but quite as inconsiderate of the interests of the Prussian State; since the latter could hardly expect to be benefited by such a strengthening of the Hanoverian and Hessian nobility, in view of their hostility at that time. The Government therefore declined very positively this proposition on the basis of the right of the King to appoint the members of the Upper House. Thereupon on the 11th of September the bill was passed with only one dissenting voice.

On account of its intimate connection with this subject, it may be noticed right here that now, after the ratification of the Peace of Prague, a similar bill was proposed by the Government with regard to Schleswig-Holstein, the passage of which by the Parliament was delayed only by an adjournment, which soon took place. Somewhat later, on the 27th of October, a treaty between Prussia and Oldenburg was effected, in which the Grand Duke, in return for the payment of three million thalers and a small increase of his territory about Eutin, resigned forever to the Prussian Crown not only his own rights but also those ceded to him by the Russian Emperor to any portion of Schleswig-Holstein. This was an act of no little significance; since it did away for all future time with the last possibility of the assertion of foreign claims to the Duchies of the Elbe.



The bill of an electoral law for the North German Parliament, which the Government had already sent to the House of Deputies on the 13th of August, was first discussed three or four weeks by a committee to whom it was submitted before it was brought to vote in the House. This last was done on the 11th and 12th of September. In this connection there was shown decidedly less spirit of compliance than in the matter of the annexations. In regard to the latter, considerations from standpoints of the different political parties played only a subordinate part: German National and Liberal sentiments fell together into the balance in favor of the bill. But concerning a North German Parliament, many serious political doubts arose, and as in Mecklenburg a feudal tendency, so here a liberal phase of particularism opposed Bismarck's efforts in the direction of German Unity.

It was argued that by the annexations Prussia had increased her population to twenty-four millions, whereas the Petty States that would still remain in the future confederation counted together only five millions; and how could there be then any thought of a confederate constitution worthy of the name? For, as a matter of fact, the King of Prussia would be the master of the allied states as well as of the annexed ones and the old Prussian provinces. A parliament for this Prussian confederate state by the side of the Prussian Parliament would be an institution having no *raison d'être*. Why not allow the deputies of these Petty States to enter the Prussian Parliament for

matters of common interest? That would be a natural and consistent arrangement. But the division of parliamentary rights between two separated bodies could only result in the weakening of both; and this would destroy the significance of any popular representation whatever in Germany.

That the Parliament was to be elected on the basis of universal suffrage sounded democratic enough, and Waldeck declared that therein lay the acknowledgment of the principle of the sovereignty of the people. But just this made many Moderate Liberals anxious, and Radicals suspicious, lest in Bismarck's hands it would amount to a copy of the Napoleonic system, in which the precious voters would let themselves be led like cattle to the ballot-box by prefects and the clergy.

In short, the sentiments of all parts of the House were sceptical and cool. Yes, they said, if it only were a question of election of deputies from all Germany! Then the magical power of the word *German Parliament*, which had been constantly agitating the Fatherland in all its depths and heights ever since 1848, would now again manifest its full force at once. But, they said, Bismarck had unfortunately stopped in the midst of his victorious course, when everything was most propitious for the reception of the South German states also into the new confederation. Evidently he had not wished to do this: the thought only too readily suggested itself that he had purposely avoided it from fear lest a strong and vigorous parliament might spring up in Germany.

Such ideas and similar ones were expressed in the greatest imaginable variety, especially by the spokesmen of the Party of Progress. The central parties were far from adopting all these sentiments as their own; but on one point they were entirely agreed: never could the Prussian Constitution be changed by any other than constitutional means, that is, with the assent of both Houses of Parliament. Consequently, in order that the Confederate Constitution, drawn up by the Confederate Parliament, should have legal force in Prussia it must be laid before the Prussian parliament. To insure this it was proposed by the committee to begin the electoral bill with an Article: "For the *consideration* of a constitution for the North German Confederation a Parliament will be chosen," etc., — whereas the Treaty of Confederation of August 18th read: "For the consideration and *conclusion* (hence the definite settlement) of the Constitution."

Bismarck took no part in the discussion of September 11th; but in the next session he arose to reply to the misgivings that had been expressed. He remarked that in the event of any change that might there be made in the stipulations of the Treaty of Confederation, the other Governments and their Estates might — unless their zeal for the cause was greater than that manifested by some portions of that House — very easily find excuses and valid reasons for placing obstacles in the way of the whole work. "I am far removed," said he, "from assigning equal importance with the Prussian Parliament to these various assem-

blies of Estates; but theoretically, such a right of making additions to the Confederate electoral law as is claimed here, cannot be denied to the parliamentary assemblies of even the very smallest states so soon as is it practised here. And if the Government in question withdraws into the attitude of resistance, the Prussian Government will be in the greatest embarrassment." In reply to the reproaches for not having followed up the Prussian victories further and used them as a means of accomplishing the realization of German Unity, he said: "The most advantageous position for the Opposition has at all times been to represent always as an indispensable need just that which for the moment could not be attained, and to lay upon the Government the blame for its not being attainable. I may, however, be permitted to represent to you that we might perhaps have attained something better, if you had supported the policy, the results of which you now decry; and the fact that, even without your support, and though we were forced to enter the contest with our hands tied, we were nevertheless able to gain these results, does not in my opinion justify a criticism from those persons that hindered us from gaining more."

He very wisely, and with good reason, said: "A better-informed age will not in the future refuse to bear witness to the Government that the use made of the victory has been a rather bold one. But the greater and more important the victories, the less ought one to determine upon acquiring exorbitant

advantages, which would no longer imply courage, but recklessness."

Finally, in answer to the fear lest differences between the two popular representative bodies, the Confederate and the Prussian Parliaments, might diminish the authority of the latter and strengthen absolutist tendencies, he made the simple observation that Prussia would send almost 250 members to the former, and all other members of the Confederation together hardly 50; adding, that under any electoral system the inevitable current of public opinion would make itself felt strongly and decisively, so that in both assemblies there would always surely be the same majority of Prussian deputies, and hence there would be no reason for any anxiety about possible disturbances of constitutional rights in Prussia through the agency of the Confederate Parliament.

Nevertheless, he did not make any direct attack upon the proposed Article I. of the bill. He only wished, he said, to have the Government relieved from all responsibility for the numerous delays and difficulties that might arise from such a limitation of a Confederate mandate. Yet the Government preferred, he said, even then to face these difficulties in the hope of overcoming them, rather than afford to the distrust, from which this Article sprang, any fresh nourishment by offering to oppose it. Bismarck very properly relied upon the natural adjustment of things in themselves: if the Parliament were once organized, then in spite of all reservations the representative

assembly of no country would venture to censure its decrees.

The House of Deputies, however, still held to its point; and after the rejection of a counter-motion, brought forward by Count Bethusy-Huc, Article I., which allowed to the Confederate Parliament only an advisory function, was adopted by a large majority. This example was soon afterwards followed by the Mecklenburg Parliament with great satisfaction.

Further discussions concerning the bill passed off smoothly. Most of the numerous motions for amendment were rejected, in harmony with the wishes of the Government. The clause about direct elections on the basis of equal, universal suffrage and secret ballot, having once been included in the Treaty of Confederation, was now mentioned only in a very superficial and incidental way. No one raised any objections to an additional Article which assured freedom of speech in the Parliament; on the other hand, a further motion granting to the members of the Parliament a daily fee for their services was voted down by a small majority — again without any particular discussion of the question.

Thus again a general understanding was reached. For soon afterwards the Upper House also voted its approval, although a resolution was added warning the Government of the serious dangers of universal suffrage. This warning was, indeed, as good as spoken into the air. A Parliament was assured to the nation on the broadest and most democratic basis.

