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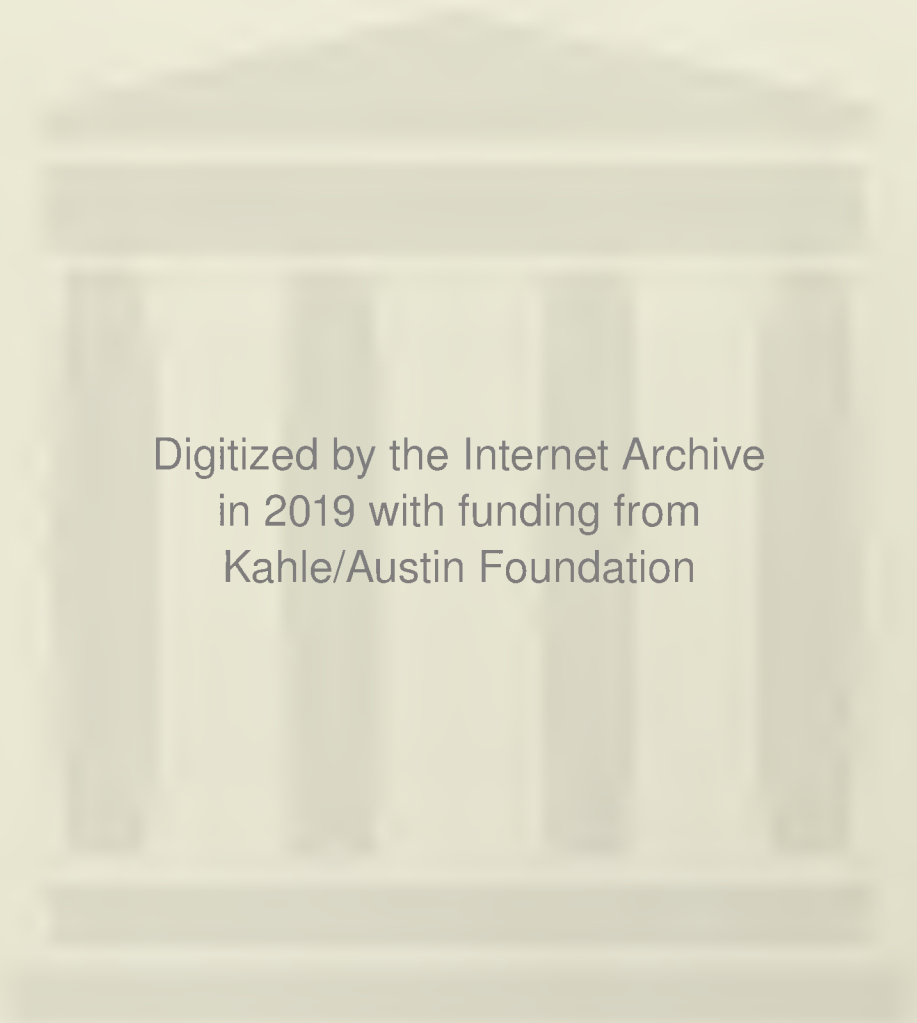

REPUBLICAN GERMANY

A POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STUDY

BY

HUGH QUIGLEY

AND

R. T. CLARK

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PREFACE

WHILE a number of special studies have appeared in this country on the subject of contemporary Germany, no effort has yet been made to examine in detail those political and economic factors which have gone to the formation of the German Republic. It is not sufficient to attach a concluding chapter to a history of Germany covering the contemporary epoch. While, of course, no history can be interrupted at any particular point, Germany has undergone so many difficult and critical experiences since the conclusion of the War that one is justified in regarding her as almost a new State ; an immensely complicated work of adjustment in practically every phase of national life has been carried out during the last nine years, and such an adjustment has its own interest, its own significance and its own value. We have, therefore, decided to begin our survey with the revolutionary period which took place towards the end of the War, and devote attention wholly to political and economic factors. It may be possible in a later study to deal with philosophical, literary, artistic, musical, and other elements which are expressive of the contemporary German spirit.

The book falls into two parts clearly defined : the first part is almost purely historical and describes the formation of the German Republic, the constitution, the consolidation and the strengthening of the central executive ; the second part does not lend itself to pure historical narration, owing to the fact that production, finance, industry and labour are all forces with their own sphere of activity ; it would be dangerous to mix them together and, out of this mixture, arrive at some conception of the new German economic State. In the political, as well as in the economic, sphere, certain salient characteristics appear, certain forces have been active in both, and it has been our desire to explain some of these characteristics and assess at their true value many of the forces which have linked up all activities within the German State.

The political section does not pretend to be a formal history

of the first nine years of the German Republic ; it is rather an attempt to create an historical background, in front of which the spiritual and intellectual forces of the new Germany may be seen more clearly. The standpoint adopted has been that of Republicanism, since we believe that a German Republic is more useful to the world than a German Empire, and that democracy in the long run is the only form of government worthy of men with any claim to freedom in thought or in action. Certain critics may consider this attitude as one of bias and question the accuracy and the balance of the analysis, but no political history can be entirely impartial if it is to be something more vital than a bald record of fact. The interpretation is, therefore, individual, but there is no attempt to introduce theory into historical narration ; individuality lies only in method of approach. There has been no manipulation or distortion of historical facts or tendencies. In spite of this, there will be disagreement no doubt as to many points in the general interpretation and in the judgments implied in the choice of events, but there is always room for the play of personal opinion, even in the most scientific disquisition, and if we have been able to explain the development of the German Republic clearly and convincingly, we may find in that sufficient justification.

In the economic sphere, there is a danger of going too deeply into statistical comparisons, with neglect of theory and of connecting narrative. To give some unity of purpose and treatment to the survey, selection has been carried out with a view to eliminating those characteristics and those developments which may not be regarded as specially Republican. Thus, in the chapters devoted to industrial production, we have concentrated attention on those industries which were affected by the Treaty of Versailles, and described changes which have taken place in other industries since the conclusion of the War. This observation applies especially to the section on electricity and super-power. In the case of reparations, no elaborate detail has been given regarding the negotiations between the Allies and Germany or the various schemes put forward by the Allies in dealing with the question. We have been concerned more with the principle of reparations and its place in the economic development of Germany. It is difficult to strike the balance between what is and what is not significant, especially in labour problems and in the organization of industry, and the objection may be raised that generalization should be based more adequately on detailed analysis. Such a detailed analysis

would, however, entail a separate monograph for each main subject discussed in the economic section, and break up the unity of the book.

The book has one theme—the origin, definition and consolidation of the German Republic. The period, 1917–1927, represents one great phase in the political and economic history of the German people, almost wholly self-contained, with few unfinished elements. Its conclusion can be seen in the Conference held between the *Reich* and the *Länder* regarding the unitary State at the beginning of 1928 and in the elections to be held in the same year. A new phase begins with the first full year of the Dawes payments and with the revival of normal trading agreements between Germany and other countries ; in finance, in politics, in industry and trade, the strength of the Republic has been restored and the return to normal conditions ensured.

Some hesitation was felt about employing the word " Republic " in connection with Germany, owing to the fact that Germany has adhered consistently to the word " Reich " and has shown unwillingness to adopt unhesitatingly the word " Republican " in legal and other documents. Nevertheless, Germany is a Republic as far as a constitution can make her a Republic. She is not, however, a centralized Republic like France, for her component " Lands " have their defined autonomy. Although the word " Land " was adopted to indicate that these component parts were not " States," we have for reasons of easy comprehension and, to avoid the use of an unfamiliar word, translated " Land " as " State ", except in the section dealing specifically with the German Constitution. There the term has a particular legal significance and has no real equivalent in English. Elsewhere in the book, " Land " has been abandoned in favour of " State ", since it is not, in these cases, a question of the legal distinction but of a territorial unit. The whole question of the relationship between the central executive and the various States or *Länder* has been under discussion for many years, and the feeling is growing that Germany should be a single united State, with greater power vested in the Government. Under these reservations, we have adhered to the terms, " Republic " and " Republican ", throughout the book.

We would, in conclusion, like to express our indebtedness to the German journalists, who never record a political event without prolonged and instructive comment, and to Professor Hohlfeld for his wholly admirable and stimulating "*Geschichte*

des deutschen Reiches." We should also express our admiration for the remarkable work which is being carried out in Germany in the sphere of economic research by institutions like the Federal Statistical Bureau and the *Institut für Konjunkturforschung*; they have brought the art of statistical analysis to a very high level indeed, and made the work of examination of modern industrial tendencies in Germany much less exacting than it would otherwise have been. We have also to thank Mr. F. Hall for his assistance in correcting the proofs and in verifying statistical data.

H. QUIGLEY
R. T. CLARK

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INTRODUCTION

CONTEMPORARY GERMANY

Difficulty of an historical survey—assessing factors of permanent value—a dramatic theme—the rise of the new democratic State—an inspiring subject—democracy on trial—Ebert and Hindenburg—industrial adjustment—the conception of the German mentality—philosophic doctrines and personalities—three great thinkers—literary and artistic criticism—"Thomas Paine"—the art of the film—contemporary art movements and tendencies—the Expressionists—industrial architecture—decorative principle—conclusions.

THE bare chronicle of fact may be, in itself, of sufficient interest to keep alive a modern history, but such a chronicle can have little value outside of the facts that it gives; it may be used as a source of reference and it may supply romantic story-tellers with certain hard details sufficient to rescue otherwise vague narrations from the danger of unreality. When the object of survey is an immensely complicated industrial State like Germany, the mosaic presented by a mere record of what has taken place in every branch of activity must be more bewildering even than those decorations which have been built into the baroque palaces of Vienna. There is a feeling that each detail must have its own significance, but what that significance is lies beyond comprehension; there must be some connecting link, some general plan which will give dignity and meaning to the architectural mass, and, where such a meaning can be found and placed in true perspective, the effect is one of a complex and even stimulating beauty. On the other hand, it may be possible to concentrate on ideas alone, develop a thesis, bring elaborate arguments into line, and evolve principles which appear to carry with them a satisfactory interpretation of what has occurred. In this case, one may assume a certain degree of conscious or unconscious assimilation of fact without the necessity for minute statement or close representation. There is here, however, a

danger of interpretation becoming unsubstantial and unreal; there may be too many assumptions and too many points of view. The basis of criticism may be subjective, and thus a wholly individual conception be expressed, which has no significance outside of the mind of the critic.

Again, there are fashions in philosophy, in the theory of history, in historical method, in æsthetics and in ethics, which may decree at one time a certain method of approach and a certain arrangement of values, but there is no certainty that fashion will coincide always with truth or with the lasting elements in criticism which survive the most revolutionary and the most extreme phases of opinion.

What, then, remains to be done in the case of a country like Germany? The way of safety lies, of course, in an immensely voluminous narration of fact, without commentary and without interpretation, but, even in this case, the presentation of the subject or the arrangement of the material may lead to greater distortion of the truth than the most perfervid eloquence. Yet, any survey of contemporary Germany must depend above all on the intelligent use of fact One may, of course, content oneself with selection of a few movements already clearly visible, and by the study of such movements arrive at some conception of what Germany means in the international political and economic spheres. Such a selection suffers from incompleteness, but it leads to a clear understanding of the principal forces making for national development, and such forces are in themselves the results and the origins of historical events. The ideal arrangement would be, therefore, the grouping or the selection of facts leading to and illustrative of those creative forces, with elimination of unnecessary and purely superficial phenomena.

What method can be adopted of assessing such forces at their proper value, or even of interpreting events in such a way that recognition of a creative force at work will be possible? Against that difficulty every student of contemporary Germany has to strive. In the case of histories with a perspective hundreds of years before the present time the passage of the centuries has usually been sufficient to arrange values and facilitate interpretation, so that a certain objectivity is possible in criticism and, with it, a fair degree of accuracy. With Republican Germany, however, no such assistance can be expected; we are still too close to events to be able to size up the picture as a whole and to decide which are its salient features; we run the danger perpetually of admiring the embroidery instead of the

cloak, of singling out secondary characters while the hero escapes our attention. The developments on which we now lay great importance may, in a few years, look grotesquely insignificant. In the case of Germany, for example, the inflation period occupied all minds during 1921, 1922 and 1923, and gave rise to an immense volume of theory and of economic journalism mixed with a little inspired musing. Now, however, the whole subject has faded into the background and has left practically nothing behind; prophecies have proved unfruitful and jeremiads singularly hollow of meaning. The inflation years made, undoubtedly, a great impression on the German people, but, historically, they represent a period which, in the evaluations of a century hence, will probably be as nothing. In the same way, one can look back on the enthusiastic ideals of the revolutionary period and marvel at the optimism of those who were responsible for Socialistic Utopias drawn on paper. Even at this distance of time, we can see how inconstant the most solidly rooted doctrine was and how enormous the forces of opposition were to changes in the social complex of Germany.

Some effort can, therefore, be made to place values in a perspective different from that which held the scene nine or seven or six or five or three years ago, and perhaps to determine the relation between such values from the point of view of their contribution to the formation of contemporary German mentality and the contemporary German State. Whether such evaluation will be recognized in the future as even approximately correct lies in the lap of the gods. To the historian of fifty years hence, all the difficulties which have arisen round reparations and the Dawes Plan may appear singularly uninviting objects of discussion—symptoms of a widespread disease, the very name of which might be distasteful.

