A SHORT HISTORY OF GERMANY

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A SHORT HISTORY OF GERMANY.

CHAPTER I.

Foundation building is neither picturesque nor especially interesting, but it is indispensable. However fair the structure is to be, one must first lay the rough-hewn stones upon which it is to rest. It would be much pleasanter in this sketch to display at once the minarets and towers and stained-glass windows; but that can only be done when one's castle is in Spain.

Would we comprehend the Germany of to-day, we must hold firmly in our minds an epitome of what it has been, and see vividly the devious path of its development through the ages.

The German nation is of ancient lineage, and indeed belongs to the royal line of human descent, the Aryan; its ancestral roots running back until lost in the heart of Asia, in the mists of antiquity.

The home of the Aryan race is shrouded in mystery, as are the impelling causes which sent those successive tides of humanity into Europe. But we know with certainty that when the last great wave spread over Eastern Europe, or Russia, about one thousand years before Christ, the submergence of that continent was complete.

Before the coming of the Aryan, the Rhine flowed as now; the Alps pierced the sky with their glistening peaks as they do to-day; the Danube, the Rhône, hurried on, as now, toward the sea. Was it all a beautiful, unpeopled solitude, waiting in silence for the richly endowed Asiatic to come and possess it? Far from it! It was teeming with humanity—if, indeed, we may call such the race which modern research and discovery have revealed to us. It is only within the last thirty years that anything whatever has been known of prehistoric man; but now we are able to reconstruct him with probable accuracy. A creature bestial in appearance and in life; dwelling in caves, which, however, a dawning sense of a higher humanity led him to decorate with carvings of birds and fishes; but certain it is, the brain which inhabited that skull was incapable of performing the mental processes necessary to the simplest form of civilization; and life must have been to him simply a thing of fierce appetites and brutal instincts. Such was the being encountered by the Aryan, when he penetrated the mysterious land beyond the confines of Greece and Italy.

The extermination, and perhaps, to some extent, assimilation, of this terrible race must have required centuries of brutalizing conflict, and, it is easy to imagine, would have produced just such men as were the northern barbarians who, for five hundred years, terrorized Europe; men insensible to fear, terrible, fierce, but with fine instincts

for civilization—dormant Aryan germs, which quickly developed when brought into contact with a superior race.

The earliest Indo-European migration is supposed to have been into Greece and Italy, where was laid the basis for the civilization of the world. The second was probably into Western Europe and the British Isles; then, after many centuries, the central and last, and at a time comparatively recent, into the Eastern portion of the continent.

So, by the fourth century B.C., three great divisions of the Aryan race occupied Europe north of Greece and Italy: the Keltic, the western; the Teutonic, the central; the Slavonic the eastern; and these, in turn, had ramified into new subdivisions or tribes.

To state it as in the pedigree of the individual, the Aryan was the founder, the father of the family; Slav, Teuton, and Kelt the three sons. Gaul and Briton were sons of the Kelt; Saxon, Angle, Helvetian, etc., sons of the Teuton; and all alike grandchildren of the Aryan; whom—to carry the illustration farther—we may imagine to have had older children, who long ago had left the paternal home and settled about the Caspian and Mediterranean seas: Mede, Persian, Greek, Roman; apparently bearing few marks of kinship to these uncouth younger brothers whom we have found in Europe in the fourth century B.C., but with nevertheless the same cradle and the same ancestral roots.

It is the Teutonic branch of the Aryan family with which we have to do now, between whom and their Keltic brothers there flowed the River Rhine.

Greece and Rome were unaware of the existence of the Teuton until about the year 330 B.C., when Pythias, a Greek navigator, came home from a voyage to the Baltic with terrible tales of the Goths whom he had met. Nearly one century before Christ the inhabitants of Italy were enabled to judge for themselves of the accuracy of the description. Driven from their homes by the inroads of the sea, the Goths poured in a hungry torrent down into the tempting vineyards of Northern Italy. Gigantic in stature, with long yellow hair, eyes blue but fierce—what wonder that the people thought they were scarcely human, and fled affrighted, leaving them to enjoy the vineyards at their leisure!

Accounts of this uncanny host reached Rome, which soon knew of their breastplates of iron, their helmets crowned with heads of wild beasts, their white shields glistening in the sun, and, more terrible than all, of their priestesses, clad in white linen, who prophesied and offered human sacrifices to their gods.

But the sacrifices did not avail against the legions which the great Consul Marius led against them. The ponderous Goth was not yet a match for the finer skill of the Roman, and the invaders were exterminated on the plain near Aix, 102 B.C. The women, in despair, slew first their children, then themselves, a few only surviving to be paraded in chains at the triumph accorded to Marius on his return to Rome. Such

was the first appearance of the Teuton in the Eternal City, and the last until five hundred years later, when the conditions were changed.

CHAPTER II.

At the time of this first invasion the German race was divided into tribes with no affinity for each other, who were indeed much of the time in fierce conflict among themselves. One of these tribes, called the Cherusci, occupied the southern part of what is now Hanover. Their chief, Hermann, had in his youth been taken to Rome as a hostage, and there had been educated.

Hermann was the first to dream of German unity. While the infant Christ was growing into boyhood in Palestine, this Hermann was studying Latin and history at Rome; and as he read he pondered. He found that the Romans had achieved such tremendous power by *combination*. If his people would unite and stand as one nation before the world, why might not they too become great? These Romans were pleasure-loving and vicious. His Germans in their rude homes were just and true. They did not laugh at vice; they were rough, but simple and sincere; love bound the father and mother and children closely together. The idea of German unity took possession of Hermann. He resolved to devote his life to its accomplishment, and to return to his country and try to inspire his race with a sense of common brotherhood, and a comprehensive patriotism.

Julius Cæsar, the great Roman general, was governor of Gaul, and with one eye fixed on Britain and another on Germany was steadily bringing Europe into subjection to Rome.

The task of subduing the stubborn Teutons was given by Augustus to Varus, a trusted general. In the year 9 A.D., Varus had arrived with his great army in the heart of Germany. Little suspecting the plans and purposes surging in the young man's brain, he leaned upon Hermann, whom he had known in Rome, as his guide and counselor in a new and strange land.