Many opponents of the principle of universal suffrage had consoled themselves with the thought that this was to apply of course only to this one election, and that it would be the business of that Parliament itself to determine the permanent electoral system for the Confederation. This did not exactly indicate very great prophetic powers: there would have to arise pretty serious crises to induce a popular representative body to deprive a portion of their own constituents of those very rights by the exercise of which they themselves had been elected. And especially at that time, when Bismarck on this one point, the advocacy of universal suffrage, was agreed with the Party of Progress, any resistance was necessarily hopeless, and any attempt to make such resistance must appear merely as the expression of a "*salvavi animam meam.*"

The results of the following decades have indeed shown that in 1866 only incomplete practice had been had in judging of the consequences of democratic principles. Practical experience has as little confirmed the anxiety on the part of the Radicals lest universal suffrage should in the end be put under the control of the police, as it has Bismarck's hope of finding more respect for the wishes of the King among the common people than among the citizens of the middle and upper classes, or the expectation that like-minded Majorities in the Confederate and Prussian Parliaments would run parallel with each other.

He who plants an ilex must expect to gather sweet fruit.

But whatever the future might bring in this respect, universal suffrage had become inevitable since the 10th of June. The chief thing now was that the approaching election for the Parliament was a settled fact. Everything depended upon protecting the Parliament against any interference from outside; and a motion to this end, introduced by the Government, gave to the House once more an occasion to manifest, by the side of many misgivings on the constitutional line, a very satisfactory preponderance of national sentiments.

On the 28th of July the King had signed at Nicolsburg a bill asking for a public loan to the amount of 60 million thalers for extra-ordinary needs of the Army and Navy. This was at the time when the Peace-Preliminaries with Austria had, to be sure, been agreed upon; but a definitive peace had not yet been accomplished, hostile operations had not yet ceased against South Germany, and the first news of demands for compensation had just been received from Paris. Nothing, accordingly, could be more in season than the acquisition of means for keeping in readiness for further warfare. The committee of the Lower House, before whom the bill had been laid for consideration, was not organized until the 17th of August; and then discussed the matter so thoroughly that its report was not ready for presentation before the 15th of September; so that the debate in the House could not begin until the 24th.

Meanwhile, indeed, the situation with respect to



foreign relations had changed considerably. Peace had been concluded with Austria and the Southern States, and the French demand for the Rhine territory as far as Mayence was withdrawn. But we know how little this had resulted in complete assurance. The negotiations with France concerning her second proposition of compensation, were still pending; and between Austria and Italy the state of things was such that Bismarck still postponed the disarmament of the Prussian army. The Government, therefore, on account of the uncertainty of the situation, continued its request of July 28th, in spite of the changes for the better that had since taken place.

The victorious offensive movements of the army, the good condition of the State exchequer, and the remarkable skill of the Minister of Finance, Von der Heydt, had rendered it possible to prosecute to the end a war that dashed to the ground a European Great Power of the first rank, without any increase in the taxes, and without a loan or a fresh issue of paper-money.<sup>1</sup>

The expenses that had accumulated up to that time amounted in round numbers to 60 million thalers, of which the State treasury had contributed 20 million, and other sources either had contributed or were about to provide for 10 more. The remaining 30 million Baron von der Heydt had raised by various financial operations, and by using the revenues accruing to the State from rents and from funds employed in business

<sup>1</sup> The Treasury notes that had been put into circulation in accordance with the order of May 18th, had nothing to do with the expenses of the war, nor with the administration of the affairs of State.

enterprises; so that during the short time that the war continued, there had been no disturbance of the civil service.

It was clear that these amounts must be covered as soon as possible. Besides these, there were to come in the immediate future the cost of disarming, the restoration of materials and equipments for the army, and the continuance of the condition of readiness for hostilities, which the Government considered indispensable until the end of the year: altogether making 48, or, with that remnant of the war expenses, 78 millions. Now, when this calculation was made, it was possible to count upon 45 millions to be contributed as war-indemnity.<sup>1</sup> But from this amount the Government wished to spend 9½ millions upon the building of iron-clads, and the fortification of the harbor of Kiel, and to place 27½ millions in the empty State treasury, in order to be ready to meet any emergency. Thus, of the 45 millions, only 8 were still at command, leaving 70 millions to be provided for in some other way. It was thought that part of this might be covered by the sale of certain stocks in the possession of the State; and therefore the bill was sent to the Prussian Parliament for the appropriation of 60 millions.

Members of the Party of Progress preponderated in the committee; and the whole calculation very soon began to be curtailed by them in various directions. The items were said not to be sufficiently specified to allow

<sup>1</sup> Darmstadt and Saxony were at this time still wanting.

several of them to be discussed in the form of special bills; and by no means was the need of the hour so urgent, nor so extensive. After elaborate explanations had been made by the Minister of Finance, there was, indeed, not much left of such special objections. But so much the more lively became the discussion concerning the State treasury and its replenishment.

Against this national economy and politics were arrayed in the field. It was maintained that the nation would be losing the interest on the capital, which would lie idle in the time of peace; and that in comparison with this, it would be much more economical to wait until a war threatened, and then procure the necessary means by a loan. Then again, it must be considered that a full State treasury offered to the Government a most favorable opportunity for incurring expenses without or against the will of the representatives of the people; indeed, it might be termed an ever-present temptation to unconstitutional administration.

By striking out this item and referring several others to the next budget, the result was the decision to grant to the Government not 60 but only 30 millions, and this not as a consolidated loan, but to make possible the issue of treasury notes payable in one year, and the currency of the outstanding notes that could not be immediately called in. As the latter came in they were to be used to bring in again the treasury notes; so that new sources of help were still refused to the Government.

The report of the committee in this epilogue to the quarrel over the budget was made by the same man that had in 1861 opened the conflict by his motion for the specialization of the budget items, deputy Hagen from Berlin, a man in other respects a clear-minded and honest patriot, but one who under all circumstances held rigid economy and the greatest possible power of the popular representatives to be the most fundamental basis upon which the welfare of the State could be founded.

The Minister of Finance, immediately after the report had been fixed upon, declared it to be on no account acceptable, since in this way the Government might be again brought into the embarrassing position of being obliged to choose between negligence of duty and violation of law. He expressed the hope that the Majority of the committee might in the debate in the House disappear in a small Minority.

Nor did this hope deceive him. Although the constitutional objections to a State reserve-fund had weight also with the parties of the Centre, yet all such anxieties were overbalanced by truly German sentiments and by the conviction that whoever wished to achieve the unity of the German nation must, in view of the present state of feelings in Europe, also have at hand the means of carrying on great struggles. Hence several counter-motions were proposed on the spot in opposition to the report of the committee. Twesten, indeed, declared that the existence of a State treasury reserve was not consistent with the principles of a parliamen-

tary constitution, but wished to overlook that in consideration of the great tasks to be accomplished during the next few years. He accordingly proposed that the desired loan of 60 millions should be granted to the Government: whatever portion of this should not be consumed in extra-ordinary war-expenses before the 1st of January, 1870, should then be applied to the cancelling of State debts, and after that time no dead reserve should be tolerated.

The mention of this date has since been the occasion of the severest criticism of the error committed by this talented man. How bad it would have been for Prussia, if in the summer of 1870 she had had no money at her disposal beyond the war loan! Twesten's motion, however, met with determined opposition as soon as it was brought forward. The deputies Michaelis and Röpell demanded that the House should grant the loan and the payment of 27½ millions into the State treasury reserve, as well as specially approve the laying aside of those revenues accruing in consequence of former legislation. Yet the aggregate of the reserve was not to exceed the sum of 30 millions; and, as Lasker added, all revenues beyond this amount should be used in diminishing the public debts.

The Conservative party would gladly have raised this maximum sum to 40 millions, but abandoned this point upon the declaration of the Minister of Finance that although he recognized this as better, he would be satisfied with the "well enough" of Michaelis' motion. Michaelis, without doubt the greatest financier

of the House, demonstrated that the interest accruing from a given capital was not always the only benefit nor even the chief one to be derived from it; that in the case of the treasury-reserve the loss of interest was outweighed by the feeling of security gained by its existence, and this itself was from an economic point of view productive even in the time of peace. He could also with good reason assert that by his motion this treasury-reserve was placed under the superintendence of the representative assembly, and that especially the replenishment of the same by war-contributions was subject to the approval of the Parliament.