There are complications which must serve to make the most careful record almost a speculation. Yet we have in Germany what is lacking in other countries during the post-war period—namely, a theme. The consolidation of the German Republic is in itself a theme of the most absorbing interest; it lends itself to dramatic presentation with the leading characters active at moments with a real dramatic force. The first act had all the vivacity and strength and suggestive force of a great play—the collapse of the German armies and the outbreak of the revolution, with Ebert emerging as the character dominating the stage. The second act, if we may continue the simile, was less interesting than the first, and represented a

period of preparation, when new characters were introduced and new dramatic *motifs* were being evolved—the Treaty of Versailles and the early reparations discussions terminating in that eventful Conference of the Reparations Commission in 1921, when Germany's total indebtedness was finally agreed. The third act had all the elements of tragedy in it, and at one time (when the collapse of the Republic came very near) catastrophe could be visualized. Yet the dramatic action moved much more rapidly at this time ; against a background of destitution and despair, rapid changes of scene took place, with eagerly gesticulating characters discussing artistic, literary and social events. There were strong contrasts and strong colours with a suggestion of future greatness of a fine, inspiring quality. This act closes with the collapse of passive resistance, on the part of the German Government and the industrialists, to the French and Belgian occupation of the Ruhr. The fourth act was less interesting in its play of character and of event ; it represented the destruction of certain characteristics which had previously almost led to tragedy and the emergence of new motives closely related to those which had gone to the proclamation of the Republic in the early years. Capital and labour were working together and the State was deriving fresh strength from their union. The reparations problem had ceased to be an object of dissension and of perpetual duelling ; it reached a temporary solution in the elaboration of the Dawes Plan and in the report by the Commission of Experts. This act illustrated the first period of consolidation of the German Republic after a time of disturbance. The fifth and probably the last act is now being played, and promises something more heartening than a catastrophic ending. There may be scenes of conflict, world-shaking events, accompanied by the possibility and dangers of war, but the real consummation will probably be reached—namely, the recognition of the German Republic as a permament feature in German history and in economic and political relations, and, with it, the opening of a new era of international prosperity.

The dramatic theme is present, therefore, and only requires illumination and, to some extent, interpretation. Such an interpretation would only receive justice at the hands of a poet like Hardy intent on creating a modern version of *The Dynasts* ; it lends itself to the finest qualities of vison and of sure delineation ; the scene is not dominated by a colossus like Napoleon, but, on the other hand, it is not crowded with a mass of insignificant and irresponsible characters. The decorations are

not conceived in a spirit of bravado with an immense flourishing of tinsel draperies and papier-mâché statues ; artistic *motif* is couched in a chaster phraseology and expressed in more vivid and more intimate colouring and line ; the impression of reality and of throbbing life is never obscured by a display of pyrotechnics or magnificently empty gesture. We may have a tendency to regard such things as the development of a democratic constitution as outside the range of literary and artistic effect, but even the struggles of a State forcing its way into a new conception of social, economic and cultural values may have in it all the greatness and all the tragic pettiness of the human spirit. There is certainly in this subject of Republican Germany the possibilities of a fine drama or of a world-embracing novel similar to Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. It is in this spirit that the study of contemporary Germany should be undertaken ; otherwise there is a danger of too absorbed attention to detail, which may become tedious in the extreme and ultimately unsatisfactory through sheer insignificance.

The main problem confronting the German Republic from the day of its birth was, in essence, that which confronts every modern democracy. Only, instead of a democratic constitution and a democratic view of life being developed over many decades and even many centuries, the act of conversion had to take place within a very short period. The Reich prior to the Great War was almost wholly an absolute monarchy, with the concentration of responsibility and the sources of power in a certain class, which, in turn, was dominated by a few outstanding personalities. It is true, of course, that, as a modern nation, with a full knowledge of social, economic and political movements in the world, the tendency towards assertion of the democratic standpoint was inevitable, even in the pre-war years. The point at issue is, however, that the very constitution of the German Reich precluded the assumption of power by the democracy itself ; there were no tribunes of the people to maintain some balance of power against the aristocracy and the patricians. The German revolution destroyed this elaborate system, overturned the machinery of government and responsibility, and forced democracy to undertake its own salvation and its own direction.

From the beginning, therefore, it was on trial, without traditions, without previous experience, and possibly without any real vision of future expansion. In any other country, as Italy and Russia have shown, democracy would not have survived the trial, and there would have been a restoration of the old

absolutism, without any modifying qualities whatever. The German temperament was a temperament attuned to authority ; it was unwilling to experiment and to embark on hazardous adventure ; it was willing to concur with any government which promised a fair measure of stability and of peace ; it was definitely unwilling to be convulsed by perpetual changes in the form and in the policy of the constitution. The new democracy had, therefore, a fair guarantee of life, even at its most critical moments. Relations had to be adjusted between all the elements composing the State—between the central executive and the executives of the individual States, between the State and industry, between industry and labour, and between the State, industry, labour and finance together. Much of this work of delicate adjustment had already been carried out, and was inherent in the economic and political development of the State. The greater part of the task lay, therefore, in the definition and in the grading of values.

A central motive existed, which was in itself a powerful factor making for unification—reparations ; the necessity of recovering lost ground, of maintaining a strong position against the hypercritical body of the Allies, of resisting excessive demands and of creating a solid national front against the political manœuvres of France and her satellites, did much undoubtedly to consolidate the new democratic *régime* and make it operate with satisfactory efficiency. It was largely a shaking-down process, with the discarding of many elements in the old *régime* which might at one time have been deemed important, and the discarding of such elements was not unattended by political and social disturbances. The Kapp revolt and the Hitler disturbance were political phenomena actuated by reactionary and conservative elements, even as much as the Spartacist and Kurt-Eisner revolutions were phenomena of extremism from the Left, which, in turn, had to be broken up and discarded.

We should not forget also the rôles played by the first two German Presidents—namely, Ebert and Hindenburg. They contributed immensely to the success of the new *régime* ; their sincerity, their keen sense of duty and their consistency of character were, in themselves, an inspiration to the rest of Germany. Ebert passed through much the most critical period, and his policy was more subject to disastrous comment and perhaps disastrous result, but on practically no occasion did the German Republic or the German Constitution suffer any real weakening of authority or any loss of prestige, either at home

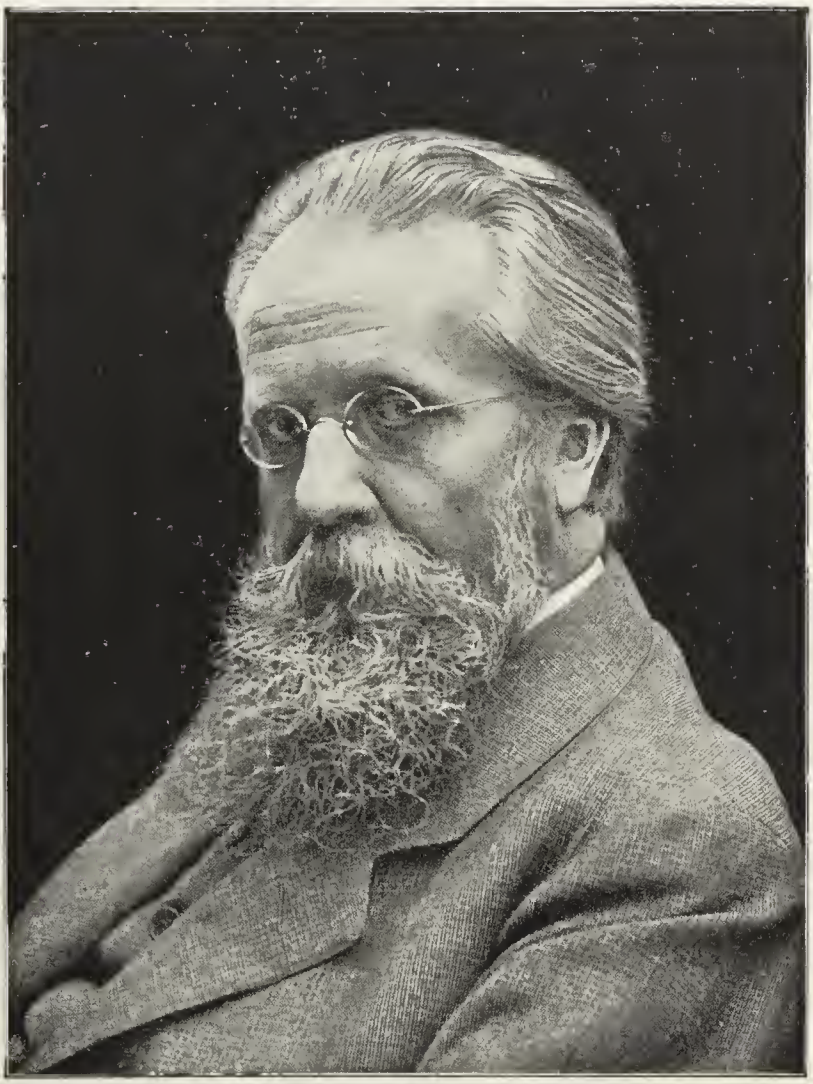
or abroad. Hindenburg came at a time when the first definite movement towards consolidation of the German Republic had begun ; the Ruhr adventure was over, and the economic recovery of the country was assured. Yet there was still danger of a movement away from the Republican form of government towards royalism—not necessarily the restoration of the old *régime*, but the adoption of some constitution not far removed from that of a monarchy. The close attention to the duties and the responsibilities imposed on him by the Republic, without any question and with an almost instinctive justice in application, made Hindenburg an even more admirable defender of the new democracy than Ebert. It is perhaps significant that neither Ebert nor Hindenburg was a professional politician ; they stood outside of politics and were, therefore, able to keep clear of the petty intrigues and the little acts of dishonour and compromise which enter into a politician's life ; they were able to see the big things and measure at their value the efforts made by the professional politicians to strengthen their position or exact one further ounce of power.

Industry went through much the same process as the political democracy, but, in its case, both causes and results were purely economic. It depended on organization more than on personalities. It was perhaps more exposed to the hostile action of the Allies than the German Constitution ; the occupation of the Ruhr represented for it a much more disastrous event than anything which took place in the political sphere, and the process of recovery told more on the resources of the country than political changes or the revolutionary efforts of a few individuals. In this case, the inspiring motive was wholly one of consolidation and of substitution. The Ruhr-Lorraine-Luxemburg economic unit had been broken up by the Treaty of Versailles, and on the maintenance of this unit had depended in the past much of the prosperity of the heavy industries. The organizing genius and the administrative capacity of the industrialists were taxed to the utmost to make good dislocations caused by the disruption of this unit, and they were confronted with difficulties, both financial and political, not of their own choosing. Their task lay clear before them, and it appeared to be merely a case of adjusting resources to an immensely increased demand on them, but innumerable complications crept in—inflation, reparations, the collapse of the mark, stabilization, and the Dawes Plan—all containing possibilities of depression or even of disaster.

The constitution of industry itself changed to meet the new

economic conditions, and it had no set definition. In this, at least, it was different from politics, where, of course, the form of government had been decided by the revolution and elaborated in the Constitution of Weimar. We cannot find any dominant personality at work during all this period of experiment with vertical combines, horizontal trusts and selling syndicates ; the imperialism of Stinnes came to a conclusion very soon and died out without leaving many traces behind it, while the theories of Rathenau remained in a state of suspended animation, largely owing to the inability of Rathenau himself to apply them to the great industrial concerns under his own control. Although administrative capacity was present to a notable degree, the forces of character and of vision were not always in the ascendant, and it is difficult now to single out individuals in whom might be glorified all those qualities which made for the recovery of German industry and for the consolidation of the new German economic State. Yet the part played by industry, however less spectacular and less vivid with human values it might have been, had intrinsically dramatic possibilities, which only required a touch to become as profoundly exciting as political or human drama. Both politically and economically, all the forces of the new Germany were coming into action to strengthen the State and bring it into its due position among the great industrial countries of the world.

Other factors of profound significance enter into the composition of the contemporary German State ; they comment on and expound many of the leading characteristics disclosed by political and economic investigation. One cannot ignore the influence of philosophy, criticism, art, literature and music on the German mentality, but the study of such aspects would involve in itself an enormously complicated work, much beyond the range of the present book. Yet the political and economic phases must be brought into line with the intellectual, philosophic and artistic, if one is to understand the real achievement of Republican Germany. It is possible, of course, to isolate each section and devote to it a minutely detailed study, and perhaps create out of a group of such studies what may be regarded as a full statement of the aims and ideals and strength of the German nation. In doing so, however, one would have in opposition practically every thinker of significance in Republican Germany ; pragmatism and empiricism are no longer greeted as magic formulae for the perception of truth. The exact registration of phenomena as carried out by the natural sciences, the classification of ideas, even as of facts, according



HEINRICH RICKERT

to a rigid system incapable of modification, and the codification of mental impressions and even emotions are almost wholly repugnant to the modern German spirit. The one conception held to be valid is that throughout every manifestation, whether it be political, economic, literary, artistic, or musical, there pulses a nerve force, a vitality which derives its origin from a central nerve complex, a central source of power, which is what we understand by the German nation and the German spirit.

The work of investigation becomes, therefore, highly intuitive and at times highly speculative. Can we find those essential characteristics which link up one manifestation with another and together form one conception ? What basis of evaluation and criticism is to be adopted ? Should theory be confined within the limits of what is actually discovered or postulated from the evidence supplied by fact, or should there be some effort made to define the nature of the theory which should be applied to the evaluation of material developments ? These are questions which have agitated contemporary thinkers in Germany, and they are problems which go far beyond the scope of a merely philosophical discussion ; they affect the mentality of the German people and their capacity to conduct life and follow out the process of material existence. In other countries, there would be less preoccupation with such questions, owing perhaps to the instinctive feeling that some natural and unseizable historical process is at work which will smooth out difficulties and ensure the continued prosperity and the continued progress of the human race. But in German philosophy, as in German industry, the doctrine of *laissez-faire* has never had much influence.