Unsuspectingly he marched with his heavily armed legions, as if for a holiday excursion, into the fastnesses of the Teutoberger Forest, into which Hermann led him.

When fairly entangled in the dense wood, surrounded by morasses and wet marshes instead of roads, suddenly there was a thundering war-cry, and barbarians swarmed down upon him from all sides. Hundreds who escaped the rain of arrows were lost in the morasses. It was not a question of victory, but of escape, for the entrapped and heavily armed legions. Only a handful returned to tell the story, and Varus, unable to bear his disgrace, threw himself upon his sword.

The great Emperor Augustus clothed himself in mourning, let his beard and hair grow, and cried in the bitterness of his soul, "Varus, Varus, give me back my legions!"

But Hermann, like many another hero, was not comprehended by the people he wished to inspire. He had arrested the tide of Roman conquest in Germany. How was he rewarded? His people could not understand his dream of unity. Should they be friends with the Cimbri and Suevi, who were their enemies? They suspected his

motives. There were intrigues for his downfall. His adored wife, Thusnelda, and his child were delivered to the Romans and graced a triumph at Rome, and when only thirty-seven years old, the first heroic character in the history of Germany was assassinated by his own people.

Our Saxon ancestors, four centuries later, made the British Isles echo with the songs in which they chanted the praises of this "War Man," this "Man of Hosts," who was the "Deliverer of Germany." Hermann had not consolidated his people, but he had arrested their conquest and subjugation by the Romans. Many, many centuries were to roll away before his dream of unity was to be realized.

What sort of people were these ancient Germans, for whom Hermann hoped so much almost nineteen hundred years ago?

They were pagan barbarians, without one gleam of civilization to illumine the twilight of their existence. They had no art, no literature, nor even an alphabet. They were fierce and cruel; but they had simple, uncorrupted hearts. They were brave, truthful, hospitable, romantic, with instincts singularly just, and a passion for the mysterious realities of an unseen world. War and hunting were their pursuits, the family and domestic ties were strong and abiding, and over all else, religion was supreme.

Like their Scandinavian kinsmen, they worshiped the gods of their ancient Aryan ancestors in sacred groves; and offered sacrifices, sometimes human, to *Wotan*, and *Donar*, or *Thor*, the Thunderer, for whom they named Thursday, Thorsday, or *Donners-tag*, and in honor of one of their goddesses, *Freyja*, another was called Frei-tag, or Friday. The decrees of fate were read in the flights of birds, or heard in the neighing of wild horses, and then interpreted to the people by priestesses, who, clad in snow-white robes, presided also at the terrible sacrifices.

CHAPTER III.

During the three centuries after Hermann had arrested the flood of Roman conquest, a civilization of the simplest sort was slowly developing in Germany, where society was divided into the *free* and the *unfree* classes.

The tribes in the south differed greatly from those in the north. They had no settled homes, nor ownership in land. This was divided among them every year by lot; one-half of the people remaining yearly at home to till the soil, and the other half giving their entire time to the wars which were as perennial as the growing crops of grain.

In the north, however, where lived the ancestors of the Anglo-Saxon race, conditions very different prevailed. There the lands were bestowed in perpetuity upon the most powerful members of the tribes, and by them handed down to their sons. The unfree class tilled the soil, and were thus the serfs of a ruling class, and only freemen could bear arms.

There were no cities in ancient Germany, only villages which were composed of rude huts. A collection of these villages formed a group which was called a *Hundred*. Every Hundred had its chief, who was elected by the people; and the one chosen by the combined will of all these Hundreds was the chief or King of the tribe.

The chiefs of the Hundreds formed a sort of advisory council to the King or tribal chief. But supreme over the will of these chiefs and their King was the will of the people. Every village had its *meetings of the people*, which all freemen were entitled to attend. The real governing power lay in these meetings, to which both chiefs of the Hundreds and the King were compelled to defer.

Was a new King to be elected, or were there grave questions concerning wars to be considered—they were discussed in advance by the chiefs and the King. But the ultimate decision lay with the people themselves; a general meeting of the whole tribe being required to elect a new King; the people clashing their arms in token of approval, or shouting their dissent.

As all freemen bore arms, there was no distinct military organization. Every man held himself ready at any moment to respond to a call, and the army was the people!

About the middle of the third century, numerous small German tribes became united into large confederacies. Conspicuous among these were the Allemani, the Franks, the Saxons, and the Goths.

The Allemani, in the south of Germany, it is said were so called because of the fact that *all men* held the land in common. If this be so, then the French name for Germany is essentially communistic, and it is not strange that communism has always found a congenial soil in that land.

The Franks occupied the banks of the Rhine and of the river Saal. The Saxons were spread over North Germany, and the Goths, on both sides of the river Dnieper, were divided into the Ostro-Goths and the Visi-Goths (or the East and West Goths).

It was these Visigoths under Alaric who inflicted the deadliest blows upon the Roman Empire. The sacking of Rome in 410, and the establishing of a Gothic kingdom in Spain, shook the very foundations of that power. Then the legions could no longer be spared in distant Britain, which was left to its fate. And that fate was of deepest import to us! The Saxons and the Angles overflowed and absorbed the land, and Keltic Britain was Teutonized.

So this untamed and untamable Teuton was being spread, like some coarse but renovating element, over the surface of old Europe. And with the occupation of Gaul by the Franks in 481, and the annexing of France to the Frankish kingdom under Clovis, the process was complete.

I cannot resist the temptation of saying a few words about the Anglo-Saxon occupation of Britain, which, as it virtually converted us from Kelts into Teutons, is not a digression.

From the time of Julius Cæsar the island of Britain had been occupied by the Romans, and in consequence had become partly civilized and Christianized. Upon the fall of the empire, the Roman legions were withdrawn, and the people, left defenseless, became the prey of their own northern barbarians, the Picts and Scots; the drama of Southern Europe and the Goths being re-enacted on a diminished scale. In the fourth century the Britons implored the Angles and Saxons to come and protect them from these savages. Invited as allies, they came as invaders, and remained as conquerors, implanting their habits, speech, and paganism upon the prostrate island. It was the extermination of this exotic paganism which impelled to those deeds of valor recited in the Round Table romances, and which made King Arthur and his knights the theme of poet and minstrel for centuries.