Bismarck, seriously exhausted in consequence of the exertions of the summer, took part in the debate only so far as to make one short but pertinent speech, in which he openly and pointedly asked for a vote of confidence; at the same time making the promise in the name of the Government that no part of the loan should be made use of for any other expenses than those connected with maintaining a readiness for war. The result was then the passage of Michaelis' motion, by a vote of 230 against 83: the latter consisting of a part of the Party of Progress and of the Left Centre, the Catholics, and the Poles.

On the following day the Upper House expressed its assent in constitutional form. Thereupon, on the 27th of September, an adjournment of Parliament for six weeks ensued. A few days later, the Government introduced into the annexed provinces the universal duty of serving in the army according to Prussian

rules, and also established three new army-corps in the same, into which the Confederate contingents of the North German Petty States at once were merged. Within a short time a fourth army-corps would be added as the contingent from the Kingdom of Saxony. If the troops to be supplied in accordance with the three South German alliances were also to be reckoned with the others, the victor of Königgrätz might be sure of being able to meet any fresh threat from abroad with an army of almost double the former strength.

The steps that had already been gained towards laying the foundation of the North German Confederate State were in every way satisfactory. But before any further progress could be made, another obstacle of a special nature had to be removed from the path. There were three states that should belong to the Confederation, partly in the nature of things, and partly in virtue of the treaties of Nicolsburg and Prague, but which still stood in open hostility to Prussia. These were Reuss (elder line), Saxe-Meiningen, and the Kingdom of Saxony.

The Princess Regent Caroline von Reuss zu Greiz, by birth a princess of Hesse-Homburg, was a strong and determined woman, who, on the 14th of June, had cast her vote in the Confederate Diet against Prussia, and had in compliance with the order of the Diet sent her troops to Rastadt. The battle of Königgrätz, which shook all Europe, left her entirely unmoved. She declined every request of Prussia to join the new Confederation. Finally Bismarck lost his patience;

and in the middle of August he ordered the military occupation of the country, or, in other words, sent two companies of infantry to be quartered at Greiz. Caroline held out four weeks longer; but at the end of that time she submitted, joined the North German Confederation, and paid 100,000 thalers into the treasury of the Prussian society for disabled soldiers.

King William had already sent word, as we have seen, from Nicolsburg to Duke Bernhard of Meiningen, that his state would be offered more advantageous terms of peace, if he would abdicate the throne in favor of his son and heir. The old man, firm in his sense of honor and regarding the deposition of his office as ruler as a serious violation of duty, a sort of desertion, resisted long, until here too a military chastisement proved effectual. The new Duke, George, was granted peace in return for his simply joining the North German Confederation and his acknowledgment of the treaty by which Thurn and Taxis surrendered the control of his postal service to Prussia.

To follow the negotiations with the Kingdom of Saxony, which with their various turns and phases dragged on until the 21st of October, would be as useless as it would be unpleasant. We have already seen that a strong and influential party at the Prussian Court had originally determined upon the complete annexation of Saxony; that King William wished at least to receive Leipzig and Bautzen; and that Bismarck always considered the Minister, Von Beust, to be one of his most dangerous German antagonists.



When Bismarck accordingly peremptorily prohibited Beust from taking any part in the negotiations of peace, the latter at once presented to King John his request for dismissal. This was granted in an extremely gracious letter, in which the King also thankfully acknowledged the faithful and judicious services rendered by his Minister since 1849. Beust hastened to have this letter published in the Vienna newspapers, and thus spread the glory of his fame throughout Europe. The consequence of this was that it was supposed in Berlin that the King of Saxony continued to entertain in unabated measure Beust's hostile sentiments towards Prussia; and therefore it was determined that by the imposition of severe conditions of peace he should be reduced to complete subjection. This supposition was perfectly natural, but was, as a matter of fact, utterly incorrect. King John was a man that was thoroughly cultivated both in mind and character, one whose soul was not acquainted with the feeling of hate, and who had entered the lists against Prussia solely from motives of political conviction.

When he sent his Minister, Von Friesen, to Berlin to negotiate concerning peace, he said to him that so long as the old Confederation had existed he had fulfilled his duties under the Confederate law to the best of his knowledge and conscientiously; that after the overthrow of the old Confederation he was willing to join the new one, and in like manner to fulfil his Confederate obligations faithfully, provided that Prussia would grant to him in it a position consistent with his

personal and royal honor; and that if this were not done, he should prefer to give up altogether his claims to sovereignty. Then and later he evinced that these words were spoken with the most sacred earnestness.

To start with, his representatives, Baron Friesen and Count Hohenthal, had a hard time of it in Berlin. They were obliged to wait in patience several long days before Bismarck granted to them the first interview. He did not wish to begin negotiations with them before the conclusion of the Treaty of Prague, so that any further interference on the part of Austria would be impossible. When, in spite of that, Baron Brenner immediately afterwards arrived in Berlin in order to recommend that Saxony should be treated mildly, Bismarck turned him off with a sharp rebuke.

"I cannot understand at all," said Bismarck, "this step on the part of Austria. In the stipulations agreed upon at Nicolsburg and repeated at Prague, Austria has recognized Prussia's new organization of North Germany, and very expressly Prussia's right to regulate the position of Saxony in the North German Confederation. In this affair of internal business no third Power has any right to interfere; and it is consequently a matter touching Prussia's honor that she should absolutely decline in the name of the independence of Germany any attempt to do so. The King is penetrated with these sentiments. Every intervention of Austria or France will only make Saxony's fate the harder."

In fact, King John, like the South German princes,

had also called upon the good services of France; and Drouyn de Lhuys had done as he did for Bavaria and Darmstadt, and sent instructions to this effect to the French ambassador at Berlin. With the latter, however, Bismarck talked more strongly if possible than to Brenner. "Napoleon has repeatedly affirmed that the organization of North Germany is a matter of indifference to him. Germany will arrange her own affairs as she thinks best, and will not suffer any non-German Power to exercise either the right of control or of criticism in the matter."

To the Saxon negotiators Bismarck represented very plainly that in accordance with the Treaty of Prague it was Prussia's business to determine the position of Saxony in the North German Confederation, and that consequently there was on the part of Saxony neither demands to make nor conditions to set, but simply to recognize in the treaty under consideration the Prussian stipulations. They would not be asked, he continued, to grant any cession of territory, but to give up the military supremacy over their troops. These troops must form a part of the Prussian army, must take the oath of allegiance to the Prussian King, have their officers appointed by the latter, and according to his orders occupy Saxon or Prussian garrisons. In the same manner he mentioned the other conditions. Friesen was forced to say that he was not empowered to assent to such concessions.

From what Bismarck had said in the committee of the Lower House on the 17th of August, and from his

final attitude, we may infer that the imposition of those severe conditions upon Saxony was not in accordance with the sentiments of his heart, and that here too he cared most about the restoration of sincere friendship.

Toward the end of September, however, he left Berlin in search of relief from his nervous troubles in the quiet of the country at Putbus, and the negotiations with Saxony were continued by the former deputy to the Confederate Diet, Herr von Savigny, without any further participation on the part of Bismarck, — and soon, in contradiction to the latter's principles. Now, the desire for the acquisition of Saxon territory had not entirely died out in Berlin in spite of the Peace of Prague; and the conclusion was drawn, contrary to the spirit of the treaty, that although territory might not be demanded, nothing stood in the way of accepting it if offered.

Accordingly, Savigny made one unbearable demand after another, and supported them by more and more disagreeable regulations with regard to the Prussian military administration in Saxony: while Friesen secretly learned that everything would change its aspect if he should offer in return the cession of Leipzig. But when the Saxons showed that they would remain firm, and when a letter from their King reminded the Prussian Monarch in warm words of their old personal relations of close intimacy and kinship: then, about the middle of October, the tide turned, and the end of it all was the conclusion of a

peace that differed only in a few minor points from the treaties with the other German states.

Saxony entered the North German Confederation, and promised to reorganize her troops according to the general regulations to be determined in the future by the Confederation. Until then she would place them under the supreme command of a Prussian general, resident in Saxony, and would suffer a Prussian garrison upon the Königstein as well as a garrison in common in Dresden. The war-indemnity was fixed at ten millions. The remaining stipulations, as in the South German treaties, concerned railways and the Tariff-Union.