We find three men active above all in the expression of the modern German spirit—Ernst Troeltsch in the sphere of religion and ethics, Heinrich Rickert in the sphere of pure speculation and scientific investigation, and Max Weber in the sphere of sociology and economics.[1] All three belonged to the same school of thought, and, in common with thinkers of less extensive range—namely, Natorp, Husserl, and Lask—were interested more in the mental perception of the historical process than in the search after reality itself ; they had abandoned to

[1] Although Heinrich Rickert's principal work, *Die Grenzen der naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung*, appeared originally in 1902, it only reached a second edition in 1913, eleven years after, whereas, in 1921, two editions appeared, with considerable alterations and extensions—sufficient almost to make of it a new book. His second great work, *System der Philosophie*, appeared in 1921, and his *Philosophie des Lebens* in 1920. Ernst Troeltsch produced his main studies

a very large extent the search after some system which would explain reality and give it a definite value for the spirit ; they were interested not so much in the question whether reality could be understood and truth be defined with reference to a higher power such as God, as in the spirit itself. They felt that some connection existed between an individual mind, the mind of a mass of individuals such as a nation, and the universal mind, and they strove to discover what form and what functions such a spirit under all its aspects would assume. With the purely logical extremists, the task of bringing philosophy closer to reality, or rather of fusing reality into one act of perception and of knowledge, was abandoned at once, and attention concentrated on the abstract investigation of mental perceptions. Their science of the mind was confined purely to the mind and to the creation of a logical system, which should act later as a basis for approaching material existence. They worked from the mind outwards, and perhaps some of their success as creators of systems has been due to this deliberate exclusion of the complicated problems inherent in material existence.

In the case, however, of the humanists, such as Weber and Troeltsch, the conviction that mere theorizing was of little consequence beside the social mission implied in any real philosophy did much to widen their outlook and to strengthen their influence on the German mentality. With Troeltsch, religion represented the vital force active throughout the history of the human mind, and it meant to him what sociology meant to Max Weber, with exactly the same problem implied, —the reality of the human spirit and its movement through history, and the progress of the human spirit towards a universal mind and the fundamental reality which governs the universe. The task of speculation lay in determining what bonds united the spirit of the present to the immense progression of the human spirit through time and space ; the eternal halted to the ever-present contemplation, and we passed to a future which became, in turn, the present ; the present lived in the power and beauty of the spirit, picking up from the inexhaustible spirit its own inspiration and its own food.

on the history and philosophy of religion before the War, but his principal work in pure philosophy, *Der Historismus und seine Probleme*, written during the period 1916–1922, was published in 1922. In influence, therefore, these thinkers belonged to the post-war generation and touched on deeper issues for the contemporary German mentality than writers like Oswald Spengler, Max Scheler and Graf v. Keyserling, who enjoyed a much more fashionable vogue.

There is an inspiring quality in such a perception, since, instead of the absolute being recognized as something unattainable and something which should not be investigated, there is a pure idealism of the spirit as eternally active and eternally capable of progress. For all three philosophers, the essential article in any creed was exactly this belief in the domination of mind, of reason, of the ever-active spirit. In a world depressed economically and politically, such a doctrine was in itself a vitalizing force ; it brought the future always before the vision and acted in this way as a source of inspiration.

In addition to this, the efforts of this modern school to clear up mental processes and to elaborate some clear definition of the relations between the sciences as controlled by and expressive of the human spirit meant that clear thinking should be applied to the investigation of ordinary, every-day developments. Rickert alone of the three great philosophers has definitely evolved a system which is designed to present his ideas to the world, but it is doubtful whether, in future years, a few sentences and a few magnificent paragraphs scattered through Troeltsch and Weber may not be worth all the elaborate speculative systems evolved. All three writers strove to attach their conception of mind and of human existence to a more fundamental conception of the purpose and reality of history : the lesson of history was a lesson for humanity even in the face of providence, which appeared to be dissociated entirely from any historical perception ; there was a meaning behind and within all human activity sufficient to give to it its position and its reality. In the words of Goethe, " It is a characteristic of mind that it should always stimulate and inspire mind "—and in this power to awaken thought and deepen motive lie the great contributions of these three thinkers to the idealism of their time. The power of thought was for them the power to reconcile and bring human activity into the ideal of harmony and peace.

The contribution of the philosophers to the interpretation of the German outlook on life has been no inconsiderable one, and we can trace their influence through political and economic movements, which otherwise would be difficult of interpretation. It is necessary to remember that the capacity of the German people to absorb philosophic doctrine is greater than that of almost any other people in the world, and from the time of Kant onwards, the political influence of philosophic theory has never been insignificant. With a school which would have advocated mere preoccupation with details and not with the

great problems of human existence, with a school which would have contented itself merely with the study of the past without any constructive ideals for the future, the will to victory and to economic recovery might have been less strong in Germany than it was, and certainly less effective in its methods of expression.

Similar movements took place in the sphere of literary criticism, which is not radically distinct from philosophy itself. In the hands of critics like Georg Simmel, Gundolf, Heinrich Rickert and Dehio, the discussion of the literary and philosophic achievements of the great figures of German history became an illustration of the philosophic movement actually in progress. The great figures were creators not so much of literary and philosophic works intrinsically valuable, as of the German spirit active at certain periods of time. Simmel, like Gundolf, whose *Stefan George* and *Goethe* belong to the finest and most suggestive the modern German school has produced in criticism, moves from the interpretation of the individual through his work. The artist stands alone as a creator, and in him alone the motives and impulses underlying creation must be found : the examination of sources and contemporary records, biographical or philological, are as nothing in the actual creation, which is a complete and perfect thing in itself, four-square, unassailable. It is possible to trace exquisitely and delicately to this source every manifestation of the spirit, and the sum of these manifestations is the spirit itself. The creative spirit gleams through the work of art like rays from a central flame. The success of such a theory must depend absolutely on the power of the critic to achieve unity of vision in his criticism ; and the various studies which Simmel devoted to the great figures in literature and art, Kant, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Goethe, and Rembrandt, show in their varying degree the strength and weakness of the underlying philosophical conception.

Other critics, chief among them Heinrich Wölfflin, move in an entirely opposite direction ; they are concerned less with the spirit active in the work of creation than with the registration of periods and of styles shown in the work of art. Their criticism is purely formal, and as such has had little effect outside the narrow range of students and experts. Other critics again, like Emil Ludwig, float gracefully over the surface, carrying out attractive studies in one plane ; the characters they draw appear before us in a beautiful and moving fresco, but we cannot feel that in the flesh they could have represented anything more

fundamental than one individual active in an enormous crowd of individuals. The vital energy, which makes their work so notable for us in our efforts to meet contemporary problems, has escaped definition.

In philosophy and in criticism we can find elements at work which have gone towards the development of the spirit pulsating through Republican Germany, and, from many points of view, their contribution will probably be regarded as one of the lasting things in the progress of German civilization. In literature, poetry and the drama there is less evidence of creative forces at work. If we except novelists, dramatists and poets like Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Stefan George, Franz Wedekind, Richard Dehmel, Reiner Maria Rilke, and many of the writers active during the revolution period, the work carried out by Germany in the literary sphere has not been at all comparable with that of Britain, or even France, and the preoccupation of the German reading public with translations of Russian and British writers, principally novelists and dramatists, does show that there is a gap to be filled. Economic conditions may be the explanation for the lack of creative energy in the sphere of pure literature since 1921. Literature demands a background of leisure and of wealth : a work of art cannot as a rule be executed in intervals of leisure after strenuous labour, and the general impoverishment of the German people, with the necessity for every individual to become active in some bread-winning occupation or other, has undoubtedly reduced the ranks of potential literary geniuses. Such a state of affairs will undoubtedly be remedied in future, since the activity recorded in the economic, political and philosophical spheres will probably be extended to the literary, artistic and dramatic. The domination of the economic motive has certainly been a factor tending towards neutralization of literary inspiration and towards elimination of a background sympathetic to the efforts of the artist, whether in words, in colour, or in line.

Yet certain features assume an extraordinary interest through the light they cast on national aspirations and the national mentality. During 1927, perhaps one of the most highly eulogized dramas performed on the German stage was the tragedy of " Thomas Paine ", written by Hans Johst, who has already acquired some distinction as a writer of plays and novels. " Thomas Paine " describes the struggles of the American democracy, led by George Washington, to free itself from the domination of Britain ; it also gives expression, through Thomas Paine, to many sentiments inspired by the

noblest form of Republicanism—sentiments which shine out all the more brightly in contrast with the brutality and materialism rampant during the French Revolution. Paine is honoured in the new American Republic and thrown into prison in the new French revolutionary State. Yet, on his return, unknown, to the United States after many years' imprisonment, he finds incredulity and indifference ; much of the splendour and idealism of the early Republican days has already disappeared. The play, as such, has many fine dramatic qualities, but it had intrinsically few claims to popular success. One would be inclined, therefore, to attribute the interest of the German public in it to its glorification of the Republican form of government and to its ennoblement of the Republican spirit and its advocacy of freedom. These sentiments were calculated to appeal to a country overshadowed by reparations, and struggling to strengthen and consolidate a new form of government—the new State which had been ushered in at the revolution.

In other directions we can find similar reactions, and they show that a definite change has taken place in the German spirit. In art, in architecture, and in the cinema especially, certain manifestations can be recorded of more than passing interest. The German genius came to expression more vividly in the art of the cinema than even in literature or the drama. The film constitutes in itself one of the most inspiring and, socially, one of the most significant, developments of recent times ; its justification is primarily social, since it opens up a new world of human interest to the public generally and provides a form of pleasure which is the modern equivalent of the Greek or Roman theatrical representations. In the hands of geniuses of the quality of Fritz Lang, Murnau, and Dupont, supported by actors like Emil Jannings, Conrad Veidt, Werner Kraus, as well as Mady Christians [in light society dramas], the film obtained recognition as one of the highest forms of art, and it is a distinctive contribution of the German producers and the German public (which, of course, made it possible for the producers to carry out their work) that they should have raised the film to an artistic level not inferior to that already achieved by literature, the drama, pictorial and plastic art. Their influence has been such as to cause a radical change in the whole conception of the nature and the power of the film, and although at times American financial penetration and perhaps excessive preoccupation with purely popular success may have dimmed and distorted the original vision of the great

German film producers, the work they have carried out must always retain an historical and æsthetic significance as part of the contribution of Germany to the development of modern culture.

The inspiration within the films has been derived almost wholly from the treasure-house of the German mind as shown in history and in art. Thus, in films like " The Nibelungs ", " Faust ", and its modern counterpart, " The Student of Prague ", we find great dramatic themes enshrined in the history of the German spirit transferred to the screen without any loss of power or of beauty. In " The Nibelungs ", the imagination displayed in the arrangement of the scenes and in the conception of the atmosphere and of the historical setting bears comparison easily with the musical conceptions of Wagner and the dramatic power of Friedrich Hebbel : there is the same perception of an immense background of human destiny and of human fate, granting to every figure in the legend the magnificence and the glory of a symbol active in the human spirit ; there is the same perception of a beauty, which is not plastic or pictorial or purely verbal alone, but æsthetic and soul-stirring ; there is direct community of interests and inspiration between the artists and the public viewing the work of art. This criticism applies especially to " The Nibelungs " of Fritz Lang, and, to some extent, also to " Metropolis ", which, even although technical experts may question the design and the functions of the wonderful machinery installed in the mechanical city of the future, does impress the spectator with highly dramatic suggestion. The vision shown in " Metropolis " bears many points of resemblance to the vision shown in " The Nibelungs ". In each case, human characters are struggling against forces beyond their control and beyond their conception : in " The Nibelungs ", these forces are supernatural, and may be identified with the great historical movements and changes enshrined in legend, while, in " Metropolis ", the civilization of the future is undoubtedly man-made without real control by man himself. This mechanical cosmos assumes all the dreadfulness of a Frankenstein, and, in the end, may overwhelm civilization itself.

In these four films and in the screen dramas of a mysterious and purely philosophical nature, such as " Doctor Caligari ", we can trace an affinity between the romantic mentality of the early nineteenth century and the ideas of the present ; they are in the tradition of Novalis and Tieck. In other films, such as " Vaudeville ", " The Last Laugh ", " The Waltz Dream ",

the interplay of characters in the modern world has brought them closer to the novel pure and simple, where action depends on psychological changes and reactions, on the adjustment of the human element to change in surroundings and the assertion of personality through a series of complicated motives terminating in a dramatic crisis. These elements are less distinctively German, and they show more of the German humour and sentimentality than "Faust" or "The Student of Prague", but they are notable through the amazingly vivid impression of reality they convey. The sense of intimacy between the audience and the characters active on the screen is closer, and every action of even the most trivial type assumes dramatic significance and a compelling attraction. In one film especially, "The Secrets of the Soul", which is a dramatic version of a Freudian theory, the whole theme is held together by the magnificent acting of Werner Kraus, and it is acting which depends on significant touches and vivid projections of personality from the screen to the audience.