But the Saxon had come to stay, and Teuton and Kelt became merged, much as do the lion and lamb, after the former has dined! The Teutonic Saxon may be said to have dined on the Keltic Briton, and remained master of the island until the Normans came, six centuries later, and in turn dominated, and made him bear the yoke of servitude.

Nor was this French-speaking Norman French at all, except by adoption; being, in fact, the terrible Northman of two centuries before, on account of whose ravages the noble had intrenched himself in his strong castle, and the wretched serf had in mortal terror sold himself and all that he possessed, for the protection of its solid walls and moat; and thus had been laid the foundations of feudalism. He it was who, with longhair reeking with rancid oil, battle-ax, spear, and iron hook—with which to capture human and other prey—had held France in a state of unspeakable terror for centuries, but who had finally settled down as a respectable French citizen in the sea-board province of Normandy, and in two centuries had made such wonderful improvement in manners, apparel, and speech that the simple Saxon baron stood abashed before the splendid refinements of his conquerors.

The origin of this mysterious Northman is unknown; but whatever it was, or whoever he was, he certainly possessed Aryan germs of high potency.

So the Saxon had built the solid walls of the racial structure upon a foundation of Britons; and, though with no thought for beauty, had built well, with strong, true structural lines. It was the Norman who finished and decorated the structure, but he did not alter one of these lines; the speech, traits, institutions, and habits of England being at the core Saxon to-day, while there is a decorative surface only of Norman.

So when the Englishman calls himself, with swelling pride, a Briton, he speaks wide of the mark. The Keltic Briton was buried fathoms deep under seven centuries of Saxon rule, and then, to make the extinction more complete, was overlaid with this brilliant lacquer of Norman surface. And if that mixed product, the English people, have any race paternity, it is Teutonic, and herein may lie the impossibility of making the English and Irish a homogeneous people—the English Teuton and Irish Kelt being in the nature of things antagonistic, the particles refuse to combine chemically, and can only be brought together (to use the language of the chemist) in mechanical mixture.

CHAPTER IV.

Among the German tribes it was the Goths who had first come under the civilizing influence of the Christian religion.

As some winged seed is wafted from a fair garden into a dark, distant forest, and there takes root and blossoms, so was the seed-germ of Christianity caught by the wind of destiny, and carried from Palestine to the heart of pagan Germany, where, strange to say, it found congenial soil.

The story is a romantic one. A Christian boy in Asia Minor, while straying on the shores of the Mediterranean, was captured by some Goths, who took their fair-haired prize home to their own land, and named him Ulfilas.

The boy, with his heart all aflame for the religion in which he had been nurtured, told his captors the story of Calvary—of Christ and his gospel of peace and love; and lived to see the terrible sacrificial altars replaced by the Cross.

The Goths had no alphabet, so Ulfilas invented one, and then translated the Bible into their rude speech. A part of this translation is now preserved in Sweden and is the earliest extant specimen of the Gothic language. This Gothic version of the Lord's Prayer, written by Ulfilas more than fifteen centuries ago, bears such close resemblance to the German and English versions that it can be easily read by us to-day; and makes us realize our own near kinship to those simple barbarians of the fourth century.

In the year 375, thirty-five years before the sacking of Rome, from the vast plains lying between Russia and China there had poured into Europe a terrible race of beings called Huns. They seemed more like demons than men. Insensible alike to fear, to hunger, thirst, or cold, they appeased their ferocious appetites upon wild roots and raw meat. These hideous men ate, drank, and slept on horseback, their no less hideous wives and children following them in wagons, as they ravaged through the Continent of Europe.

The Huns, under the leadership of Attila, swept everything before them; leaving a track of blood and ashes through Germany.

The Goths deserted their lands and homes on account of this brutish invasion and pressed down into Italy and Southern Gaul; the Ostro-Goths (or East Goths) becoming in time masters of Italy under King Theodoric, while the Visigoths (or West Goths), who were already in Southern Gaul, had overflowed the Pyrenees and established a Gothic empire in Spain (or Hispania, as it was then called).

It was not alone the Goths who were swept before Attila and his Hunnish hosts. The Vandals, the Burgundians, the Longobards were carried by the same tide into Southern Europe; the Vandals thence into northern Africa; while the Slavs from the northeast in turn pressed down after them, and, like the waters of the sea, occupied the lands which they had deserted.

So this Hunnish invasion was a tremendous upturning force—in itself bearing no relation to the future result more than the plow to the future grain; but it was a terrible instrument, used in bringing the German race into contact with higher civilizations, where, in the alchemy of time, they were destined to survive not as a nation, but rather as an element, and where, in the great creative processes, they were intended to re-enforce the decaying races of Southern Europe with their rude but uncorrupted vitality.

Of the Huns themselves nothing remained in Europe after the defeat of Attila, excepting in Dacia, over which they had permanently spread, and which was later called Hungary.

During this process of re-creating the old races of Southern Europe, the Roman Empire was perishing. Its conversion to Christianity in the fourth century, under Constantine, was too late to save it. For three hundred years pagan Rome had been drenching the soil of Southern Europe with the blood of Christians. Then this zealous new convert not only espoused the religion of Christ, but determined by her Church Councils what that religion meant and what it did not mean, and made fierce war upon heretics like the Gothic Christians, who knew nothing about these strange doctrines of which Ulfilas had not told them, nor concerning which did their simple Gothic Bible say one word! (A conflict between *Trinitarianism* and *Arianism*.)

The Roman Empire was the "*Holy* Roman Empire," now. When Constantine removed his capital to Byzantium, it required two Emperors, an Eastern and a Western, to govern the crumbling mass. But as the temporal power declined, there was at Rome a new and spiritual kingdom which was expanding and claiming an empire over all Christendom. The Bishops of Rome had become Popes. Gaul or France was now governed by the German Franks. And the Frankish Kings in France, and the Visigoth Kings in Spain, and Christians everywhere must bow to the will of the Pope.