Soon afterwards King John, accompanied by the Crown Prince Albert, made a visit to Berlin, on the occasion of which a hearty feeling of good-will was, indeed, again established between the two royal Houses.

There remains for us still to cast a glance at the condition of things in South Germany. There, in the minds of the great majority, the most contradictory sentiments prevailed in strangest confusion. In honor of German Unity they had attacked that proud Prussian, who would decide every question arbitrarily against the will of the others. And then after a few weeks had come the startling revulsion. They had found the blow from the strong Prussian arm to be exceedingly painful, but had at the same time learned that this arm alone was strong enough to bring about an actual realization of the much-lauded German

Unity. The bloody strife had caused a thousand burning wounds; and yet the seriousness of the struggle had aroused the feeling of affinity to a new and unknown strength. The time was past, in which the policy of Frederick William IV., so full of contradictions, so rich in words and poor in deeds, had undermined all faith in Prussia's power and strength of will. Prussia had mightily won the respect of the world, and had gained, if not the brotherly affection, at least the esteem of her South German brethren. And in the intercourse of nations as of men esteem is the indispensable condition of affection.

To be sure, some few groups still stood aside, grumbling and angry. The Catholic clergy and nobility of Bavaria, long since filled with an attachment for Austria, saw with distress and vexation the dreams of an "entire Germany" vanish in smoke. The Republican party felt that Prussia's victories had dashed all their hopes to the ground. They repelled every thought of a union with the North, and were not loath to say that under certain circumstances the duty of self-preservation might cause the states of South Germany to form alliances with foreign Powers against Prussia.

But the general and strong current of feeling moved irresistibly against these sentiments. At one blow, it had now been clearly seen that Austria's ejection from the old Confederation was not a loss, but rather a source of strength to the cause of German Unity. More than all, the point to be considered was the

union of the South with the Northern Confederation. If Prussia really was not at liberty at present to allow their admission, then the feeling was that every preparation should be made so that all might be in readiness when the first propitious moment came. And above all, as it became more and more known that the division of Germany by the line of the Main had been the work of the French mediation solicited by Vienna, the national spirit in the South was redoubled, in vigorous opposition to this barrier set up by foreign hands.

When the Bavarian Parliament was opened on the 27th of August, and Baron von der Pfordten brought forward the treaty of peace with Prussia and the demand for a loan of 30 million florins, he portrayed the situation with evident satisfaction. "Bavaria," said he, "fully independent in her external relations, free and strong internally by reason of her loyal fidelity to the King and a Constitution that is always respected, will be true to herself and her development, but will never forget that she will remain a German land and a German people, and that her strength belongs not only to herself but to the entire German Fatherland." This was precisely the standpoint that he had defined in his declaration on the 10th of June and had maintained in the recent treaties: not a federation but an alliance with Prussia.

On the following day, the 28th, forty-two members of the Left, that is, more than a third of the second Chamber, united in support of a programme, which

denounced the dismemberment of Germany into North and South and rejected all thoughts of a Southern confederation, demanding rather a united Fatherland with a common parliament and central head. They further desired the admission of Bavaria into the Northern Confederation so soon as it might in any way be possible, and in the mean time, the establishment of a close alliance with Prussia, and also the continuance and further development of the Tariff-union; and finally, if German territory should be threatened by any outside power their army was to unite at once with the North German army under the leadership of Prussia.

The Majority of the Chamber did not, indeed, wish to go ahead quite so fast; for it seemed to them that joining the Confederation before its Constitution was settled upon might in some way compromise Bavaria's constitutional freedom. But after the Minister had expressed himself unreservedly against the formation of a South German confederation, both parties united upon the following motion which was passed by a vote of all the members except eleven. The motion read: "May His Majesty the King be pleased to grant his authority to a close alliance with Prussia, that that course may be pursued which at present can alone lead to the desired objects of uniting Germany by the help of a parliament elected freely and endowed with the necessary functions, of actively maintaining national interests, and of successfully warding off possible attacks from foreign powers."



Then the treaty of peace and the request for a loan were passed almost unanimously, the single dissenting voice being an Ultramontane.

The First Chamber, whose members (of the upper nobility), like their Hanoverian peers, were anti-Prussian, approved of the treaty and the loan, but otherwise were content to pass a patriotic resolution in which the close alliance with Prussia and the Prussian leadership were not mentioned. The resolution was as follows: "We desire that in case German territory should be attacked by outside powers, His Majesty the King shall resist such an attack with all the forces of the nation and the army."

The Parliament was then adjourned.

In Würtemberg, the Government held, as we have seen, to the very same standpoint as the Court of Munich, except that Varnbüler did not feel so confident as Pfordten with regard to the security of the external relations of his State. But it was different with the sentiments of the representative assembly. The Suabian Democrats were set in their own particular views, and the very fact of their standing alone contributed to make them doubly self-conscious in their loyalty to their convictions. Königgrätz and its consequences had as little effect upon them as upon Caroline of Reuss and the Mecklenburg nobility. "The way a battle turns out," said they, "cannot affect our ideas of right and wrong." Germany's condition seemed to them more disordered than ever. In spite of the indemnity and the electoral law,

Bismarck was still in their eyes the *Junker* and the enemy of Freedom.

Their feeling was that it would be ruinous to urge a too hasty admission into the North German Confederation from anxious fears of isolation: for that isolation could be remedied by a close federation of the South German states among themselves with a common representative assembly; but yet, since only a nation that is contented at home can be strong against outsiders, so it appeared that the chief business of Württemberg should be the reform of her Constitution and administration on the principles of active freedom, as well as the introduction of general military service without the burdens connected with this in other countries—a task which they deemed to be hard, indeed, but not impossible to perform.

These sentiments were expressed to the Government by the Second Chamber in the form of a very lengthy address, which was adopted by a vote of 61 to 25. To this Baron Varnbüler made on the 10th of October the evasive response, that preliminary information concerning a Southern confederation had been received, but that it had not as yet been possible to hold any detailed discussion of the matter on account of the shortness of the time. On the 16th, the King graciously received the Address and expressed his thanks for this public manifestation of the views of the deputies. "To you also it has been evident," said he, "that immediately after the overthrow of historical conditions, Württemberg must follow the development

of the new order of things. If, after the bloody struggle in Germany, the spirit of sincere conciliation gains the ascendancy, then we may hope that for the good of Europe our national idea shall be realized. The internal reforms shall be the subject of the most careful investigations by the Crown."

It is unnecessary to portray the effect which this reply produced upon the Majority in the Chamber. Every syllable of it stood in direct opposition to their wishes; yet, after all, no one word could give occasion for any antagonistic utterances.

But in the neighboring state of Baden, national sentiments made themselves felt most strongly. It was then manifest, how artificially and without gaining any hold upon the people, Edelsheim and his associates, both clerical and secular, had four months before incited and instigated the troops. After the Parliament had been opened on the 9th of October, and the Minister, Von Freydorf, had laid the Prussian treaty of peace before it for confirmation, the committee of the Second Chamber appointed for its consideration reported on the 23d the simple motion that the South German states should join the North German Confederation, with the reservation, not inconsistent with this, that they should preserve their independence in internal affairs.

Freydorf thereupon took occasion to repel most vigorously the idea of a Southern confederation, and also hinted at the obstacles that still stood in the way of immediately joining the Northern Confederation. He

counselled the people not to conjure up dangers unnecessarily by premature haste. "Unnecessarily, I say," continued he; "for the time is coming when that which is now attended with danger will come to pass of itself in the natural and inevitable course of events. It lies in our hands to hasten the approach of this time. This era of the union of all Germany will then have arrived, unless unexpected occurrences compel us to act more speedily, when the people of South Germany shall have laid aside their obscure and unfounded antipathies, and shall have arrived at a clear understanding of their own advantage and of the fundamental conditions of Germany's power and greatness."