In these films, certain qualities have been illustrated, which are universally recognized as German, and yet we cannot define those German characteristics which distinguish them from American or British qualities; we know that the world as shown to us is not the world that can be reproduced or even paralleled in Great Britain or in the United States. The action and reaction of characters within that world, the setting of the scenes, the development of atmosphere, the accumulation of dramatic motive, are not beyond the range of the British or American producer, but the result is something purely German and yet universal in its appeal. Such an imaginative power extends even to historical dramas devoted to the life of Frederick II, the German musicians and episodes such as can be found in great profusion during the Thirty Years War and the Napoleonic campaigns in Germany, while a less significant range of activity is to be found in elaborate fantasias, short didactic allegories and screen versions of fairy tales. Variety is infinite, and almost every film, where some conception of artistic and dramatic values is present, bears a significance not merely for those enamoured of the screen-world, but also for those who would desire to penetrate to the modern German mentality through its manifestations in literature and art. It is essential to recognize now that a film must take its place as a great art midway between the drama and pictorial or plastic representation, and the contemplation of the achievements of the German producers and actors during the last

six years must strengthen the impression that in this, at least, Germany has given to the world something of lasting significance.

In pictorial and plastic art, achievement is more difficult to find since their very nature is such that few revolutionary changes really take place ; changes in style and in method may cause what is tantamount to a new method of artistic representation, but the fundamental conception remains unchanged. The preoccupation of the artist may lie in the photographic reproduction of reality, in the realization of rhythmic sensationalism on canvas, or in the expression of a definite attitude towards colour and towards form, but the limitations imposed on art reduce it finally to reproduction—representation infused with the personality and the genius of the artist. The War might have given rise to a new school of painters intent on recording, as far as colour and line would allow, the ideals and the visions of a generation to whom war was an abhorrence, and to whom the problem of existence presented itself under gloomy and fugitive colours. But we cannot find any such school in action, and to understand contemporary movements in German art we must go back to the nineties of last century, when the first exhibition of the great French painters, Manet, Degas, Puvis de Chavannes and Sisley, were held in Berlin. Before that time, a number of German artists, whose work still commands respect, had already introduced elements of an Impressionistic and wholly modern nature into German art. Side by side with this older school, which still occupies an imposing part of the stage, one can place those artists who are influenced, first of all, by the French Impressionists and later by Renoir, Vincent van Gogh, Cézanne, Manet, Matisse, and, later still, by Georges Bracque and Pizarro. Other French artists had a modified influence on contemporary German painting, chief among them, Bonnard, Vuillard, Denis, Rousseau and Roussel. Another group should be distinguished, namely, the Expressionists and the Cubists and purely rhythmic painters, who correspond perhaps more vividly to the contemporary German spirit than the other groups. Yet even in this last case we find that the Expressionist programme, as elaborated by Nolde, Pechstein, Schmidt-Rottluff and Heckel, dates from 1910.

It is difficult, therefore, to trace any movement which may be regarded either as specifically German or so modern in inspiration that it can be placed within the period of the German Republic. It is true, of course, that art in its finest manifestations must be a growth as well as a complex ; no one

movement and no one period ever dominates the scene. There is a perpetual flux of ideas, a swirl of emotions, a rich confusion of colours and forms, a struggle between tradition and ultra-modernity, a contrast of personalities, of ideals, and even of technical systems. In the light of purely æsthetic criticism, all these movements, all these personalities, all these conceptions, coherent and incoherent, may appear singularly pale and undistinguished. If an effort is made to gather up all these artistic manifestations, and force out of them some essential meaning, some deeply imbedded emotion, some eternal vision and knowledge of beauty, and bring them into the vivid illumination of the age, disappointment and disillusionment may well result. The German mentality is not easily satisfied with pictorial or plastic representation. Its achievement in this sphere is not to be compared with its achievements in the economic or industrial spheres, but it has originality and a vitality of its own.

The older school of artists and sculptors can still be appreciated and the beauty of their work be felt even in an age of Futurism and Impressionism. The perfection of line and mass shown in the sculptures of Adolf von Hildebrand, where an almost classical theory of form and ideal has predominated, the vivid naturalism of Max Liebermann, Walter Georgi and Bartels, where Dutch influence has been at work, the lush symbolism of Franz von Stuck, where colour and shadow have been used to convey a symbolical and almost statuesque meaning to historical scenes, the social *expertise* of Habermann, and the living portraiture of Max Slevogt or Leo Samberger, are all elements which have entered into the contemporary German art mentality, and even the most extreme representations of the Futurists, the most violent declarations of war against them on the part of the younger generation have not been sufficient to weaken their influence or break down their authority. The modern French individualists, such as Cézanne and Van Gogh, have inspired almost the whole of the work of the new generation of painters like Hans Purrmann, who form a transition from the older German school to portraiture as represented by Leibl and Trübner. Contemporary sensationalism in paint is quite clear, while, in other artists, such as Breitner, Robert, Steinmetz, Hüther, Puttner, Schrimpf, Hufer and Pascin, the imitation, conscious or unconscious, of contemporary French models can be seen.

Five artists, other than the Expressionists, may be singled out as representative of the definitely original and definitely

German artistic genius—first of all, Eduard Munch, who, before Cézanne and Van Gogh had penetrated into Germany, was already working out his own problems of form and colour and light and shadow. There is an affinity of interest and of conception between him and Paul Gauguin, but there is no reason to believe that Gauguin had any influence on the formation of the art of Munch. Two artists specializing in drawings and in etchings—Rudolf Grossmann and Robert Engels—and, with them, to a less degree, Richard Seewald, come very close to expression of what we generally regard as the essentially German spirit. All three have a keen sense of the humorous and the grotesque ; Grossmann has a tendency towards artistic shorthand reminiscent of the Expressionists, but Seewald and Engels, in the innumerable illustrations they have drawn for German classics, have a pleasure in life and in dramatic motive which is almost Rabelaisian ; their humour is of the romantic blend, strong, obvious and palpitating with life ; æsthetics, with a delicate appreciation of *nuance* and inner meaning, have no significance for them ; they work out illustrative and, in some cases, decorative themes solely with reference to their human qualities and to the impression they are designed to make on the spectator. In sculpture, Hermann Haller is in direct line of descent from Adolf von Hildebrand, but he has been able to impart a certain individuality to his bronze models of the human figure and a certain decorative symbolism which stamps him as original ; their beauty has vivacity and a sly quality of humour.

The Expressionist group of painters occupies a place apart in the history of contemporary German art, and at one time, namely, the four years 1918–21, there was every possibility of a general revival of art on Expressionistic or Futuristic lines. The spirit of the time, with its uncertainties and its sudden enthusiasms, was sympathetic to anything of an eclectic or even erratic nature. Material existence during the years of inflation had assumed all the character of a speculation, the outcome of which was doubtful, and this speculative element penetrated into art. The Expressionistic movement had qualities destined to attract minds insecure and apprehensive of the future ; mysticism, symbolism, emotionalism and innumerable other "isms" could be found in it. It proposed a rhythmic abstraction which was in itself an escape from reality ; it dealt with subjects which lent themselves to fantastic and highly poeticized treatment, such as religion and the representation of the new architecture as well as imaginary landscapes. In the

hands of colourists like Josef Eberz, Seewald, and Dauringhausen, who had also a sure grasp of form and rhythm and composition, Expressionism rose to a high level of art, and introduced something vital and strangely beautiful into pictorial representation conceived as poetry or as the expression of human emotion. In a long series of paintings devoted to the illustration of the story of Christ, Eberz accomplished a work of illustration of a rare magnificence in colour and unity of inspiration. He had reduced dramatic incident, as shown in the New Testament story, to abstraction, which, however, had an emotional significance and æsthetic justification. In this sense, at least, he came close to El Greco ; in other directions, namely, in landscape and *genre* scenes and in portraits, he was rather less successful.

In other directions, Expressionism was able to produce work of more than contemporary significance : the architectural abstractions of Feininger, which can serve as illustrations of the mechanical city of the future, the strange visions of Ehmsen shown in colour abstractions suggestive through decorative power alone, the more restrained portraiture carried out by Emil Nolde, the distorted anatomy of Schwalbach and Ewald, the strongly imaginative and even repellent pastels done by Weinzheimer as an illustration for the " Divine Comedy ", all form part of the distinctive contribution of this new movement to contemporary German art. In woodcuts, as experiments carried out by Dulberg, Heckel, Pechstein, Lange, Schmidt-Rottluff and Seewald showed, the force and the crudely imaginative qualities of the German spirit can find expression in art and give it a compelling attraction.

Since 1921, however, the influence of the advanced school of artists has waned, and much of their extremism has been softened down and a compromise made with naturalism. Yet the influence of Futurism or Expressionism was not confined to the actual work of the artists ; it caused a change in decorative art generally, and was instrumental in developing a higher conception of decoration, especially in the art of book-production. As the exhibition at Leipzig in 1927 proved, the new German book-production has been suffused with many of the ideas, both technical and æsthetic, of the more advanced artistic schools, and in the art of the films, as shown in " Metropolis ", Expressionism has had fruitful results.

In architecture, many of the qualities inspiring contemporary art movements have also been at work, especially in the construction and in the design of industrial buildings. It is only

necessary to enter the main hall of the new railway station at Stuttgart to understand the distinctly modern, and even revolutionary, character of much of the architectural activity now going on in Germany. In this hall, we stand as in a temple devoted to modern industry, with every detail of the structure simplified to give this impression. The great windows rising almost from floor to roof of the main façade, the lofty roof held on beams, a feeling of immense space and the deliberate use of the texture of the stone and of the wood to give a decorative effect—are all characteristics which stamp this new architecture as something original and impressive. In the same way, we can look at the great offices built for the United Steel Works in Düsseldorf, for the *Gutehoffnungshütte* at Oberhausen, the Wilhelm-Marxshaus in Düsseldorf, and similar structures carried out in Hamburg. A special style has been evolved for industrial purposes, where simplicity and subdued colour strike the dominant note ; bricks and tiles are used for decorative purposes in the most skilful manner. The plane is always horizontal in the sense that each main decorative section in the building is drawn on horizontal lines, but the tendency of the mass itself is upwards, and this struggle between the horizontal decorations and the upward striving of the building constitutes some part of the value and significance of contemporary industrial architecture. The interiors have been carried out in strange and startling colour schemes stimulated through the use of bricks of a certain type with a glaze of colour which takes the light and reflects it from wall to wall. The decorative scheme depends on light as a principal factor in intensifying and giving new value to colours. The effect of this can be seen at its best in the Planetarium constructed at Düsseldorf, where there is a vaulted passage round the main hall conceived in dark green glazed brick, with windows casting light at close intervals from one side, the central window closing up the end. The effect of the vaulting, of the coloured bricks and of the lighting is one of mystery and a slightly harsh beauty. In the same group of buildings, the use of mosaic built into a purely Expressionistic design is singularly effective and stimulating, through the contrast between the purely horizontal decorative scheme carried out without elaboration in line and the tumultuous colours thrown together in the mosaic.

A characteristic also of the new architecture is the employment of statuary which has ceased to have any connection with naturalism. It is highly stylized and even distorted to suggest

and strengthen the decorative motive. This use of statuary is not, of course, an absolutely contemporary development ; it may be seen in the great buildings owned by the Tietz Company in Cologne and Düsseldorf, while it can be seen also in whole streets of towns like Stuttgart and Leipzig. In this architecture, which bears many points of resemblance to the more advanced forms of art, we may perceive the beginning of a movement towards a closer relationship between industry and art, which would bring the economic development of Germany into line with the artistic and cultural.

One can prolong the survey indefinitely, since the elements composing a modern State, expressive of the mentality of a people like the German people, are infinite, but even this inadequate survey may suffice to introduce a subject of intense interest and very great significance. Germany, politically and economically, has moved out of the depths and has become again one of the Great Powers : that is a great achievement after seven years' difficulty ; everything else is subordinated to that fact, but full comprehension of what this means is only possible after we have become aware of the atmosphere surrounding the principal tendencies and movements in contemporary Germany. The appreciation of atmosphere, as such, must be an instinctive process, and the best one can do is to create the conditions favourable to such an instinctive appreciation. There are links joining up all those manifestations recorded in politics, in economics, in literature, in art, and in philosophy, and they come together in one conception of the German mentality and the German spirit. The justification of a survey, however closely detailed it may be, lies in the effort it makes to recapture this spirit and show exactly where it has been active and what its finest achievements have been. We have indicated lines of approach to this engrossing and exceedingly difficult subject ; they may serve to guide appreciation and excite a desire for direct investigation—in itself, a contribution to the history and expansion of culture.

BOOK I

BUILDING THE GERMAN REPUBLIC

CHAPTER I

FROM AUTOCRACY TO REPUBLIC

The work of the autocratic *régime*—the struggle between the government and the democratic parties—the influence of the Russian Revolution—the resignation of Bethmann-Hollweg and its consequences —towards revolution—the policy of Hertling—concession to democracy —the Cabinet of Prince Max of Baden—the Kiel revolt—the choice before the Majority Socialists.

ON August 4, 1914, the Imperial *régime* in Germany reached its zenith. For the first time since the foundation of the Empire, the whole nation, an insignificant fraction excepted, stood solidly behind the Imperial Government and the Emperor, and when the latter, with his usual and not always unfortunate sense of the dramatic, declared "I know no more parties," he expressed fairly accurately the sense of unity with which the German nation confronted the peril its statesmen had brought upon it. On August 4 the German democracy in the Reichstag virtually abdicated its function; the sole protestor, Karl Liebknecht, a man whose courage verged on mania, did not make his protest vocal.