But the Roman Emperors were becoming less and less able to protect their dominions. The Teuton Lombards had overrun Italy, and at last the lowest point of degradation seemed to be reached, when the Imperial Crown at Byzantium was grasped by Irene, who deposed and blinded her own son in order to reach the throne once occupied by Augustus.

Who could be more fit to fill this august position at the head of Christendom than Charlemagne, the great conqueror of men and defender of the Holy Faith?

The coronation of Charlemagne, King of France and Germany, at Rome, in the year 800, was a revolt of the West against the sluggard Emperors at Byzantium; just as his father Pepin's had been, fifty years before, a revolt against the sluggard Kings of France.

Not for 800 years had there been such a commanding personality on the earth; not since Cæsar hurled his legions into Gaul and Britain had there been such a display of

military genius and valor, and perhaps never before such a breadth of intelligence in controlling a vast and heterogeneous empire.

Thenceforth, Charlemagne and his successors (when crowned by the Pope) were the successors of the Cæsars and the temporal heads of the Holy Roman Empire. Excepting in name the once great empire had ceased to be Roman. The rude barbarian race which, in the time of Julius Cæsar, was buried in the forests of Central Europe, was at the head of Christendom; and under Charlemagne, a map of the German Empire was a map of Europe.

Charlemagne acknowledged the Pope who crowned him as his spiritual sovereign, while, on the other hand, the Pope bowed before the Emperor who appointed him as his temporal sovereign. It was a magnificent, all-embracing scheme of empire, of which the spiritual head was at Rome, and the temporal at Aix-la-Chapelle.

It seemed as if, by this dual supremacy, Charlemagne had provided for all possible exigencies of human government. He rested content, no doubt thinking he had embodied a perfect ideal in creating a system which should thus co-ordinate and embrace both the spiritual and temporal needs of an empire. But as soon as his controlling hand was removed unexpected dangers assailed his work.

In less than fifty years from his coronation his three grandsons had quarreled and torn the empire into as many parts. With this event France commenced a separate existence as a kingdom and the Imperial title belonged alone to Germany (treaty of Verdun, 843).

It was the strong, rough arm of the Goth which had hammered in pieces the Roman Empire and brought these tremendous results for the Teuton race; but it was the Frank which had survived as the governing power.

These Franks established a new system of land tenure, which combined the two opposing systems prevailing in North and South Germany. They proclaimed that the land belonged to the Crown. But the Crown, upon certain conditions, bestowed it upon landholders who were called barons. These barons might hold their land from generation to generation, so long as these conditions were fulfilled. They, in like manner, parceled out their lands into farms, which were held by the class below them upon like conditions of submission and fealty to them. The people bound themselves to furnish military service and food, and to work for their barons a specified number of days in the year, and to receive in return a certain protection, and a refuge within the castle of their chief. The baron was responsible to the count who was his superior, and the count to the King.

This was the feudal system, which was a net-work of reciprocal duties. No man, be he peasant or count, could call anything his own unless he discharged his obligations and responsibilities.

The system met great opposition for a time in South Germany; especially from Welf, Count of Bavaria, from whom the historic Guelphs are descended. But it

survived, as we know, increasing in oppressive weight and rigidity, until for centuries it crushed the life out of Europe.

CHAPTER V.

One century after Charlemagne, the kingship of Germany ceased to be hereditary. The great nobles, or vassals as they were called, elected the King, who was crowned at Aix. And then, after the Pope had crowned him at Rome (but not until then), he was also King of Italy and Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

The condition of Germany was at this time very disordered. There were jealousies and conflicts between the various states composing it and incessant incursions from those troublesome neighbors, the Magyars or Hungarians, the Turanian people on their southeast border. This latter led to an important phase in the development of Germany. Henry I., father of King Otto the Great, in 924 offered these Hungarians a large yearly tribute if they would cease to annoy his country. For nine years the tribute was paid. The Germans in the meantime were busily engaged in building fortresses on their frontier, and walled cities throughout the land. These were called *burgs*, and were placed under the command of counts, who were called *Burgraves*.

So, in the tenth year, when the Hungarians insolently demanded their tribute, Henry threw a dead dog at their messengers' feet, and told them that was his tribute in the future.

The Hungarians in a fury poured into Germany. But—lo! instead of collections of helpless villages lying at their mercy, there were walled towns which defied all their efforts to capture, and after some futile attempts the Hungarians troubled Germany no more.

Another important development of this period was an eventful one for Europe. There was a large class of young men, younger sons of nobles, for whom there was no suitable classification. They were proud and by necessity were idle.

This same Saxon King Henry invited these young men to serve the empire in a new and peculiar way. They must be men of honor and truth; they must be devoted and loyal to the Holy Roman Empire; never have injured a weak woman nor run away in battle; they must be gentle and courteous and brave, and faithful to the Church.

The men who could take these oaths and make these pledges were called knights, or *Knechts*, servants of the King. Thus was created the order of knighthood, which quickly spread over Europe.

The great Charlemagne, in accepting the crown of the Holy Roman Empire in 800, unconsciously inflicted a deep injury upon the future Germany. That glittering bauble, the crown of the Cæsars, was very costly, and retarded the development of Germany for centuries.

That country needed all her resources and energies at home, to solidify and develop a great nation during its formative period.

Instead of that, for seven hundred years the ambitions of the Kings of Germany were diverted from what should have been their first care—the unity and prosperity of

their own nation; and were chasing a phantom—the re-establishment of the great old empire, with Rome as its heart and center.

Another mistake made by Charlemagne was far-reaching in its consequences.

He little suspected the nature and the latent power existing in that spiritual kingdom with which he formed so close an alliance. He feared not the Church, but the ambitious and scheming nobles. So, in order to create a friendly bulwark about the throne, he made some of the archbishops and bishops secular princes, and bestowed upon them dominions over which they might reign as sovereigns.

The Church, which had not been growing any too spiritual since it was adopted by Rome, was more and more secularized when it had Primates ravenous for wealth and power.

The Pope and Emperor, instead of close allies as Charlemagne had intended, had finally become jealous and angry rivals. In the open warfare which in time developed two political parties came into being—the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, which represented the adherents of the Pope and the Emperor.