This was directed rather against the Address of the Würtembergers than his immediate countrymen, who did not need the warning. After rejecting a motion to proclaim the Imperial Constitution of 1849, the Chamber accepted the report of the committee by a vote of the whole house against eleven. The feeling of the country was perhaps more plainly evinced by the fact that the First Chamber unanimously adopted a similar report presented by Bluntschli for the committee, and also decided with only three dissenting votes, to request the Government, in case it was impossible to join the North German Confederation at once, to conclude at least an offensive and defensive alliance with Prussia, to make such military arrangements with Prussia as were necessary for the security of the country, to seek to have the Tariff-Union changed into a permanent and unified organization instead of

the temporary arrangement from which any state could secede by giving notice, and to have introduced into all Germany a common system of postal, telegraph, and railway service, as well as a common citizenship.

Thus did the waves of a national impulse towards unity beat unceasingly from the left and from the right, from the North and from the South, upon Napoleon's arbitrary and bungling piece of work, the dams of the line of the Main, which he had erected across the middle of Germany. The Southern States were not yet members of the Confederation, but were already, to use an old expression, relatives of the Confederation (*Bundesverwandte*) in virtue of the offensive and defensive alliances with Prussia and of the new organization of the Tariff-Union, already announced. Freydorf was right: the natural and inevitable course of events must here irresistibly break its way, unless some circumstance not to be foreseen should throw down the barriers beforehand. How soon such a crisis might take place no one could at that time estimate. But in regard to the certainty of the final result there was in Germany no longer any doubt.

We may make the statement that in the autumn of 1866 the German Empire was founded.

Three-fourths of the territory of this Empire was dominated by a Government that was in the first place efficient in military organization, guided by the firm hand of King William, counselled by the representatives of the North German Sovereigns, and recognized by all the Powers of Europe. The opening of that

Parliament was near at hand, that should in common with this Government determine the limitations to be placed upon the powers of the Confederation in its relation to the individual states and also the functions of the new Reichstag in the legislation and in the control of the finances of the Confederation. The men of the Party of Progress in the north and the Democrats in the south might entertain serious misgivings about the way the work of framing a Constitution would turn out: its essential elements were unalterably assured by the previous course of things and by the Confederate Treaty of August 18th.

It was, in the first place, certain that the functions of the future supreme Confederate authority would be in general the same as those specified in the Imperial Constitution of 1849. Yet it was the fixed intention of the Prussian Government to curtail largely the right of interfering with the internal administration of the individual states, which had been in that Constitution granted under many circumstances to the Imperial Supreme Authority. For the legislation of the Confederation the Reichstag should consist, not of two, but only of one House. This, however, should be chosen according to the democratic electoral law decreed in 1849. Every law should need the ratification of the Confederate Government as well as of the Reichstag. Nothing whatever was said about the suspensive veto of 1849 or the *liberum veto* of the old Confederate Diet.

The most radical difference between 1849 and 1866

consisted in the form of the Confederate Government. The former period aimed at the appointment of a Constitutional and hereditary emperor, with responsible ministers, to the utter exclusion of the German sovereigns: whereas now the plan included all of these sovereigns in a Confederate Council (*Bundesrath*) organized after the fashion of the old Confederate Diet, with committees for the various branches of the administration, and under the presidency of the King of Prussia, who should occupy a superior position in virtue of the conduct, placed in his hands once for all, of the foreign policy, the army and the navy, but who otherwise in the Confederate Council, in spite of the increase of his votes, could be outvoted like every other prince by a decree of the Majority.

The National Assembly, borne along by a popular movement for freedom, had formerly begun its work by first destroying the old Confederate supreme authority and had then tried to erect upon the free space thus gained a monarchical Confederate Government. It had, in doing this, offended on the one hand the Sovereigns most seriously, and on the other had driven the democratic parties into the enemy's camp.

It had overlooked the fact that often by the side of an ideal spirit of advancement there persists in Germany a fixed devotion to traditional conditions of daily life. German Unity was then the ideal, greeted with resounding enthusiasm: but the habit of mind that characterizes Particularism was firmly rooted and found a thousand sources of nourishment in the actual con-

ditions of living. The National Assembly underrated this power and the measure of its sway; nor did that body discover the formula for reconciling it with the great spirit of national progress.

In contradistinction to all this, the Prussian Government, urged forward by the situation, had been since 1865 slowly, step by step, approaching the plan not of an overthrow, but of a reform, of the old Confederation. To King William it seemed contrary to the nature of things that in the Confederate Diet Prussia's rights were of no more weight than Darmstadt's, and that she was thrown into the shade by Austria's presidency. He regretted the actual state of things, which utterly prevented the only organ of the nation as a whole, the Confederate Diet, from accomplishing anything of common advantage. And finally, he was indignant over the wretched Confederate Military Constitution, which converted defence against external foes into a suicidal illusion.

He determined to provide some remedy for these evils, but in other respects to disturb in no way the independence of the individual states nor the rights of his fellow-sovereigns in the Confederation. After he had by means of a series of unparalleled victories removed from the way that source of all evils, the antagonism of two Great Powers in the Confederation, he kept persistently within the limits he himself had set; and the Confederate Treaty of August 18th merely repeated the Prussian motion of the 10th of June. Thus his prudence and moderation succeeded



where the National Assembly had failed. Advised by his great Minister he found the basis for a well-balanced adjustment between the ideal and the actual, between unity and individualism. Thus he created an institution, that made at the start less pretence to brilliancy than that of 1849, but which had every prospect of a firmly-established continuance. The wisdom of his principles has since then been confirmed in every respect by experience.

Before the time of the peace-conferences, when all definite arrangements of Germany's future seemed suspended in the balance and undecided, the Crown Prince Frederick William, who in general had in mind for the supreme head of the Confederation a higher rank and position of power than did the King, maintained that his father should bear the title of King of Germany. Bismarck reminded him that there were other Kings in Germany: the Kings of Hanover, of Saxony, etc. "These," was the reply, "will then take the title of Dukes." "But they will not agree to that." "They will have to!" cried His Royal Highness.

After the further course of events, the Crown Prince indeed gave up his project; but in the early part of 1867 he asserted that the King should assume the title of German Emperor, arguing that the people would connect no tangible idea with the title of President of the Confederation, whereas the renewal of the imperial dignity would represent to them the actual incorporation of the unity finally attained, and the

remembrance of the old glory and power of the Empire would kindle all hearts.

This idea, as we have experienced and continue to experience its realization, was in itself perfectly correct. But it was evidently at that time premature: a North German empire would have aroused no enthusiasm in the north, and would have seriously hindered the accomplishment of the national aim in the south. King William rejected this proposition very decidedly: in his own simple way he wished to be nothing more than Confederate Commander-in-chief and the first among his peers. This, too, he continued to be, even after he had four years later, upon the admission of the Southern States into the Confederation and at the motion of Bavaria, ratified by the Sovereigns and the Reichstag, consented to accept the imperial crown.

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

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1740-1786.	Reign of Frederick the Great, King of Prussia.
1786-1797.	Reign of Frederick William II.
1797-1840.	Reign of Frederick William III.
1840-1861.	Reign of Frederick William IV.
1858-1861.	Regency of William I.
1861-1888.	Reign of William I.
1806, July 12.	Formation of the Confederation of the Rhine.
Oct. 14.	Battle of Jena.
1807, July 9.	Peace of Tilsit, between Prussia and France.
1813, Oct. 16-19.	Battle of Leipzig.
1814, May 30.	First Peace of Paris.
Sept. 20-1815, June 10.	Congress of Vienna.
1815, May 22.	Constitutional Law granted in Prussia by Frederick William III.
June 8.	German Confederation constituted at Vienna.
June 18.	Battle of Waterloo.
Nov. 20.	Second Peace of Paris.
1816, Nov. 16.	First Session of the German Confederate Diet at Frankfort.
1819, Sept. 30.	Carlsbad Decrees adopted.
1820, June 8.	Vienna Final Act.
1830, July 27-29.	Revolution at Paris.
Sept. 7.	Revolution at Brunswick; flight of the Duke.
Sept. 13.	Revolution in Saxony; abdication of the King.
1830-1848.	Reign of Louis Philippe.
1831, Jan. 5.	New Constitution in Hesse-Cassel.
Sept. 30.	Elector William II. abdicates in favor of the Electoral Prince as Co-regent.
1832, June 28.	New Confederate Laws passed.
1834, Jan. 1.	Establishment of the Tariff-Union.
1835, March 2.	Death of Francis I. of Austria, accession of Ferdinand I.
1846.	Insurrections in Poland and Galicia.
July 8.	Christian VIII. of Denmark declares the integrity of the Kingdom, and the right of the Crown to Schleswig and Holstein.