The completeness of the abdication may be explained as the chivalrous surrender to patriotism, but it also gives the measure of the democracy's weakness. It confined its action to acquiescence. It is true that the abdication could have been foreseen, although the theory to explain it—that the German is by nature non-political and non-democratic, so assiduously propagated by the Right in Germany and the uncritical abroad—will not bear examination in the light of history. There was an exceedingly powerful democratic movement in Germany comprising the conventional type of continental Liberalism and the equally conventional type of continental Socialism. It had been extremely critical of the Imperial rule; it had made its voice heard effectively on numerous occasions—the *Telegraph* interview of 1908, for instance, and the Zabern incident of 1913; it had agitated sincerely for constitutional and social reform, for Parliamentary government in the Reich, for electoral reform

in Prussia, for the democratic control of foreign policy and the like. Its action had, however, never borne much fruit. The mutual hostility between Liberalism and Socialism prevented the elaboration of common action ; the Imperial rule, however undemocratic, had been, economically and militarily and, so far as was known, politically, a brilliant success. From a disjointed collection of weak States, Germany had risen to be the greatest power on the Continent ; her commercial expansion had been phenomenal and showed no signs of flagging ; politically and economically, she was on the way to world-empire. The *régime* was efficient and fundamentally the people were content and happy. Democracy was an academic creed ; even Socialism was touched with the academic blight because it could promise little more of vital purpose to the average citizen than he already enjoyed. The discontent voiced in the political literature of the pre-war years latterly became almost theoretical, and the agitation for reform and change lacked the solid basis of hardship and profound sense of grievance. The programmes of the German parties were confessions of belief far more than the announcement of truceless war against the *régime* and, even where passion crept into them, it was powerless against the indifference of the many and the hostility of the few. It was unable to use the one unassailable argument for change that the *régime* to be supplanted had failed. The greatest asset of the Socialists was that the *régime* persisted in treating them as a pariah party, but, on August 4, that asset, like so many other things, disappeared.

The root cause of the collapse of the *régime* was that it absolutely failed to read the lesson of the abdication of August 4. It was incapable of realizing that the democracy expected to be paid for its sacrifice. The dramatic declaration of unity—a declaration which had involved on the part of a compact mass of the nation the uneasy surrender of cherished principle—had to be translated into a state of fact. That could only be achieved by modifying the Government on the lines demanded, and by a unifying act on the part of the Government recognizing at last the position of the Socialists within the state—a position which they had hitherto obstinately denied them. That modification was never voluntarily attempted ; that unifying act was never made. Even if brilliant success had attended Germany's war effort, the attitude of the *régime* at the crisis would in the end have destroyed it, but the destruction was made absolutely certain when it gave failure instead of success. The *régime* had claimed and had been

given the credit for Germany's remarkable achievement; without delegating or sharing its power, it could not escape having to bear all the responsibility for destroying that achievement. The successive shocks administered first by the failure of Imperial diplomacy, second by the failure of the military machine, third by the breakdown of the economic life with the consequent disappearance of prosperity, the beginning of hardship and the menace of starvation, did more to convince the masses of the people that change was necessary than fifty years of theoretical demonstration, and explain the fact that, when change did come, it met with no resistance.

The reaction to the inability of the *régime* to act in the spirit of August 4 began before the war was a year old. The failure of the *attaque brusquée*, whose success had long been held as essential to ultimate victory, and the prolongation of the war gave the democracy time to reflect, and the Government did nothing to distract that reflection. It is significant that the first symptom of disaffection came from the uneasy consciences of the Socialists and took the line of least resistance in opposition to the war. The first opposition, that of the Left Socialists, took the form of peace propaganda.

To trace the history of the revolt against the *régime* is outside the compass of this work; it must suffice merely to sketch it in the broadest of outline.

The movement of resistance strengthened in direct proportion to the increase in hardship and to the realization that decisive victory was impossible. That being so, it followed that the war must end either in decisive defeat or in peace by compromise. To avoid the former might demand a national effort; to secure the latter a declaration on war-aims according to the later fashionable formula "peace without annexations or indemnities" was urgently necessary. Neither the one nor the other could be expected from the *régime*, and hence the opposition to it took the character of a peace movement plus advocacy of such constitutional reform as would realize national unity. In the appeal to the masses, the former aspect was much more important than the latter. In January 1916, the extremists founded the Spartacus League which aimed at sabotaging the war, and, six months later, came the first strike—that of the metal workers, a strike fomented and directed by the extremists and definitely of a political character. It was not supported by the official trade-union leaders nor generally by the rank and file of trade unionism, but, for the Government and for the trade union and Socialist leaders, it was the writing

on the wall ; the latter read it, the former did not. Defeatism of a revolutionary type had definitely made its appearance.

The peace polemic at Christmas 1916 and in January 1917 brought the question of war-aims to a head. It revealed the well-defined character of the Entente policy that was lacking in the German, but, in that definiteness, was a revelation of Imperialist designs which could have been used to Germany's advantage. The attempt to do this encountered a resistance which virtually sealed the fate of the Imperial *régime*. While the Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg shared the view of the opposition (now concentrating itself into a solid bloc), that decisive victory was impossible, that it was important to state Germany's war-aims in a manner calculated to influence favourably neutral opinion and that peace with America, above all, must be maintained, the military leaders were still confident of victory. Ludendorff believed that, with intensive submarine warfare, the war could be ended in three months. So confident indeed were the military leaders that they accepted cheerfully the risk of adding the United States to the ranks of Germany's enemies, and were chock-full of annexationist schemes. The *régime* was divided against itself. Between the two, the Chancellor with great courage held stoutly on, losing influence daily but maintaining himself in power with no little dexterity of compromise. The struggle suddenly resolved itself into one between a military dictatorship and a parliamentary rule with Bethmann and the politicians who shared his view vainly trying to maintain the Bismarckian system, as it was in 1914.

Into this charged atmosphere came the bombshell of the Russian revolution. The most amazing thing about the revolution from the European point of view was that, although everyone expected and confidently prophesied its coming, it took everybody by surprise when it did come, and it triumphed in forty-eight hours. Its effect was all the greater and all the swifter. To Europe the fall of Tsardom was what the fall of the Bastille was to France ; there is no mistaking the genuineness of the thrill that went through the nations, and that thrill was felt not least violently in Germany, for the March revolution left the Central Powers the last stronghold of autocratic reaction on the Continent. Within a month, revolutionary strikes broke out, and the Socialist Left at last broke definitely with the party and formed a new organization whose peace policy was nearer to a revolutionary policy than that held by any recognized party. But it was the course of the Russian

revolution that exerted the most sinister influence. Russian Liberalism went from victory to a disaster. Supported by all the democratic elements, it was challenged at once by a ridiculously tiny Socialist minority with a clear-cut programme. The fight between Liberalism and reaction gave place to the fight between the Liberal revolution and the Communist revolution, and the Communists won because of the failure of their opponents to translate the revolution into political act. The end of revolution was thus seen to be the victory of extremism which preached world revolution to its adherents, and summoned the proletariat of the world to rise. The extremists in Germany had at last a concrete basis to work on and a definite end to gain.

The revolutionary challenge could not be mistaken, but it was accepted very differently by the three anti-revolutionary sections into which the nation was now divided. The Right, grouped round Imperial Head-quarters, believed, despite strikes, propaganda in the army and mutinies in the fleet, that, whatever menace there was, could be dispersed by a whiff of grape-shot and denounced the Government for its failure to take drastic measures against external and internal foes. They still considered the Russian revolution, with some reason, as a military and political gain to Germany, and they saw no need to secure national unity at the price of concessions. The democratic opposition began to close its ranks ; it realized that peace took precedence over reform and its efforts culminated in the creation of a democratic front which, in July 1917, presented to the Reichstag the famous peace resolution in the name of the Majority Socialists (so-called to distinguish them from the seceding Socialists called since April the Independent Socialists), the Centrum, the Progressives and the parties which, despite diversity of aims, combined to form a Reichstag majority. The Government, between which and Imperial Head-quarters the Kaiser wavered pathetically while it lasted, had no illusions as to the seriousness of the situation ; as a sop to the democracy, it extorted from the Kaiser the Easter declaration from the Throne that the work of constitutional reform should be taken in hand. But it would not accept the peace resolution, and so Bethmann drew upon himself the hostility of both sides. The odds were too great, but it was Imperial Head-quarters which forced his resignation.

The disappearance of Bethmann left the militarists the sole support of the *régime* which now became identified with Imperial Head-quarters and the Right. Two solutions suggested

themselves. One was the proclamation of a military dictatorship; the other, the acknowledgment of the parliamentary situation by the appointment of a ministry based on the new Reichstag majority. The Kaiser would consent to neither; he appointed to the Chancellorship a Prussian official whose function was to represent Imperial Head-quarters, but who was still to be a constitutional minister. Whatever dictatorship there was, had to be carefully veiled.

The advent of Michaelis meant a decided defeat for the democracy, but that was largely the democracy's fault. The majority had issued the word "Bethmann must go" because they fancied that, if they forced a statesman so much in sympathy with them to resign, the *régime* would have to capitulate to parliamentarism. They did not realize that, in the circumstances, such a capitulation would have been an abject confession of the *régime's* failure, and the time for that was not yet ripe. Instead of forcing Bethmann to resign as an opponent of Liberalism, Imperial Head-quarters got rid of him because he was not conservative enough. Thus passed the one statesman acceptable to the Kaiser who might have steered Germany from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy.

Naturally the war against Bethmann was carried on with redoubled vigour against Michaelis. The democratic opposition smarted under the snub administered to it, especially when they found that the peace resolution, which they regarded as vital, meant nothing to the new Chancellor. Michaelis lasted one hundred and ten days. These hundred and ten days saw a definite bid on the part of the Reichstag majority for the leadership of the nation. Time had come to take some such step, for anti-war and revolutionary propaganda was steadily making headway. The troops in Russia were being inoculated with the virus of Bolshevism, and the recruits to the western armies obtained from the great "comb-out" of the sheltered trades in the autumn introduced the revolutionary element to the front line. Imperial Head-quarters pressed for repressive measures, and Michaelis permitted the general indictment of the Independent Socialists as a revolutionary body on the ground of subversive activity in the fleet. The Reichstag majority rose to defend their colleagues, and they received the important addition of the National Liberals, who demanded from the Kaiser a Chancellor in harmony with Parliament. Imperial Head-quarters did not sustain their nominee and Michaelis fell. The situation of July was repeated.

But there were differences. This time a military dictator-

ship was mentioned and it was clear that the reaction now lacked a leader. The elements supporting the Imperial *régime* looked towards Head-quarters and the latter, with the liquidation of Russia in sight and the great bid for a decision preparing, were too much preoccupied with military affairs. The Kaiser appeared to be little better than a puppet ; the Crown Prince was half suspected of resenting the tyranny of Head-quarters ; the junker and officer class was restrained by discipline and etiquette from taking an initiative which Hindenburg-Ludendorff renounced, and, of that class, the best representatives felt uneasily that catastrophe was approaching and that it could not be averted by the policy of the *régime*. It is probable that the vast majority of the nation would have welcomed the appointment of a Chancellor who would have announced, as his mission, the smooth transition to democracy outlined in the Easter declaration and a statement of war-aims on the lines now adopted by democracy throughout the world, but again they were disappointed. At the same time, Imperial Head-quarters must have felt equal disappointment, for, if the Reichstag majority did not get a parliamentary Chancellor, Head-quarters did not get another Michaelis. The new Chancellor was the Kaiser's nominee, the aged Catholic premier of Bavaria, Count Hertling.

Hertling's task was merely to delay. For the moment, all the efforts of Imperial Head-quarters were directed to military ends. The Bolshevik revolution took Russia out of the war, an invaluable military and political success soon to be sealed by the peaces of Brest and Bucharest. There was even confidence in the success of the gamble for decisive victory in the West. Hertling had only to hold the home front together. The home front needed no holding ; it only required to be given responsibility. It was not the home front that collapsed. but the front at Imperial Head-quarters, while the German nation generally was still prepared to defend German soil against the ever clearer intentions of the Allies to impose a Carthaginian peace. The revolutionary movement, despite the steady reinforcement of the Spartacists—now aspiring to be the Bolsheviks of Germany—and the Independent Socialists, now working in closer union with the Spartacists, had still no firm hold either on the intellect or the imagination of the masses. In January, the great munitions strike, organized with great skill by the Spartacists and Independents, was sabotaged by the trade unionists themselves, who appealed to the Majority Socialists to take charge and save their leadership

of the working class. They did so, to the intense disgust of the extremists, and the strike fizzled out. It represented a most dangerous blow to the prosecution of the war, delivered at a critical hour ; it was averted solely by the patriotism of the German workers.

The Reichstag majority was placed in a distinct quandary by Hertling's appointment. It indicated that the *régime* was not yet prepared to yield to parliamentarism, but, at the same time, the majority, as represented by Payer, was included in the Government ; it was understood that Hertling had taken office on the condition that Imperial Head-quarters did not interfere in politics and that, while the decisive battle was now impending, the renunciation of Belgium was made part of the Government policy. The majority therefore had to mark time. The promise to abstain from political interference was not kept. Kuhlmann, the Foreign Minister, speedily came to loggerheads with Imperial Head-quarters on the Russian peace terms. Hindenburg-Ludendorff demanded his dismissal, but the Government stood firm. Head-quarters demanded a reaffirmation of annexationist policy in Belgium ; in June Payer was permitted definitely to announce that this should not form part of Germany's policy. Consequently the majority had no reason to fight Hertling as they had fought Michaelis, and when they had, when Kuhlmann's adherence to the peace resolution caused his fall and it was again evident that the Cabinet was in the hands of the Militarists, the great crisis of the war had arrived and men were too anxious to fight.

The great offensive achieved a great triumph and then wore itself out : the gamble had failed and Ludendorff passed to a strategy of exhaustion. The great defeat of August 8 meant a further transition to a dogged defensive. The transition from anxious hope to the contemplation of disaster had a devastating effect on the German nation, but it did not yet despair. Despite the triumph of the extremists, despite the ominous appearance of unrest in the army, the national morale held. It was Imperial Head-quarters that broke down. By September, Ludendorff recognized that the fighting value of the army had been so lowered by casualties and defeat, and the position so compromised by the collapse of Germany's allies, that even a dogged defensive was impossible. Characteristically, he took a view of extreme pessimism and, in a nervous crisis, sent a despairing appeal for immediate overtures for an armistice.