It was a part of the settled policy of the Popes to stir up strife in Italy, and thus, by compelling the Emperor to pour his revenues and his energies into that land, to weaken and undermine him at home.

For the first five hundred years of its existence the Church had been governed by the bishops of Rome. In the next five hundred years these bishops had grown into Popes, who were the spiritual heads of Christendom. As the Church was entering upon its third five-hundred-year lease in the year 1073, the miter was worn by the fiery monk, Hildebrand, who had become Gregory VII. This man resolved to establish the supremacy of the Church over the secular arm of the government. As a weak Emperor wore the Imperial crown, the time was favorable for claiming a religious empire existing by divine right, and superior to the will of kings and emperors.

In the conflict which followed Henry IV. deposed the Pope—this creature of his own appointing, who would override the authority of the power which had created him! And as a counter-move the Pope excommunicated the Emperor.

Had Henry stood his ground as he might, for he would have had ample support from his people, it would have been a gain of centuries for Europe.. But the ban of excommunication, with its attendant horrors here, and still worse hereafter—it was more than he could bear. Affrighted, trembling, penitent, he crossed the Alps in dead of winter, crept to the castle of Canossa, near Parma, where Hildebrand had taken refuge; and there this successor to Charlemagne, this ruler of all Christendom, standing barefoot and clad in sackcloth shirt, humbly begged admittance. The Pope's triumph was complete. So he let him shiver for three days in cold and rain before he opened the gates and gave him forgiveness and the kiss of peace.

The Church had never scored so tremendous a victory. She was supreme over every earthly authority, and the hands on the face of time were set back for centuries. Let Guelph and Ghibelline storm and struggle as they might, there was no question of

supremacy now between temporal and spiritual heads. All the lines of power, all the threads of human destiny led to Rome, and were found at last in the papal hand.

In the three centuries of its existence the empire had been ruled first by Frank, and then by Saxon emperors. But the eventful visit to Canossa led to a new dynasty, the Swabian. When that humiliated monarch, Henry IV., crossed the Alps in midwinter, when Europe's mightiest prince stood woolen-frocked and barefoot upon the snow for three days, humbly entreating forgiveness, there was one knight who attended him with marked fidelity. This was Frederick of Büren, and verily he had his reward! The Emperor created him Duke of Swabia, and bestowed upon him his daughter Agnes as his wife.

The Duke of Swabia then built himself a castle on a high plateau of land called Hohenstaufen. But this fortunate duke had also another great estate called Waiblingen. So he was Frederick of Hohenstaufen, and of Waiblingen as well. The last name had a very conspicuous destiny awaiting it.

The dukes of Bavaria had been a great power in Germany, ever since that first stormy Welf, who tried to put down the new-fangled system of land-tenure which we know as feudalism!

These Welfs were evidently not progressive; they seem in fact to have been the Tories of ancient Germany. And when Conrad, grandson of Frederick, the first Hohenstaufen, was elected King of Germany, there was a very stormy time. The people divided into two factions: the adherents of the new dynasty and the Emperor in the one, and the malcontents who were led by Welf, Duke of Bavaria, in the other. As hostility to the Emperor meant friendship with the Pope, this party of the Welfs was also that of the papal faction.

The tongue of the Italian could not master the two words Welf and Waiblingen; which, as they became fastened upon the two political factions in Italy, were changed to Guelph and Ghibelline.

The Waiblingen family long ago disappeared. But the ancient name of Welf is represented to-day by the gracious Queen of England.

The party of the Guelphs in Germany was that of disaffected dukes and nobles, who from personal or other reasons desired to embarrass the Emperor, even to the extent of an alliance with his enemy the Pope.

The Ghibellines expressed the anti-papal sentiment of the people, among whom there was a growing dread and hatred of Romish power, and the time was approaching when Teutonic patriotism would mean resistance to Italian priestcraft.

While this antagonism was developing, the most stupendous event in all history was taking place in Europe. The Christian conscience—more sensitive than it is to-day—had been roused to a frenzy of indignation by Mahomedan outrages in the Holy Land. That first "European Concert" had been formed to drive the Mahomedan out of the land, where a concert of Europe is striving to keep him undisturbed to-day!

This time of a great religious war was not favorable for an anti-papal policy in Germany. Conrad allowed himself to be swept into the current. He headed a great Crusade in the year 1147.

Not one tithe of his vast host ever reached the Holy Land. They melted like the dew before disease, starvation, and the sword of the Moslems in Asia Minor.

When the despondent Conrad returned to Germany he brought back one lasting memorial of his ill-fated Crusade. He had seen at Constantinople, on the Imperial standard of the Byzantine Emperor, a double-headed eagle. This representation of a double empire he determined to adopt for the emblem of his own, and hence it is that it exists to-day on the Austrian standard, and upon the coins of Germany and Austria.

It was well for Germany that, while she was thus torn and distracted by contending political factions, and while her life blood was being drained into Italy, Frederick I., or Barbarossa (1152), came to hold the reins of government as they had not been held since Charlemagne.

This great Hohenstaufen threw his lion-like weight into the controversy concerning Papal and Imperial supremacy. He spurned the pretensions of the Pope and his encroachments upon secular authority.

He claimed that his office was from God—not from the Pope; and that it was not a whit less sacred than his rival's. To which the Pope replied: "Who was the Frank before Pope Zacharias befriended Pepin? and what is the Teutonic King now, till consecrated by papal hands? What he gives, can he not withdraw?"

But the Imperial power never reached such height as under this imperious, commanding Teuton; who exists now as a half-mythic hero, honored in picture, statue, song, and legend throughout Germany. His reign was a splendid fight against the two antagonists which were finally to be fatal to the Empire—Italian nationality and the Papacy.

The knighthood established by his Saxon predecessor, in 930, had during the Crusades expanded into great orders of chivalry throughout Europe. Frederick Barbarossa fostered and brought the chivalry of Germany to great splendor.

He also brought to an end the long and destructive feud between the Welfs and the Waiblingers, pacifying the former by bestowing upon them the territory of Brunswick; to which fact England owes her present Queen, who is a daughter of the house of Brunswick.