- 1847, Feb. 13. Summons issued to the United Provincial Diet in Prussia.
- Sept. 12. Meeting of Liberals at Offenburg.
- Oct. 10. Meeting of Constitutional party at Heppenheim.
- Nov. 20. Frederick William I. becomes Elector of Hesse-Cassel.
- 1848, Jan. 20. Accession of Frederick VII., King of Denmark.
- Jan. 28. Frederick VII. proclaims a new Constitution, uniting the Duchies more closely with Denmark.
- Feb. 24. Outbreak of the Revolution in Paris.
- March 13. Insurrection in Vienna; flight of Metternich.
- March 18. Insurrection in Berlin.
- March 24. Eider-Danish Government declares the incorporation of the Duchies.
- March 24. Insurrection in the Duchies; Provisional Government established.
- March 24. The rebels in the Duchies seize the fortress of Rendsburg.
- March 30-April 4. German Preliminary Parliament at Frankfort.
- April 9. Troops of the Duchies defeated near Flensburg.
- April 23. Danes defeated by Prussians, aiding the Duchies, at the Dannevirke.
- May 2. Capture of the fortress of Fridericia.
- May 15. Insurrection at Vienna; Emperor flees to Innsbruck.
- May 18. Meeting of the German National Assembly at Frankfort.
- May 29. Archduke John appointed Vicar-General of the Austrian Empire at Vienna.
- June 28. Decree of the National Assembly concerning a Central Government.
- June 29. Archduke John chosen Regent of the German Empire.
- July 12. The Confederate Diet remits its functions to the Archduke John.
- July 12. Termination of the Confederate Diet.
- July 25. Italians defeated at Custozza by Radetzky.
- Aug. 26. Truce and Compact of Malmö signed.
- Sept. 5. Compact of Malmö rejected by the Committee of National Assembly.
- Sept. 16. Compact of Malmö accepted by the National Assembly.
- Sept. 17. Riot in Frankfort.
- Oct. 6. Insurrection in Vienna; murder of Count Latour.
- Nov. 22. Schwarzenberg appointed Prime Minister of Austria.
- Nov. 22. Austrian Diet at Kremsier.
- Dec. 2. The Emperor Ferdinand I. abdicates in favor of his nephew, Francis Joseph.
- Dec. 10. Louis Napoleon chosen President of the French Republic.
- 1849, Feb. 26. Victory of Austrians over Hungarians.
- March 4. New Constitution proclaimed for Austria.

- 1849, March 7. Close of the Kremsier Diet.  
 March 23. Battle of Novara; abdication of Charles Albert, King of Sardinia, in favor of his son, Victor Emmanuel.  
 March 24. The Prussian King formally recognizes the claims of the Duchies.  
 March 26. End of the truce of Malnö.  
 March 28. The German National Assembly elects the King of Prussia "Hereditary Emperor of Germany."  
 April 3. The King declines the imperial crown.  
 April 3. Hostilities with Denmark recommence.  
 April 8. Wildenbruch's interview with the King of Denmark.  
 April 12. The German National Assembly recognizes the Provisional Government of the Duchies.  
 May 26. Formation of the League of the Three Kingdoms.  
 June 5. The King of Denmark sanctions a new liberal constitution.  
 July 3. The French enter Rome.  
 July 10. Armistice renewed at Malmö.  
 Sept. 30. Compact of the "Interim:" a treaty between Prussia and Austria for the formation of a new central authority for a limited time.
- 1850, Feb. 23. Appointment of Hassenpflug, Minister in Hesse-Cassel.  
 Feb. 27. Federation of the Four Kingdoms.  
 March and April. Union Parliament meets at Erfurt.  
 May 8. Meeting of Princes in Berlin.  
 May 10. Confederate Congress, summoned by Austria, meets at Frankfort.  
 July 2. Separate Peace between Denmark and Prussia.  
 July 14. Official declaration from the King of Denmark.  
 July 24. Battle of Idstedt; defeat of Schleswig-Holsteiners.  
 Aug. 2. Protocol signed in London by the Great Powers, proclaiming the integrity of Denmark.  
 Sept. 2. Restoration of the Confederate Diet at Frankfort; Prussia and her associates refuse to join it.  
 Oct. 11. League formed at Bregenz by Austria, Bavaria, and Würtemberg against Prussia.  
 Oct. 17. Brandenburg meets the Czar at Warsaw.  
 Oct. 26. Brandenburg's first interview with the Austrian Emperor.  
 Nov. 2. Ministerial Council at Berlin decides upon peaceful measures.  
 Nov. 6. Death of Count Brandenburg.  
 Nov. 8. Skirmish at Bronzell.  
 Nov. 9. Schwarzenberg demands the abolition of the Prussian Union.  
 Nov. 9. Prussian troops occupy the military roads in Hesse-Cassel.  
 Nov. 29. Convention of Olmütz.

- 1850, Dec. 23-1851, May 15. Conferences at Dresden upon German affairs.  
 Dec. 24. Prince Schwarzenberg's visit to the King of Prussia.  
 1851, May 30. The re-established Confederate Diet assembles with its former membership.  
 May 31. The Czar and the King of Prussia meet the Emperor of Austria at Warsaw.  
 Aug. 29. Bismarck appointed deputy to the Confederate Diet.  
 Sept. 7. Commercial Treaty signed between Hanover and Prussia.  
 Nov. 18. Death of Ernest Augustus, King of Hanover; accession of George V.  
 Dec. 31. The Emperor Francis Joseph revokes the Constitution of March 4, 1849.  
 1852, Jan. 28. Royal Manifesto issued in a concessive spirit by the King of Denmark.  
 April 5. Death of Prince Schwarzenberg.  
 April 13. New Constitution proclaimed in Hesse-Cassel.  
 May 5. Signing of the agreement concerning Neuchâtel.  
 May 8. Signing of the London Protocol concerning the Danish succession.  
 June. German fleet sold at auction.  
 Nov.-Dec. Chaatisement of Hesse-Cassel.  
 Dec. 2. Napoleon III. proclaimed Emperor of the French.  
 1853, Feb. 19. Treaty of commerce and navigation between Prussia and Austria.  
 April 8. German States of the Tariff-Union agree to the conditions of the commercial treaty between Prussia and Austria.  
 1854, April 9. Protocol concerning the integrity of Turkey signed by the Four Powers at Vienna.  
 April 20. Treaty of alliance between Prussia and Austria.  
 July 31. New Constitution for the Duchies proclaimed by the King of Denmark.  
 Dec. 2. Alliance of Austria with the Western Powers.  
 1855, March 2. Death of Czar Nicholas; accession of Alexander II.  
 Aug. 18. The Austrian Concordat, increasing the Papal power in Austria.  
 Oct. 2. New Constitution proclaimed in Denmark.  
 1856, March 30. Treaty of Paris, at the close of the Crimean War.  
 1857, May 26. Settlement of Prussia's troubles with Neuchâtel.  
 Oct. 23. William, Prince of Prussia, appointed temporary regent.  
 1858, Jan. 14. Attempted assassination of Napoleon III. by Orsini and others.  
 Feb. 11. The Confederate Diet declares the Danish Constitution of 1855 to be illegal.  
 March 27. Fortification of Copenhagen decreed.  
 Oct. 9. William, Prince of Prussia, appointed permanent regent.