It was not open to the politicians to question the military necessity of the request, but they must have felt that the

anxiety of Imperial Head-quarters lay in avoiding responsibility and in forcing the statesmen to accept the burden of liquidating the war. Head-quarters, having practically ruled the country, suddenly abdicated. Their rule had destroyed alike the prestige of the Throne, the *régime* and the Government. There was no leader left except the Reichstag to take control. For that body, there was as yet no question of playing the rôle of the Duma in March 1917. It did not, save on the meagre benches of the Independents, desire a revolution. All it wanted was to secure a democratic *régime*. To that end, Prince Max of Baden formed a parliamentary Cabinet which depended on a Reichstag majority inclusive of representatives of the Majority Socialists. A popular Government, appointed by the Kaiser but responsible to the nation, it was to conduct the peace negotiations and transform Germany into a constitutional Monarchy. Prince Max did not despair of the peace negotiations. He reckoned the situation less desperate than did Ludendorff when his pessimism was lowest and less favourable than that general when his optimism was in the ascendant ; he still believed it possible for a national effort to be made sufficient to give the enemy pause, for if it did ruin Germany it would probably ruin Europe with her—a risk the Allies, he felt, dare not take.

The victory of democracy had been won. Without revolution, the *régime* had discredited itself and had fallen unregretted and unregarded. Germany might be expected to rise in defence of her new-won liberties against foreign domination. But the leaders in closest touch with the people may well have felt that the time for a national effort was past. It required organization and that organization, in face of exultant extremism, would have been difficult. Till it was organized the fighting line must hold ; there was no reason to hope that it would come from the army leaders. The sole generals, with whom the new *régime* could have co-operated, were pessimists to a man. They saw nothing but the need to save the German army from disgraceful rout and dissolution. All that Prince Max could do was to busy himself with the formalities of surrender ; till that issue was settled, it was impossible to proceed to constructive work.

At that moment, the Government had the vast majority of the nation at its back. The official class stood solidly true to it and, with it, the majority of the officer class, including Hindenburg himself. When Ludendorff resigned its last dangerous enemy disappeared ; there was nothing to fear from the Right,

which, willy-nilly, had to support Prince Max lest a worse fate overtake it. Even the Left confined itself to growling and grumbling ; it could not create a revolutionary situation. But the Government did not fully realize that this overwhelming support of the nation was passive and not active. That passivity left Germany at the mercy of an incident and characteristically enough that incident came from the Right.

The extremists had been spurred to new activity by the collapse of the Imperial *régime* ; the task incumbent upon them, and long prepared, was to turn a March into a November revolution. They had been greatly strengthened by the release of political prisoners, notably Liebknecht and Eisner who, at Berlin and Munich, conducted frenzied propaganda for a revolution on Bolshevik lines. But if their aims were clear, the means of attainment were not ; and their appeals fell on deaf ears.

Then came the crash. The Admiralty determined to make a last effort. In spite of the fact that armistice negotiations were in progress, they resolved to fight a general action—a last " death-ride " of the German battle fleet. They acted on their own authority, although they could claim that, in Prince Max's policy of appealing for a national effort, a *levée en masse*, such as an action of the fleet, was a necessary part. On October 28, when part of the fleet was already in battle position, the crews of three battleships refused to weigh anchor. The mutiny was the work of a minority, but the officers did not grapple with it. They referred the issue to the High Command and, next day only, were the mutineers arrested. On the 30th, the plan of the Admiralty became known and mutiny broke out throughout the fleet at Wilhelmshaven. The civil population took the side of the mutineers ; officers who attempted to use force were shot down and by November 3 the movement had gained Kiel and Hamburg. The revolutionary situation had arisen.

Despite the participation of the civil element, the Kiel movement was in essence a military revolt. There was no revolt against the Government—its representative, Noske, had little difficulty in getting control of the movement—but, on November 7, Kurt Eisner, using his unrivalled talents as agitator and orator to inflame the populace of the Bavarian capital with an adroit blend of particularism and revolutionism, proclaimed the Bavarian Republic. This was revolution, for the Government had made no pronouncement on the *régime* ; it was a definite appeal to force and a challenge to the whole German system. It was also the signal for the release of forces long

pent up. Once the step had been taken the revolutionary fever spread the more quickly as it was seen that no action would be taken against the revolutionaries. The movement gained all the German cities as well as the army. Generals lost their authority; princes fled; governments resigned; self-appointed rulers took over control; soviets began to be formed and the workers' and soldiers' republic became a possibility. All that was needed was leadership, but the revolutionary chiefs were not ready. The revolution took them too by surprise and, before they had recovered, the moment for decisive action had passed. Whatever might ultimately have happened to it, the workers' republic was a possibility during that week of confusion, but the Spartacists had had no Lenin to turn them into a corps of professional revolutionaries, and lead them into action.

The effect on the Government was immediate. The outbreak of revolt ended at once any possibility of making a last desperate national effort: the war was lost; it remained only to save Germany from chaos. But a government, intended merely to secure a transition, is not a government for a crisis. The victory of Liberalism had too academic a sound to soothe the masses and it was clear that hourly the latter were getting out of control, hourly the number of extremists was increasing; at that rapid rate of progression, a revolutionary leader might appear. The sole solution was to head the revolution and endeavour to guide it. That the Government could not do. The Majority Socialists could and did.

For that party it was literally all power or downfall. They had co-operated loyally with the bourgeois parties, and they had seen their supporters pass at a steadily increasing rate into the ranks of the Independents. They were now faced with the possibility of general defection. The support of many loyal Socialists for Liebknecht's abortive attempt at an immediate Bolshevik rising was a plain indication of the way things were going, and it was known that the attempt had only been postponed and not abandoned. In the rapidly growing confusion it might be successful, and the Majority leaders would find the revolution proclaimed over their heads and themselves treated as merely bourgeois like their Liberal colleagues.

The choice was not so much between fighting the revolution with a risk of reaction and leading the revolution with a risk of Bolshevism, as between leading the revolution and being extinguished in the ultimate fight between White and Red extremists. They chose to lead. It was a desperate choice, but it

was the only way that promised hope that the democratic Germany, just come painfully to birth, would survive ; Germany has reason to be grateful that the Majority leaders were patriotic enough, able enough and strong enough to take it.

There only remained to find a procedure capable of facilitating the transition from the parliamentary government of a coalition to the revolutionary dictatorship of a party. Luckily, a pretext was available for the disruption of the coalition. On October 28 Herr Scheidemann, the Socialist representative in the Government, had addressed to Prince Max a demand from the party that the Kaiser should abdicate ; on November 7 the demand was transformed into an ultimatum. The Kaiser returned no answer to the Government's inquiry and next day the Socialists resigned from the Cabinet. Automatically they placed themselves and their party at the service of the revolution. On November 9, their leaders went to the Cabinet then in session and informed it that " the people " desired to take power into its own hands, and Prince Max, having informed them of the Kaiser's abdication, resigned. His transference of power to Ebert was an act without meaning. Ebert by a revolutionary act had assumed the rôle of dictator ; his proclamation of it did not even assume it as an act willed by the people. The Imperial *régime* had yielded to democracy ; before constitutional democracy could be established, it was forced aside by a revolutionary dictatorship. A saddler sat on the throne of the Hohenzollerns and possessed their heritage.

CHAPTER II

THE MENACE FROM THE LEFT

The policy of the Majority Socialists—a united Socialist party—the first revolutionary ministry—moderate character of ministry—dissensions in the Government—between the old *régime* and the workers' and soldiers' councils—the First Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils—results of the elections—suppressing Communist revolts.

ALTHOUGH the assumption of power by Ebert was a revolutionary act, its significance is lost if it is not realized that it was also a tactical move. There was little exultation about the German revolution. It was the culmination of a long process consciously worked out; there were no scenes reminiscent of those of March 1917, when a nation was literally drunk on liberty, and there would have been no revolutionary act had the culmination of the process not coincided with defeat in the field and a crisis at home. The first democratic Government could not hope to control the forces thus unleashed; a revolutionary dictatorship might. It is untrue to say that the Majority Socialists usurped power to sabotage the revolution, but they certainly did so to prevent a Bolshevik revolution. With a far-sightedness that does them credit, they realized that, in a highly developed, educated country like Germany, such a revolution meant a bloody civil war ending with the victory of reaction, whether Left or Right.

Their aim was to hold power till the nation could pull itself together, till the democracy could concentrate its forces, till a majority of the nation within a democratic *régime* could be duly organized. And it was time indeed to take control, for everywhere there reigned an orgy of abdication. All that the *régime* and its supporters sought was to escape responsibility for the collapse that was imminent. Everywhere the Governments had disappeared, and self-appointed committees under the guidance of irresponsible leaders held most of the German towns. Unless some central authority took control and at once, they would fall an easy victim to the extremists. It

was the Bolshevik parties and leaders, and not the dispirited, disorganized remnants of the Imperial *régime,* that constituted the most serious menace, both internally and internationally. Ebert had seized power to parry this menace.

The Left movement was split, at the moment, into three sections, with a tendency to merge imperceptibly one into the other. It was possible to unite the movement, either in a Right or in a Left sense, and thus form either a democratic or a Bolshevik Republic. For the moment, the Socialists held the field; their decision meant the decision of the nation. The first stage obviously was the reunion of the two Socialist parties. There existed little difference between the leaders of the rival groups. None of them were statesmen, they were all party men of ability and character who had never been called upon, save in a few cases a few weeks ago, to fill positions of risk and responsibility. The Independents had attracted the brilliant, the Majority retained the able; the Independents had greater driving power, the Majority greater stability; the Independents were under the influence of words, the Majority under that of facts. There were few illusions on the subject of each other, for the leaders on both sides had known each other in union and disunion for years, and, if doubtful of the strength of the other, each realized quite clearly the other's weaknesses. But both realized also their failure to attain the picturesqueness and appeal, actual, historical and moral, of the darlings of the truly revolutionary elements—Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Radek and the like, who were even then as much legend and inspiration as flesh and blood, and whose hold on the general mass of the workers might well be far greater than could be supposed.

The Majority took the initiative and never lost it. Ebert's dictatorship was not twelve hours old ere he offered to share power with the Independents by offering them an equality of seats in a revolutionary Government. It was the obvious policy. If the offer was accepted, it closed the ranks of Socialism; the united party could evolve in one direction or the other and the power of the extremists, who had adopted Leninist tactics against "a March revolution", would be put at once to the test. The apparent magnanimity of the offer made it easier for the Majority to offer but more difficult for the Independents to accept. There were the long and bitter quarrels with the Majority, the revolutionary activity of past months, the close connection with the Spartacists and the genuine hold on many of the leaders of Bolshevik principles and, at least,

their desire to push revolution to its farthest length. Germany was, according to Marxian thought, the one country where a workers' republic could be carried through; it was difficult to renounce a task that seemed possible, as difficult as to work with men who had been stigmatized as traitors and whose policy had not been to their liking. The choice before the Independents was either to hold no relations with the "social patriots" and to push on to the proletarian dictatorship—the course eloquently advocated by Liebknecht—or to join the "social patriots" and influence their conception of a Socialist State—in other words, to abandon revolutionary and go back to evolutionary work with the possibility of returning to revolution if evolution proved too slow. The possibility of capturing the whole movement by union no doubt influenced the Independents when they chose the second alternative, just as it influenced the Majority in making the offer, but, at the same time, the choice was also due to a desire to serve the nation and save it from anarchy. There were social patriots even on the extreme Left whose internationalism was not yet complete.

On November 10, therefore, the first revolutionary ministry was announced—Ebert, Scheidemann and Landsberg for the Majority, and Haase, Dittmann and Barth for the Independents. It was a revolutionary ministry in strict accuracy; actually it was a Socialist Cabinet supported by a majority of the nation. It held its power from the people even if the people had not been formally consulted. Although the Independents had made it a condition of their participation that the workers' and soldiers' councils, everywhere established on the Russian model, should be regarded as the source of the Governmental power, no steps were taken to give effect to the condition; a mass meeting of council delegates had the formation and composition of the new Government announced to it and recorded an approval valuable only as a sign that the extremists did not control a majority of the councils actually in being. The Cabinet indeed described itself as "the Council of People's Commissaries" and announced its intention of carrying out a Socialist programme, but these were only concessions to the spirit of the hour.

The formation of the ministry was a distinct blow to the extreme Left, which still dreamed of a November revolution. That the dream was not mere fantasy is shown by the fact that, only a few hours before the decision of the Independents was taken, Barth had pleaded vigorously for the summoning of a workers' and soldiers' congress to elect a Cabinet. Now this

champion of the idea of "All power to the Soviets" was a member of the Government, and he and the wing of his party which he represented had agreed to the summoning of a Constituent Assembly to decide the future form of government of Germany. They may have thought that they could pack that Assembly, but the revolt from Bolshevik practice was plain. The extreme Left had, as a matter of fact, hopelessly miscalculated the extent to which Leninism had penetrated the German masses. They remained in the majority true to democracy; in spite of appeals, some of them by men of almost heroic stature, in spite of defeat, starvation and ruin, they were not yet disposed to pass out of the Western European tradition to try the fortune of a Communist experiment. And in reliance on that sense of reality in the workers, the whole of the bourgeois classes, with but few exceptions, fell in behind the Socialist Government. The official class had not been disturbed by the revolution; it had gone on functioning as a truly official class always does, apparently reckless of Cabinet changes, of revolutionary outbreaks, of self-elected workers' councils; it kept the machinery of the State going. It was a remarkable achievement and one of supreme importance, for it minimized the seriousness of the revolution to the class which in a highly organized State is always ready to fight revolution by force, and which is apt to gauge the importance of things by the degree to which they affect its routine. The fact that the reaction did not at once coalesce into a fighting power is due indeed to the Government and its conception of its duty; it is also due to the bureaucracy which kept those services going whose importance we realize only when they cease.