For many centuries the people believed the legend that their hero had not died in Palestine; but they pointed to the mouth of a great cavern on the frowning heights of the Kyfhäuser mountain, where he was said to be surrounded by his knights in an enchanted sleep; waiting the hour when he should awaken and descend with his Crusaders, to bring back a golden age of peace and unity to Germany!

CHAPTER VI.

There are three conditions in national life of which all nations more or less partake. One is where the elements combine with a tendency toward organic development; another, where these elements fall apart with a tendency toward disintegration; and still another, where all processes, constructive and destructive, are arrested as in a crystal. The United States, the Ottoman Empire, and China illustrate these three conditions to-day.

The Teuton, who had been such a powerful element in renovating other European nations, had thus far seemed incapable of consolidating his own national life when left to himself. The tendency was steadily toward disintegration rather than growth.

This was not alone because the strength of the Teutonic kingdom was wasted in pursuit of that glittering toy bestowed by the Pope; but on account of internal strifes and rivalries which employed the hostile schemes of the Roman Pontiff for their own ends and purposes.

The rivalry with the Pope, in itself a destructive element, was made still more destructive when it was thus used by disaffected dukes as a means of annoying and circumventing Emperors whom they disliked.

A Frederick Barbarossa might arrest these processes for a time. But one century later the ruin was complete.

Frederick II., the last of the Hohenstaufens, died, leaving an empty throne and a broken and shattered empire. It was destined to rise again and to wear the name and trappings of its former greatness, but, crippled and degraded, to be in reality a mere shadow and semblance of what it had once aspired to be—the head of the world.

A period of twenty years then followed, known as the "Great Interregnum." A time when there was no King nor Emperor; when robbery and brigandage became the employment of needy knights, and when great barons made war upon and waylaid each other on the highways.

It was a time of strange chaos and darkness. And yet this period, apparently so unfavorable to growth, brought forth two of the most pregnant events in the history of Germany. These were the creation of the Hanseatic League and the birth of German literature. The one laid the foundation of a real national life in which the people should participate; while the other gave expression to the romantic ideals of a hitherto silent race.

The great German epic, which is the Iliad of the Middle Ages, was produced at this darkest hour in the history of Germany. The Nibelungen Lied deals with the colossal crimes, loves, and sorrows of Burgundian kings and princesses at the time of the Hunnish invasion. And it has been the good fortune of Germany, six hundred years later, to have a son (Richard Wagner) who has clothed that great epic in music which matches it in heroic dignity and splendor.

The other event was of deeper import than this. The burgs, or cities, which were created as a defense against the Hungarians, had become busy centers of manufacture and trade, and to some extent of learning. Many of them had been made free cities. That is, they were under the direct control of the Emperors instead of the hereditary nobles as at first. These cities enjoyed especial privileges and immunities which drew to them population and prosperity. The true policy for German Emperors, harassed by Italian intrigues and at war with their own archbishops and disaffected nobles, would have been to form close alliance with these free cities, and make friends of their burghers and guilds.

When there was no king, no ruler in the land, when robbery ran riot so that traveling was impossible, two cities, Hamburg and Lubeck, agreed together to keep order in their neighborhood. Then Brunswick and Bremen joined; and at last over a hundred towns had combined together in what was called the "Hanseatic League."

This Confederacy became the mightiest power in the North of Europe; and at one time even threatened the overthrow of feudalism, and to convert West Germany into a federation of free municipalities.

When trades increased in the cities, each trade managed its own affairs by an organization called a *guild*. The guilds in the course of time obtained a share in the government of the towns; and it was the regenerating power of these guilds which brought about this great movement. With their simple ideals of truth, sincerity, and justice, they were the storehouses of that power which is the real life of a nation. As well expect a tree to flourish when its sap is not permitted to rise, or a man to be well when the blood is obstructed in his veins, as to look for healthful growth and expansion in a nation from which the life of its common people is excluded!

Among these early guilds, that of the Meistersingers, which was chartered in 1340, was of vast importance in the development of the German people.

It was composed of artisans and governed by the strict, pedantic rules then existing in the arts of musical and literary composition.

The prizes did not confer as great an honor as those bestowed at Olympia two thousand years before, but they were sought with an intense enthusiasm.

The soul of the Teuton was by nature set to music. For him that art was not a luxury reserved for the rich and cultured, but the daily food which nourished the life of the most untutored. Within this musical and literary guild the two arts of music and poetry for centuries existed in their most elementary form, and were the soil out of which later came such marvelous blossom and fruit.

CHAPTER VII.

Germany, which had always been a loosely compacted mass, was at the close of the Hohenstaufen dynasty composed of 60 independent cities, 116 priestly rulers, and 100 reigning dukes, princes, counts, and barons, always rivals and usually at war with each other, in perpetually changing combinations for attack or defense.

Lying beneath this body of small and struggling sovereigns was a people in whom was the first dawning consciousness of human rights; which consciousness was gradually extending to that helpless mass underlying the whole—the peasantry.

In 1273 the German princes succeeded in electing an Emperor; and the Great Interregnum was over.

It is a curious fact that the two names *Hapsburg* and *Hohenzollern* should have appeared simultaneously in German history. Rudolf, Count of Hapsburg, through the influence of his brother-in-law Frederick of Hohenzollern, Count of Nuremburg, was chosen to fill the vacant throne. It was during the reign of Albert, son of this first Hapsburg, that the Swiss first revolted against imperial authority.

Gessler, who had been sent by Albert to subdue the refractory Alpine shepherds, so exasperated them by his atrocities that he was shot by William Tell. It was a long way from Tell to Swiss freedom and independence. But the people from that hour never wavered in their determination not to be serfs to the house of Hapsburg.

The Hanseatic League in North Germany, and the invincibly free spirit in Switzerland, were the two things of deepest significance at this time of political chaos.

Side by side with this assertion of political rights, there had commenced a general intellectual awakening. The Bishop of Ratisbon, Albertus Magnus, was so learned in mathematics and in science that people believed he was a sorcerer.[1] Godfrey of Strasburg had written an epic poem about King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Wolfram of Eschenbach had told of the Holy Grail in his Parsifal; and a learned history of Denmark had been written, without which our own literature would have suffered immeasurable loss, for in it Shakspeare found the story of Hamlet!