- 1858, Nov. 6. Frederick VII. concedes that the General Constitution is invalid in Holstein and Lauenburg.
- Nov. 6. Resignation of the Manteuffel Ministry; succeeded by that of Prince Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen (Liberal).
- 1859, April 26. Austrian Ultimatum rejected by Sardinia.
- May 13. Resignation of Count Buol; followed by Rechberg.
- June 4. Austrian defeat at Magenta.
- June 11. Death of Prince Metternich.
- June 24. Battle of Solferino.
- July 11. Preliminaries of Peace signed at Villafranca.
- Aug. 14. Meeting at Eisenach for the establishment of the German National Association.
- Nov. 10. Treaty of Zurich; the Italian Confederation established.
- 1860, Jan. 16. Count Cavour returns to the Ministry.
- Feb. 10. Bills brought forward by the Prussian Government about military service and a military appropriation.
- March 24. Savoy and Nice ceded to France by treaty.
- June 6. Death of Cavour.
- June 11. Ricasoli forms a Ministry.
- June 15. Prussian Regent and other German Sovereigns meet Napoleon at Baden.
- July 26. Meeting of the Prussian Regent and the Austrian Emperor at Teplitz.
- Sept. 11. Sardinian troops enter the Papal territories.
- Oct. 20. Imperial Diploma promising to restore to Holstein its old Constitution.
- Oct. 22. The Emperor of Austria, the Czar, and the Regent of Prussia meet at Warsaw.
- Dec. 13. Ministerial Crisis in Vienna; Schmerling becomes Minister.
- 1861, Jan. 2. Death of Frederick William IV.; Accession of William I.
- Feb. 26. New Constitution proclaimed for the whole Austrian Monarchy.
- Feb. 27. Tumult in Warsaw.
- March 8. Hohenzollern Ministry resigns; Von der Heydt succeeds.
- March 17. Victor Emmanuel proclaimed King of Italy.
- July 14. Attempt to assassinate the King of Prussia.
- Oct. 18. William I. crowned at Königsberg.
- 1862, March 8. Austria and Prussia move in the Diet to demand from the Elector of Hesse the renewal of the Constitution.
- May 11. General Willisen sent to Cassel.
- July 8-Aug. 10. Meeting at Vienna of plenipotentiaries from German States.
- Sept. 10. Durando's Circular.
- Sept. 23. Count Bismarck-Schönhausen made President of the Ministry.

- 1862, Sept. 28. Meeting of deputies at Weimar.  
 Sept. 30. Bismarck informs the Chamber that the Budget is deferred till 1863.  
 Oct. 11. Budget passed by the Upper House; Chamber of Deputies declare this to be unconstitutional.
- 1863, Jan. 22. Austria's proposals rejected by the Confederate Diet.  
 March 24. Commencement of the Minghetti Ministry.  
 March 30. Eider-Danish proclamation by the King of Denmark, abandoning the basis of 1852.  
 July 9. Confederate Diet calls upon Denmark to retract.  
 Aug. 2. Visit of the Austrian Emperor to King William at Gastein.  
 Aug. 17. Opening of the Assembly of Princes at Frankfort.  
 Aug. 26. Denmark refuses compliance.  
 Sept. 28. Special session of Danish General Council; Speech from the Throne.  
 Sept. 29. Danish Government lays before Parliament a bill incorporating Schleswig.  
 Nov. 5. The French Emperor proposes a European Congress.  
 Nov. 13. New Danish Constitution adopted.  
 Nov. 15. Death of Frederick VII.; accession of Christian IX.  
 Nov. 16. Prince Frederick of Augustenburg asserts his claim.  
 Dec. 2. Prussian Lower House upholds Frederick as Duke of Schleswig-Holstein.  
 Dec. 7. Confederate Diet decides to execute federal chastisement upon Holstein.  
 Dec. 21. Representatives of German States meet at Frankfort and resolve to support Frederick; appointment of the Committee of Thirty-Six.  
 Dec. 24. German troops enter Holstein; Danes retire.  
 Dec. 25. Federal Commissioners assume control in the Duchies.  
 Dec. 30. Prince Frederick enters Kiel as Duke of Schleswig and Holstein.  
 Dec. 31. Minister Hall retires; Bishop Monrad forms a Cabinet.
- 1864, Jan. 14. Motion of Austria and Prussia to occupy Schleswig lost in the Diet.  
 Jan. 16. The two Powers agree to go ahead independently of the Diet.  
 Jan. 20. Marshal Wrangel takes command of the allied troops.  
 Jan. 31. The two Powers issue a joint note.  
 Feb. 2. Bombardment of Missunde.  
 Feb. 5. Danes abandon the Dannevirke.  
 Feb. 7. The allies occupy Flensburg.  
 Feb. 13. Federal Commissioners protest against Prussian occupation of Holstein towns.  
 Feb. 18. Prussians enter Jutland.  
 March 5. New agreement signed between Prussia and Austria.  
 March 10. Death of Maximilian II. of Bavaria.



- 1864, April 4. Garibaldi arrives in England.  
 April 18. Prussians take the fortress of Düppel by assault.  
 April 25. Opening of Conferences at London.  
 April 29. Danes retreat to Alsen and Funen.  
 May 9. Danish naval victory off Heligoland.  
 May 12. Beginning of one month's armistice.  
 May 18. Prince Frederick Charles replaces Wrangel as Commander-in-chief.  
 May 28. German Powers move in the Conference the establishment of Schleswig-Holstein as an independent state under Prince Augustenburg; English proposal to divide Schleswig at the River Schley.  
 June 9. Armistice in Denmark prolonged a fortnight.  
 June 10. Bismarck's interview with the Czar at Berlin.  
 June 22. Emperor Francis Joseph and King William meet at Carlsbad.  
 June 25. End of Conferences at London.  
 June 29. Prussians bombard Alsen and capture the batteries.  
 July 8. Fall of the Monrad Ministry.  
 July 11. Formation of the Bluhme Ministry in Copenhagen.  
 July 18. Truce agreed to in Copenhagen.  
 July 26. Peace Conference at Vienna.  
 Aug. 22. Visit of the King of Prussia to the Austrian Emperor at Schönbrunn.  
 Sept. 15. Franco-Italian Convention signed.  
 Sept. 21, 22. Riots in Turin.  
 Sept. 24. Minghetti resigns; La Marmora forms a Ministry.  
 Oct. 27. Resignation of Rechberg; appointment of Count Mensdorff-Pouilly.  
 Oct. 30. Treaty of Peace with Denmark signed at Vienna.  
 Dec. 5. Withdrawal of troops from the Duchies decreed by the Diet.  
 Dec. 8. Publication of the Papal Encyclical and Syllabus.  
 1865, Jan. Great financial difficulty in Austria.  
 Feb. 22. Prussian specifications sent to Vienna.  
 March 24. Order to transfer Prussian Marine station to Kiel.  
 April 6. Confederate Diet adopt the resolution of Bavaria and Saxony, requesting the transference of Holstein to Prince Frederick.  
 April 17. Prussia asserts to Austria her determination to retain her power in the Duchies.  
 May 29. Discussion about annexation in the Ministerial Council at Berlin.  
 June 27. New Austrian Ministry; Schmerling succeeded by Belcredi.  
 July 21. Prussia decides to send an ultimatum to Austria.  
 July 23. Interview between King William and Von der Pfordten at Salzburg.

- 1865, July 27. Motion of Bavaria, Saxony, and Darmstadt, to summon the Estates in the Duchies and to admit Schleswig into the Confederation.
- Aug. 14. Convention of Gastein signed.
- Aug. 19. Meeting of King William and Emperor Francis Joseph at Salzburg.
- Sept. 8. Publication of the French Circular to the embassies.
- Sept. 14. Circular Despatch of Lord John Russell.
- Sept. 15. The King of Prussia takes formal possession of Lauenburg; Manteuffel and Gablenz assume the administration of Schleswig and Holstein.
- Sept. 20. Suspension of the February Constitution in Austria.
- Sept. 30. Bismarck calls upon Drouyn de Lhuys in Paris.
- Oct. 1. Gastein Convention condemned by the Diet at Frankfurt.
- Oct. 4. Bismarck's first interview with Napoleon at Biarritz.
- Oct. 14. Augustenburg's visit to Eckernförde.
- Dec. German States accept the Italian commercial treaty and recognize Victor Emmanuel as King of Italy.
- Dec. 14. Meeting of Manteuffel and Gablenz at Kiel.
- 1866, Jan. 20. Bismarck demands from Austria the banishment of Prince Augustenburg.
- Jan. 23. Great mass-meeting at Altona.
- Jan. 26. Bismarck's despatch complaining of Austria's infidelity.
- Feb. 7. Austria's official reply to the above.
- Feb. 24. Revolution in Bucharest; deposition of the Prince.
- March 7. Napoleon replies to King William's letter of March 3d.
- March 7. Austrian Council decides to send more soldiers to the north.
- March 14. Govone arrives in Berlin.
- March 16. Mensdorff's circular note to the German Governments, referring the Schleswig-Holstein question to the Confederate Diet.
- March 24. Prussian Circular to the German States informing them of Austria's military movements, and asking what side they would take in the war.
- March 27. Prussian Ministerial Council decides to prepare for war.
- March 29. Prussia issues orders securing her frontiers.
- March 31. Pfordten's note to the two Great Powers.
- April 7. Austria demands the demobilization of the Prussian army.
- April 8. Treaty between Prussia and Italy.
- April 9. Prussia's motion in the Diet for a German Parliament.
- April 21. Prussia agrees to a common disarmament.
- April 21. Austria decides to mobilize. Archduke Albrecht appointed Commander of the Army of the South; Benedek of the Army of the North.
- April 22. Prime Ministers of the Lesser States meet at Augsburg.