For the moment Germany was personified by six men, once the despised leaders of the ragged proletariat; against it and them stood a minority of extreme Socialists, angrily conscious that they had been outmanœuvred and prepared to go any lengths to recover the ground which they felt they never should have lost. They had no alternative to acquiescence save the carrying out of a *coup de main* on the Leninist model. Through its recognized leaders, the extreme Left declared uncompromising war on the new Government; they realized only partially that they were declaring war on the German nation.

The first essential for the Government was to get control of the country and liquidate the war. The country offered no difficulties, nor did the Allies. On November 11 the armistice was signed; Germany scarcely examined the conditions; she

trusted blindly to the magical fourteen points and the peace conference.

The discussion of these terms belongs to military history, but the German signatory is significant of the new Germany; he was the bourgeois politician Erzberger. The Socialist dictators had simply co-opted the bourgeois leaders. They looked after the country, and experts—Solf at the Foreign Office, Schiffer at the Treasury, Preuss at the Home Office—formed a Cabinet and looked after the government. And indeed the Council of Commissaries had its hands full. It was not a harmonious body; old enmities are not wiped out in a day, and many of its adherents were not to be trusted. Against its programme of a democratic Republic which could become Socialist only by will of the people, the Spartacists formulated their ideal of a Soviet Republic and began the formation of a Red guard. The Commissaries were responsible for the maintenance of law and order. They had several regiments at hand who had adhered to the Republic and officers to lead them, but to use them might have caused a revulsion in the minds of their supporters. Eichhorn, an Independent, appointed Chief of Police in the capital, had raised an armed force, but Eichhorn was more than half a Communist. Wels, the Majority Socialist military commander of Berlin, had likewise raised a Republican guard. All the forces were well armed and all were not entirely reliable. The same held true of other towns and, to add to the difficulties, the legions from west and east were marching home, some quietly demobilizing themselves, others retaining, thanks to the patriotic sacrifice of Hindenburg—now undergoing his greatest humiliation—and his colleagues, their old discipline. The disciplined presented as great a problem as the undisciplined.

The rival tendencies in the Government soon showed themselves. On the one hand, the Majority wanted to hurry on the Constituent Assembly and turn over responsibility to a Constitutional Government; the Independents desired to delay the Assembly and get the Socialist *régime* on a firm basis. Their representatives in the Land-Governments did their best. But the Majority stood obstinately by their guns and the Independents did not press their case; they knew their followers too well. It is difficult to overestimate the difficulties of the Cabinet. They had not unnaturally got rid of the parliaments of the Imperial *régime*, which clearly did not reflect the opinion of the new Germany, but, at the same time, they refused to take orders from the workers' and soldiers' councils. They

had therefore no real connection with the electorate save through the party organizations, and the lack of such connection was not atoned for by the willingness of all the bourgeois parties to make things easy for them. That alone supplied a glorious argument to the Communists and sowed doubts in the minds of many Independents as to the wisdom of their renunciation. Were the bourgeois merely rallying their forces while the Left movement, rent by faction, exhausted itself in a struggle whose fruits the victors would not be permitted to enjoy? The extreme Independents were so convinced of the answer that they had already passed over to the Bolsheviks, whose tactics in penetrating the workers' councils were daily gaining them adherents.

The loyalty of the Independents was indeed sorely tried. There had been collisions in the streets of Berlin in which soldiers—their old enemies—had fired on Spartacists nominally but also on honest workers. No progress had been made towards establishing Socialism, and more than one Independent must have asked himself, as did Eisner, the head of the Bavarian revolution, when his adherents declared for a Constituent Assembly, if the fruits of the revolution were not slipping away. There was still time to save the councils from dying a natural death and some of the Independents resolved to use it.

On December 16 there met the first Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils. The five weeks that had elapsed since the Berlin councils had approved the Socialist Council of Commissaries had been well used by the Spartacists. All they required was an organized body to maintain a balance of power against the Government, as had been done in Russia, and in the Congress they hoped to find it. The councils for the most part had worked well; they had been guided by the officials and they had always listened to the expert; if their management of the food supply created much difficulty locally, their handling of demobilization was a real service to the nation. They had largely been appointed by the two Socialist parties and the majority of them had no political aims. They wanted to co-operate, to feel that they, the representatives of the pariah class, were necessary to the State, but they did not want to rule. "All power to the Soviets" was no slogan of theirs, and the Spartacists suffered a humiliating and crushing defeat at the outset; the Congress declined to invite Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg to join its councils. The defeat was decisive and the extremists transferred the battle to the streets.

Inside the Congress, however, it came to an open conflict, not

only between the coalition parties, but between the Commissaries. The Spartacist sympathizers poured out their wrath on the Cabinet for betraying the people's revolution, and demanded a clear affirmation of loyalty to the workers' Republic. Young, hotheaded and inexperienced, but desperately sincere, Barth joined in the criticism of his colleagues. The opposition, thus reinforced, carried their point that the councils should be recognized as the source of power in the State and that a central committee to be elected by the Congress should supervise, with the right of appointment and dismissal, the German Cabinet. Such a plan made the councils or their representative committee the supreme authority in the State, but all meaning was taken from the act by the fact that the Independents abstained from joining the Committee because they thought that it had not power enough and only Majority men were elected to it. When the Congress agreed to elections for the Constituent Assembly being held on January 19, the victory of the Socialist Right, despite the pious constitutional opinion expressed in the resolution on the Councils' Committee, was complete.

But the Congress had revealed the serious rift in the ranks of the coalition, in which a growing number of the Independents supported Liebknecht's campaign against the Constituent Assembly, and the Independent leaders, especially after Barth's revolt, began to feel their position compromising. A revolt of sailors forming part of the Berlin command, which was suppressed by regular troops with a good deal of bloodshed, gave the Independents the excuse they needed. They saw counter-revolution raising its head and left the Government. The Majority cleverly left the filling of the three vacancies thus caused to the Congress Committee, and that body promptly elected three Majority Socialists, including "the *saboteur* of the Kiel revolution," Noske.

The Independents' tactics had not been particularly ingenious and they reduced themselves to impotence, leaving the Government and the Spartacists face to face. The former at once took action. On January 4 it demanded the resignation of Eichhorn—a Left wing Independent—from the office of Chief of Police. Eichhorn appealed to the party which joined the Spartacists in declaring a general strike A revolutionary committee was formed, but it talked instead of acted, while, among its enemies, was Noske, who acted and did not talk. He appealed to the officers of the old army, formed a fighting force and proceeded to put down the revolt by force. The

soldiery were not over tender in their methods; there was much unnecessary killing and, in the confusion, Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, who had been arrested, were brutally murdered by their guards. The lesson was a bloody one, but it was approved by the nation, and on January 19 the elections to the National Assembly were held in perfect order. The Majority Socialists polled 37·9 per cent. of the votes and the Independents 7·6 per cent.; the Socialist parties secured only thirty-six seats short of an absolute majority; the Radical wing of the bourgeois polled 18·5 per cent., its centre 4·4 per cent. and its right 10·3 per cent. The Centrum polled 19·7 per cent. The result was a striking victory for German Radicalism; a setback to the extreme Left, a defeat for the Right, and an overwhelming victory for constitutionalism.

Berlin was thought too stormy a place for peaceful discussion and the Assembly met at Weimar, the classic home of the old German culture. The Cabinet at once handed power over to it—no more was heard of the councils—and it proceeded to elect Ebert to the Presidency of the German Republic, and he entrusted Herr Scheidemann with the formation of a ministry. The new ministry was formed on a broad basis in view of the national significance of its task, and was composed of Majority Socialists, Centrists and Democrats, representing three hundred, and twenty-six members in a house of four hundred and twenty-one.

While the Assembly worked at the fashioning of a constitution, the Cabinet, at last a regular, constitutionally functioning Government, took over the difficult problems left by the revolutionary ministry. The Spartacus menace was scotched but not killed. Men were now recovering from the shock of revolution and surrender and beginning to realize the nature of the economic and political difficulties confronting them; the Allied blockade was only partially lifted and there was widespread unrest. The extremists had good material to work on, but they were never able to give their agitation a national aspect. The outbreaks were sporadic, and as the nation steadied itself and the anti-revolutionary elements recovered courage the more and more useless did sporadic attempts become. A demand for the socialization of the Westphalian mines, backed by a general strike, proclaimed equally by the Majority Socialists, was ended by the intervention of Government troops; in the Rhineland, in Thuringia, in Saxony, in Bavaria (where Eisner was murdered by a counter-revolutionary on February 21), strikes and *émeutes* were constant,

necessitating a further enrolment of troops, and, still more, a further employment of army officers by the Government. The troops were ably handled, but every suppression raised up new enemies for the ministry, and especially caused grave suspicions to grow in the minds of the rank-and-file Socialists. The storm came to a head in Berlin on March 5. The trade unions called a general strike to force attention to the economic difficulties of the workers. The strike was ineffective and the extremists declared it extended to the public services, whereupon the Majority Socialists called their members off and, to avoid a fiasco, the strike was cancelled. The crowds in the Berlin streets got out of hand; shots were exchanged between the police and the "rowdies"; a portion of the volunteers enrolled in the November days and the sailors' corps, already wavering in their allegiance to the Government, seized the Lichtenburg suburb. The Government seized the opportunity and with allegations, subsequently proved false, that the Spartacists had murdered numbers of policemen, sent in troops who suppressed the movement with brutality and bloodshed sufficient to arouse fierce criticism even in the Democratic and Centrist Press and almost to unite the workers against the Government. Even bloodier reverses were suffered by the Spartacists in Magdeburg, Leipzig, Dresden, Brunswick, and Munich. In Munich, after Eisner's murder, the Socialists of all shades demanded a Workers' Republic; it was proclaimed and was then overthrown by the Communists, whose rule, maintained by terror, was ended in a blood-bath worthy of the best traditions of White reaction. There was bloodshed at Magdeburg; in Dresden, a Red dictatorship murdered the Socialist Minister for Defence and was suppressed by force; at Leipzig and Brunswick, the movement collapsed. There were sporadic outbreaks till the end of May and then the Peace Treaty put an entirely new complexion on the whole struggle.

With the crushing of the extremists by the old army, the chances of a Bolshevik revolution passed definitely away. They were rendered precarious by the decision of the Independents to take the national line, and they were doomed by the failure of the extremist leaders to take advantage of the confusion preceding the election of the Constituent Assembly. It is more than doubtful if the ablest revolutionary could have done more than give considerably more trouble than Liebknecht did, for the odds would have been fatally against him, and his enemies were men who had nothing to learn even from Lenin in ruthlessness and decision. It is well indeed that Ger-

many was spared a successful Bolshevik revolution, but, at the same time, the internecine strife of the Socialist elements had disastrous effects on the future history of Germany. While the extremists later formed the Communist party and became, under the rigid discipline imposed by Moscow, a far more formidable though smaller force than Liebknecht could have controlled, the rift between Independent and Majority Socialists came to open rupture, the benefit of which the Independents reaped. The workers were unpleasantly awakened when soldiers under officers of the old *régime* shot down members of their class. They sensed the approach of counter-revolution and a state no better than in days of autocracy ; in great numbers, they passed to the Independents, who, despite their faults of indecision, had not shed the blood of their own class. The result was to cripple the Socialist power and to throw the Government more and more under the control of the bourgeois parties, among whose less radical members the idea of sharing power with the Socialists—always repugnant—now seemed unnecessary. The way was paved for the fall of the Socialists from governmental power, and on the Right the counter-revolution raised its head. The crushing of the menace from the Left created the menace from the Right. It was a menace consciously risked, and possibly justifiably risked, for no member of the Scheidemann Government, when he was asked, dreamed that the Allies were to supply the reaction with its best weapons.

CHAPTER III

THE WORK OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND THE PEACE TREATY

The Constituent Assembly at Weimar—the grouping of political parties—the national background—a democratic charter—the German State as laid down in the Constitution of Weimar—the *Reich* and its relations with the *Länder*—the rights of the President—social and labour clauses—the effect of the Peace Treaty—disillusionment and reaction.

THE revolutionary period in the history of the German Republic ends with the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, the election of the President and the appointment of the first coalition Government. There are revolutionary outbreaks in the succeeding years, but there is no revolutionary period. At no time did constitutional government see itself forced to abdicate. The foundations of the new Germany were too firmly laid by the Assembly, and its work remains a turning-point in German history.

When it met in Weimar its mere appearance must have seemed a guarantee of stability to the nation, for that appearance differed extraordinarily little from that of the Reichstag which it had replaced. Most of the old faces appeared again; the party strengths were, proportionately, much the same, in spite of the fact that the elections had been absolutely free. But a closer examination would have shown significant changes of name, and an examination of the party programmes might have suggested that all the German parties had taken a pace to the Left. Elected on a proportional representation system by universal suffrage, the Assembly was far more representative of national opinion than the old Parliaments, and yet the respective strengths of the parties were little more than the normal evolution of German democracy might have produced after a normal victory of democracy over the *régime* expressed in constitutionally won reform. Only the fact that all the bourgeois parties had reconstituted themselves indicated that something abnormal had occurred. There were no Communists,

but the Socialist party had split into Independent and Majority Socialists. The Progressives had become the Democrats and had attracted to their ranks the left and centre of the National Liberals, whose right element now called itself the German People's Party. The Centrum had become the Christian People's Party—it speedily reverted, however, to its old name —while the Conservatives appeared as the German National People's Party. The fact that a change of name was thought wise is significant, but it implied little drastic change in the policy of the parties, and, except in one or two cases more important in promise than in fact, the Constitution contains little that had not been part of the stock-in-trade of progressives of all shades during the long period of constitutional discussion.