It was at this time (1356) that the famous "Golden Bull" was issued, a new electoral system, which reduced the number of electors to seven.

The idea was that as the sun and the seven planets illumined our heavens, so that great luminary, the German Emperor, should be the center of a political system composed of seven Electors.

These earthly luminaries, whose duty it was to elect a new Emperor, were the Archbishops of Mainz, Cologne, and Trèves, and the temporal princes of Bohemia, Brandenburg, Saxony, and the Palatine of the Rhine.

The very first act of these seven wise men was to place upon the throne Wenceslas, a brutal madman, who might better have been confined as a maniac.

It was during the reign of his brother and successor Sigismund that the burning of John Huss lighted the conflagration in Bohemia known as the Hussite War.

John Huss, a professor of the University of Prague, had dared to raise his voice against the temporal enrichment of a church whose Founder had not where to lay his head, and who had put behind him the kingdoms of this earth, when offered to him by Satan!

Huss, for this offense, came under the displeasure of the bishops. Charges were brought against him that he had maintained the existence of four Gods, and he was condemned and burnt (1415).

The Hussite war had none of the reforming purpose which led to the martyrdom they wished to avenge. It was a mad strife, beginning over some detail of the Communion Service, and ending in a war between Bohemian and German, in which for nearly twenty years the country ran with blood.

At this period an event occurred of trifling significance then, but of profound importance to future Germany.

In 1411 the Emperor borrowed one hundred thousand florins of Frederick of Hohenzollern, the Burgrave, or "Count of the Castle," of Nuremburg, direct descendant from that first Hohenzollern who helped to found the Hapsburg dynasty. For this loan Sigismund gave his creditor a mortgage on the territory of Brandenburg. Frederick at once took up his residence there, and subsequently made an offer of three hundred thousand gold florins more to purchase the territory. The Emperor accepted the terms, so the then small state was thereafter the home of the Hohenzollerns, and was on its way to become Prussia.

Sigismund and his brother Wenceslas belonged to another dynasty, that of Luxemburg. But after the death of the former, in 1440, the Hapsburgs succeeded again to the crown, which they wore until it was taken off at the bidding of Napoleon in 1806.

Just before the issuance of the Golden Bull, there had occurred that most revolutionary event, the discovery of gunpowder. When a man in leathern jacket could do more than a knight in armor, when safety depended upon quickness and lightness, and ponderous iron and steel were fatal—then a momentous change in conditions was at hand! The destruction of feudalism was involved in this discovery of 1344.

Under Frederick III., that Hapsburg who came to the throne in 1440, the Empire seemed to have reached a climax of disorder. Old things were passing away, and the new had not yet come to take their place.

On the eastern shore of the Baltic the march of German civilization had received an almost fatal check. The "German Order," an organization of knights intended to keep back the Slavonic tide, had failed to do so. Holland was becoming estranged from the German Empire. France had obtained possession of Flanders. Luxemburg, Lorraine, and Burgundy were becoming practically independent; while it began to seem as if Switzerland were forever lost to Germany.

And now the Hungarians were setting up their new king, the valiant Hunyadi; and the Bohemians theirs, George of Podjebrod. Not only were these kingdoms and

principalities slipping away, but the peasants in the cantons of the Alps, and elsewhere in revolt, were some of them led by great nobles.

Still another, and perhaps the gravest of all these dangers, was one which yet darkens our horizon in this closing nineteenth century!

In the year 1250 the Turks had commenced their existence in Asia Minor, with one little clan, led by one obscure chieftain. This clan had grown as if by miracle into a great empire in the East, rivaling in power that of the Saracens, whose successors they were as the head of the Mahomedan Empire. The Turks had been steadily encroaching upon Germany; had made havoc in Hungary; had devastated Austria, and were now insolently pressing on toward their goal, the Imperial palace at Vienna.

While the incompetent and drowsy Emperor Frederick III. was helplessly viewing these stupendous overturnings, there occurred that other event, as important in the empire of thought as the invention of gunpowder had been in that of political institutions.

The invention of printing (1450),—that art preservative of all arts,—was the greatest step yet taken in the emancipation of the human mind.

The poor inventor was, after the manner of inventors, badly treated. John Fust, on account of Gutenberg's inability to pay back the money he had loaned him for his experiment, seized the printing press, and himself proceeded to finish printing the Bible.

The rapidity with which the copies were produced, and their precise resemblance to each other, created such astonishment that a report spread that Fust had sold himself to the devil, with whom he was in league.

This, together with the identity of names, led Victor Hugo, Klinger, and other writers to confuse John Fust, the practicer of the Black Art in mediæval times, with John Fust the printer. And as the original Fust had come to stand for the emancipation of the human intellect through free learning, and as printing was above all else the means for such emancipation, the coincidence, if such it be, was, to say the least, remarkable!

When we approach the time of Isabella of Castile and of Columbus, and when we are confronted with that familiar specter, the Turk, in Southeastern Europe, we feel that we are in sight of the lights on familiar headlands, and are not far from port. We are not very near to that haven, but we are passing the line which divides the old from the new.

[1] See chart of Civilization in Six Centuries, "Who, When, and What."

CHAPTER VIII.

It was not alone in Germany that the old was vanishing. The movement in that country was part of a general condition prevailing in England, France, and Spain; all with the same tendency—the passing of the power from many small despotisms to one greater one. It was an advance, although a slow one, in the path of progress. Feudalism—that newfangled system which had so tried the soul of Duke Welf in the ninth century—was dissolving.

In England the war with France, and the War of the Roses, by impoverishing the nobles had broken their remaining authority, and that system which had been gradually perishing since the Conquest was virtually dead.

In France Louis XI. had cunningly conceived the idea of recovering the power of the throne by an apparent friendship with the people; and a combination was thus formed against which a decrepit feudalism could not long stand.

In Spain the smaller kingdoms had at last been merged into two larger ones, and by the union of Castile and Aragon under Ferdinand and Isabella, and the expulsion of the Moors which quickly followed that event, that country was at last consolidated into one kingdom—in which feudalism no longer existed as a disturbing power.