- 1866, April 27. Italy decides to mobilize.
- May 3. Thiers' speech in the French Chamber.
- May 4. Count Mensdorff declares negotiations about disarming to be at an end.
- May 5. Austria's proposal to exchange Venetia for Silesia laid before Nigra.
- May 6. Napoleon's speech at Auxerre expressing contempt for treaties of 1815.
- May 7. Attempt to assassinate Bismarck.
- May 9. Dissolution of the Prussian Chamber.
- May 11. It is decided to ask Prussia to specify her plans of reform.
- May 12. Alliance of Prussia and Italy.
- May 24. Napoleon officially invites the contending Powers to a Congress; declined by Austria.
- May 28. Proposals of Anton Gablenz declined.
- June 1. Austria proposes to refer the matter of the Duchies to the Confederate Diet.
- June 3. Bismarck protests against the above.
- June 7. Prussians enter Holstein; Austrians retire.
- June 10. Prussia sends to all the German Governments her plans for a future Confederate Constitution.
- June 10. Prussia assumes the administration of Holstein.
- June 11. Austria's famous motion in the Diet,—to be voted upon in three days.
- June 12. Treaty of France and Austria.
- June 12. Imperial Manifesto in the form of an official letter from Napoleon to Drouyn de Lhuys, dated June 11th.
- June 12. Austria breaks off diplomatic relations with Prussia.
- June 12. Bismarck's Memorial concerning measures to be adopted.
- June 14. Vote in the Confederate Diet upon Austria's motion: declaring that Prussia by entering Holstein had broken the treaties, and calling for intervention by the mobilization of the whole Confederate army except Prussia's contingent, which should be demobilized. Voted for by Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, and others, 9 vs. 6. Prussia announces her withdrawal from the German Confederation, declares the same dissolved, and invites the members to form a new one exclusive of Austria. The Diet protests, and continues its functions.
- June 15. Prussia declares war upon Hesse-Cassel, Hanover, and Saxony; Prussians advance.
- June 16. Prussia's note to the German Petty States requesting their co-operation.
- June 17. Prussian occupation of Hanover.
- June 18. Prussian occupation of Dresden.

- 1866, June 19. Prussian occupation of Cassel.  
 June 20. Italy declares war upon Austria.  
 June 23. The First Army, under Prince Frederick Charles, and the Army of the Elbe enter Bohemia.  
 June 24. Italians defeated at Custoza.  
 June 26. The Second Army, under the Crown Prince, enters Bohemia.  
 June 26. Prussian victories at Liebenau, Turnau, and Podoll.  
 June 27. Second Army repulsed at Trautenau.  
 June 27. Encounter at Langensalza.  
 June 27. Left Column of Second Army victorious at Nachod.  
 June 27. Prussian victory at Hühnerwasser.  
 June 28. Left Column of Second Army victorious at Skalitz.  
 June 28. Battle of Münchengrätz.  
 June 28. Second Army victorious at Trautenau.  
 June 29. Victory of First Army at Gitschin.  
 June 29. Surrender of the Hanoverians.  
 June 29. Victory at Schweinschädel.  
 June 30. Communication opened between the two armies.  
 July 1. Command assumed by the King.  
 July 2. Falckenstein leaves Eisenach to conduct the campaign of the Main against the Confederate army under the Princes Charles of Bavaria and Alexander of Hesse.  
 July 3. Battle of Königgrätz, or Sadowa. Total defeat of the Austrians.  
 July 4. Emperor Francis Joseph cedes Venetia to Napoleon, and requests his intervention.  
 July 4. Prussian victories at Wiesenthal and Dermbach.  
 July 5. Publication of the note in the *Moniteur*.  
 July 8. Cialdini crosses the Po and enters Venetia.  
 July 10. Victories at Hammelburg and Kissingen.  
 July 13. Victory at Laufach.  
 July 13. Archduke Albrecht assumes command of all the Austrian forces.  
 July 13. Members of the Confederate Diet retire from Frankfort to Augsburg.  
 July 14. Engagement at Aschaffenburg.  
 July 15. Battle at Tobitschau.  
 July 16. Frankfort occupied by Falckenstein.  
 July 22. Fight at Blumenau stopped by the news of the truce.  
 July 24. Victories at Bischofsheim and Werbach.  
 July 25. Engagements at Neubrunn and Gersheim.  
 July 26. Fight at Rossbrunn.  
 July 26. Preliminaries of Peace signed at Nicolsburg.  
 July 30. Armistice granted to the German states.  
 July 31. Prussian army reviewed by the King fifteen miles from Vienna.

- 1866, Aug. 4. Bismarck's Circular to the states that had accepted the invitation to join a Northern Confederation.
- Aug. 4. Tariff Convention at Brunswick.
- Aug. 5. Opening of the Prussian Parliament.
- Aug. 17. Bill for annexation brought before the Prussian Parliament.
- Aug. 13. Peace with Würtemberg concluded; Aug. 17, with Baden; Aug. 22, with Bavaria; Sept. 3, with Hesse-Darmstadt.
- Aug. 18. Treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, signed between Prussia and the following states: Saxe-Weimar, Oldenburg, Brunswick, Saxe-Altenburg, Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Anhalt, Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt, Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, Waldeck, Reuss (Younger Line), Lippe-Detmold, Schaumburg-Lippe, Lübeck, and Bremen; Aug. 21, with Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Strelitz; Sept. 3, with Hesse (for the country north of the Main); Sept. 26, with Reuss (Elder Line); Oct. 18, with Saxe-Meiningen; Oct. 21, with Saxony.
- Aug. 23. Treaty of Peace signed at Prague.
- Aug. 24. Last sitting of the Confederate Diet at Angsburg; its dissolution.
- Sept. 8. Indemnity Bill passed.
- Sept. 11. Passage of the Annexation Bill.
- Sept. 16. Napoleon's Circular to the French embassies.
- Sept. 27. Loan granted by the Prussian Parliament.
- Oct. 3. Treaty of Peace between Austria and Italy signed at Vienna.
- Oct. 6. Prussia takes possession of Hanover.
- Oct. 8. Prussia takes possession of Hesse-Cassel, Nassau, and Frankfort.
- Oct. 21. Plebiscitum in Venetia concerning annexation to Italy, 641,758 vs. 69.
- Oct. 23. Electoral Law for the new German Parliament promulgated at Berlin.
- Oct. 27. Special treaty between Prussia and Oldenburg.
- Oct. 30. Baron von Beust becomes Austrian Foreign Minister.
- Dec. 3-11. The French troops quit Rome.
- 1867, Jan. 24. Schleswig and Holstein incorporated.
- Feb. 9. Draft of the new Constitution for North German Confederation settled.
- Feb. 24. North German Parliament meets at Berlin.
- April 17. Federal Constitution adopted.
- 1870, Dec. 3. The Imperial Crown offered to the King of Prussia.
- 1871, Jan. 18. Re-establishment of the German Empire; William I. of Prussia proclaimed German Emperor at Versailles.