The Constitution is a compromise, but a compromise in which the Right lost heavily. The winners in the elections were the Majority Socialists, and the Democrats who, for national reasons, notably the necessity for acceptance on a national basis of the Peace Treaty when it came, had formed a coalition with the Centrum. The Cabinet and its majority were Left Centre and the Constitution is a compromise between the Left Centre parties fairly representing the views of the voters supporting them. Its broad lines represent agreement ; its details compromise, and one can often detect the party victories by the mere wording of the text without reference to the debates.

The basis was the draft constitution drawn up by one of the ablest constitutional lawyers in Germany, Hugo Preuss, and published to give the nation an idea of what appeared in the mind of a good Democrat to be a suitable constitution for a democratic Republic. There was no doubt that, whatever the extremists on either side might say, Germany was going to be a democratic Republic. The autocracy had been crushed ; the attempts to establish a proletarian dictatorship had failed ; and neither the Anti-Republican nor the Anti-Democratic opposition had any opportunity of uttering more than a feeble protest. All they could do was to use the dissensions of the Republicans to colour some of the clauses, and even so they had little success. All the broad principles laid down by Preuss were translated into law and, if the Constitution as passed differs from the draft submitted to the Assembly, the differences do not affect broad general principles. The debates were prolonged and often acrimonious, for, to many in the House, one clause or another meant a defeat of principle amounting to destruction of a political ideal, a sacrifice of what had made the

old Germany great or a rejection of what alone could give political power to the worker, but there was also displayed an amazing amount alike of goodwill and of faith, and the Weimar Constitution remains a great charter for a democratic nation at once Conservative and Radical, and capable of constant modification as the wheels of history go forward or reverse.

The post-war mood of Europe under the inspiration of the Wilsonian ideal, which became something far greater than the limited academism its author had originally intended, was one of exaltation, and that exaltation inspired even a nation crushed with defeat. A new era of class and national co-operation appeared perfectly possible to minds in all countries, and the constitutions of 1919 and 1920 are inspired with that conviction, even although the exaltation had begun to sink. The war was the *via dolorosa* to liberty; after being sent like sheep to the slaughter, the peoples had come into their own and they alone were the power in the State. The formula enshrined in the German and other constitutions that the source of power is the people is not empty rhetoric; it is expressive of a new popular conception of the relation of the State to the people. In the German Constitution it meant a clear break with the past. The old German Empire had been virtually a league of princes and its emperor had condescended to give legal form to a desire to co-opt the nation, through elected representatives, to the Government of the country, but the source of all authority remained the prince, who derived his authority from supernatural sources. The Weimar Assembly, having seen all the princes abolished, had to find new authority and it expressed its opinion of the origin of the power conferred upon it by the notable words: "The German People, united in all their branches and inspired by the determination to renew and strengthen their commonwealth in liberty and justice, to preserve peace both at home and abroad, and to foster social progress, have adopted the following Constitution." The Assembly was building for more than the Government of Germany; the Constitution was not merely a summary of the governmental *status quo*; it was a basis for the development of a future of national progress and international co-operation.

Whatever local patriotism may say, the Weimar Constitution struck at the roots of German particularism. It is profitless to go into the interminable controversy on the nature of German federalism; it is sufficient to note that the federalism implied in the Constitution is a concession rather than an affirmation. The insistence on the German people indicates

the conception dominating the Assembly, although even that is a retrograde step from the unitary State which Preuss envisaged, and it is quite clear that it intended to signify that the old federalism was dead. It was in its nature a federation of princely houses under the guidance of Prussia ; the princely houses had gone ; the German people remained and the existence of " Lands "—the successors of the kingdoms and duchies —derives from the will of the German people as a whole. Apart from the Reich, the Lands have no existence ; they are virtually administrative divisions and the ruling tendency of contemporary German thought is to make them actually so. Germany to-day ranks as a federal State and her Constitution is a federal one, but it is so ordered that the federal aspect has less vital importance than the unitary aspect. Not merely has the Reich exclusive authority over foreign relations, citizenship, defence, coinage, customs and posts, but it has supreme authority over a score of other things (art. 7), including civil and communal judicial procedure, public health, social legislation, insurance, railways, and the like. In cases of emergency, it is the exclusive authority. Jurisdiction is left to the Lands only " so long and in so far as the Reich does not exercise jurisdiction " (art. 12), and any laws passed by the Lands may be questioned by the Reich if the general welfare is affected, while, in all cases of difference in dispute, Reich laws take precedence over Land laws. The nature of the Lands' constitutions and the principles they embody are laid down for them by the Weimar Constitution (art. 17), and no insistence on local rights can prevent the alteration of Land boundaries if national interests and the will of the people concerned desire it. The Reichsrat represents the Lands, each Land having at least one vote, the votes of the larger Lands being computed at one vote per 1,000,000 inhabitants, but no State, however great, being able to have votes exceeding two-fifths of the whole—a provision which militates against the realization of a unitary state by the creation of a greater and greater Prussia. It is not the Bundesrat from which it derives, but it may become an instrument of unification. It was dislike of Prussia far more than dislike of unity that rendered, and still renders, particularism so strong. The small States of Central Germany formed the Land of Thuringia rather than be absorbed in Prussia and, since 1919, only Waldeck has consented to lose its identity as a Land and become part of Prussia. Lands like Hesse to-day are convinced of the need of a unitary State, but they refuse to seek the road to it via Prussia, and, although

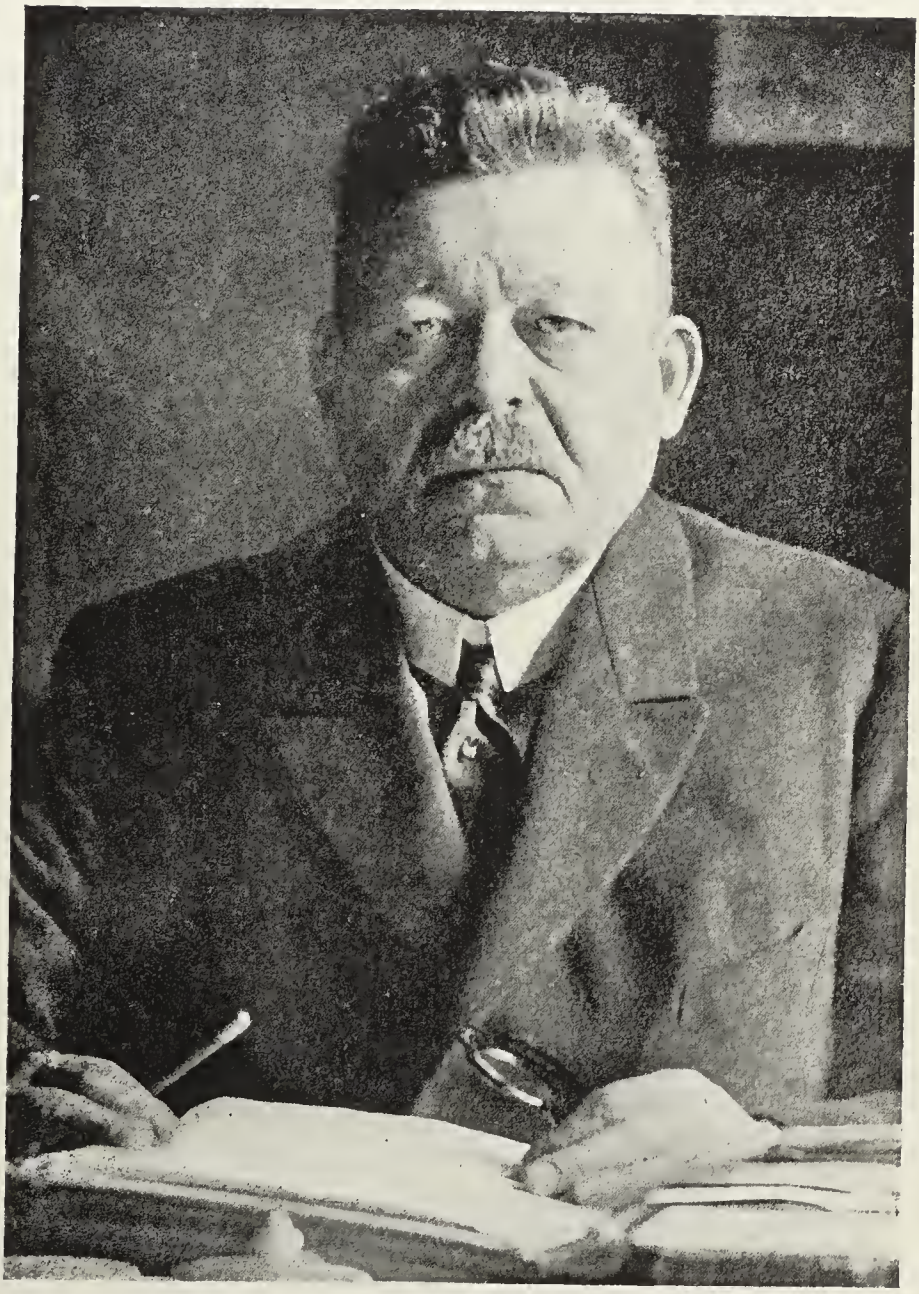
Prussia is, for administrative purposes, itself a federal State—an arrangement that facilitates its easy disappearance in Germany—a Prussian sentiment responds to the violent particularism of the South German Lands. But here the logic of facts is against romantic history, and the practical difficulties presented by the existing federalism are convincing the mass of the nation that the sooner the map of Germany can be printed in one colour the better. The unitary Germany is within reasonable distance of realization because of the gradual spread of the conviction that it is necessary, but the basis of it was laid in the Weimar Constitution as an act of political faith. When the Council of the Lands became merely a consultative and revisionary body in contradiction to the old supremacy of the Bundesrat, the victory for unity was won and the Germany of to-day has only to exploit it and gather in its fruits.

The Lands disposed of and the essential unity of Germany asserted, the Constitution simply ignores them when it comes to deal with governance of the nation except to assert their inferiority. It concerns itself solely with the establishment of popular rule. Here the Assembly was faced with its most difficult task. It was brought up against old and established custom and new and dangerous prejudices. It had been elected definitely to prevent the establishment of any type of dictatorship and yet it had to create a strong Government which would be able to maintain itself against such dictatorship as threatened it. The form that emerged is a compromise, but it is a compromise that has stood the test of nine stormy years. That compromise is based on the balancing of the powers between President, Chancellor (*plus* his Cabinet) and Parliament, with Parliament in every case the supreme authority, which in the circumstances means the electorate. The President is the head of the State with wide powers, but in practice he is compelled to co-operate with Parliament. He can dissolve a Parliament in the event of disagreement if he cares to, but he cannot dissolve the next Parliament for the same reason. If the election succeeding the dissolution gives him reason he has but appealed to the sovereign people ; if it does not, he can be removed as a result of a popular vote proposed by two-thirds of the deputies. He is given (in art. 48—one of the most hotly-debated articles in the Constitution) dictatorial powers in case of emergency envisaged as rebellion on the part of a Land or a party and can then govern by decree, but the decrees can be revoked by Parliament. The need for authority to take urgent measures, e.g. during a dissolution or

in the absence of the majority of ministers and deputies, is obvious, but the control is so carefully laid down that dictatorial power could hardly be abused unless the President were deliberately meditating unconstitutional actions of some kind, i.e. appealing to force. The risks of that are evident, but they are risks that an educated democracy need rarely run. In all other respects the President seems little more than the constitutional signatory authority of Parliament, and all other authority he possesses at home and abroad must be extorted by his own personality.

The right of the President to dissolve Parliament has been mentioned. He has also a further right: he appoints the Chancellor who in turn appoints the Ministers, but as the Chancellor, and the Ministers depend individually on the confidence of Parliament, the right is only formal. The Chancellor (art. 56) determines the general course of policy and assumes responsibility therefore to Parliament. Normally he or a Minister initiates legislation, but the individual deputy also has the right of initiation. Here, the Reichsrat, viewed as part of the legislature, has an important right; its consent must be demanded before a Bill is introduced into Parliament as a Government measure, although the refusal of consent does not prevent introduction; but it can force the Cabinet to introduce a Bill against the Cabinet's will, though the Cabinet can state its dissent while so doing. Parliament is the supreme authority on legislation, and no Bill can come into law without parliamentary approval save in circumstances (detailed in arts. 72–74) where a referendum is ordered. The sovereignty of the people in Parliament is complete even if there should be conflict between Parliament and people, but everything is done by a balancing of powers to prevent such conflict and to make the Constitution easily workable by men of goodwill, and it has proved workable, although on occasion certain men were not of goodwill.

The Assembly, in its zeal for justice, decided on an elaborate system of proportional representation as the method of election for Parliament, and, except for small and local minorities, the result does give a remarkably accurate picture of the mind of the nation. For that very reason, it creates a state of things which so far has rendered government by coalition unavoidable and has led to peculiar methods of forming Cabinets which the Assembly scarcely envisaged. The President does not send for a party leader as such; he sends for a statesman who can persuade a sufficient number of parties to co-operate under



PRESIDENT EBERT