In northern Italy also, among that brilliant group of small republics, there was this same centralizing tendency at work. Florence had passed into the strong keeping of the Medici (1434), while Genoa and most of the Lombard republics were gravitating toward the control of Milan.

It was at this period that there were for the first time formed those combinations and alliances between the nations of Europe which led finally to a system existing for the preservation of the *balance of power*. In fact, after the various monarchies had assumed these firmer and more definite outlines, there began a process of weaving them together into a larger whole; and the threads used in this process are known as *European diplomacy*, which, as we have recently seen, is stronger than individual sovereigns!

It was perfectly in keeping with the spirit of the fifteenth century that the Imperial throne of Germany should be occupied, at this time of centralizing tendencies, by a man determined not alone to reign but to rule.

Maximilian I., son of the sleepy Frederick III., was chosen by the electors in 1486. He was full of energy, intelligence, and heart, and was, besides, the handsomest prince in Europe, and his wife, Mary of Burgundy, was the fairest of princesses.

The people, weary of disorder and insecurity, were glad to feel the touch of a strong hand. Maximilian firmly planted the foundations of the house of Hapsburg. From that time the choice of the Electors was merely a formal recognition of the hereditary rights of that family.

This prince, standing on the dividing line between the old and new, possessed the qualities of both. He was stately, brave, and chivalric, and at the same time educated

according to the highest standards of his time, devoted to literature, art, and poetry, and with comprehensive and progressive plans for his kingdom. He had a sincere desire to reform abuses. He introduced into Germany the post office, and the system for the conveyance of letters, throughout two thousand independent territories!

The Turks were advancing on the east, the French King was harassing him on the west, and the Pope always trying to embroil him with other kingdoms and to drain his Empire. His was not an easy task.

He was not a Charlemagne nor a Frederick Barbarossa, but he infused strength and a power of resistance into Germany at a period of extreme weakness, and he reunited to the house of Hapsburg the kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia.

There was evidence that the long thraldom to Rome was passing away, in the fact that Maximilian assumed Imperial authority without receiving the crown from papal hands; his father Frederick having been the last Emperor who made pilgrimage to Rome for that purpose (in 1452).

When Maximilian came to the throne in 1493 an event of transcendent importance had just occurred. Europe had learned with amazement that when the sun disappeared in that mysterious Western Ocean, it passed on to shine upon other lands beyond—lands teeming with life and riches.

The most fascinating field for adventure the world had ever known was suddenly opened to Europe, and the magnet of boundless wealth was transferred from the East to the West. A stream of adventurous and rapacious men, from all the lands excepting Germany, was moving toward the setting sun.

Spain, only recently obscure, poor and struggling to free her land from an alien race, suddenly found herself mistress of her own territory, consolidated, and with an empire and resources in the West, practically boundless.

The good Queen Isabella, who had been the instrumentality in bringing about these changes for her country, had the satisfaction of seeing her kingdom at one bound take its place in the first rank among the nations of Europe.

Her chief care now was to make alliances for her children suited to this new position. She and Ferdinand aimed high. They secured the daughter of Maximilian, Emperor of Germany, for their son, who was heir to the crown of Spain; but the hopes from this union were quickly blighted, as the young prince suddenly died during the wedding festivities. Then another marriage was arranged for their oldest daughter Joanna with Philip, Maximilian's son, who was also heir to the Imperial throne.

But Isabella's sorrows matched her triumphs and successes in magnitude. Joanna became hopelessly insane. Another daughter, who married the King of Portugal, was buried in the same grave with the infant who was expected to unite the crowns of Spain and Portugal, while for her youngest child Katharine was reserved the unhappy fate of becoming the wife of Henry VIII. of England.

It is sad to remember that this admirable woman, in her intense desire to drive heretic Jews out of her country, was prevailed upon, by her confessor Torquemada, to

establish the Inquisition in Spain. Believing as she devoutly did that heresy meant eternal death, and little suspecting the engine for cruelty it was to become, this kindest and best of women may be forgiven for this fatal mistake.

Overwhelmed by private griefs and sorrows, Isabella died in 1506, leaving her crazed daughter Joanna a widow, with two sons, the elder six years old. She would have been consoled could she have known that, in thirteen years from that time, this grandson would wear not alone the crown of Spain, but the great Imperial crown of Germany, and would be lord of a greater empire, and wield more power, than any living sovereign.

CHAPTER IX.

The period of Maximilian's reign was a bridge which spanned two colossal events: the discovery of America and the Reformation. When this Emperor died in 1517, a greater work was at hand than any he or his predecessors had ever accomplished, and the humble man who was to be its instrument was destined to become a power above all princes, and to shake the Church of Rome to its foundation after an undisturbed reign of a thousand years.

The Reformation had long been preparing in the hearts of the people. The persecutions of the Albigenses in France, the Waldenses in Savoy, and the burning of Huss and of Jerome, had all come from the growing conviction that the Bible was the only true source of Christian truth and doctrine.

The art of printing had made this well of pure truth accessible to all, and there was a deep though unspoken belief in the hearts and minds of the people that a church grasping at secular power and riches had wandered far from the simple teachings of its Founder.

These smoldering fires were very near to the surface when Maximilian died. Charles, his grandson, was then King of Spain. The ambitious Francis I. of France struggled hard for the crown laid down by the Emperor, but, in 1519, it was placed upon the head of his rival, and Charles V. was the first of whom it could be said that the sun never set upon his dominions.

At this most critical moment in the history of the world, the fate of Europe was in the hands of three men: Charles V., Emperor of Germany; Francis I., King of France, and Henry VIII., King of England.

Charles, half Fleming and half Spaniard, had the grasping acquisitiveness of the one nation, and the proud, fanatical cruelty of the other. Small of stature, plain in feature, sedate, quiet, crafty, he was playing a desperate game with Francis I. for supremacy in Europe.

Francis, handsome as an Apollo, accomplished, fascinating, profligate, was fully his match in ambition. Covering his worst qualities with a gorgeous mantle of generosity and chivalrous sense of honor, he was the insidious corrupter of morals in France, creating a sentiment which laughed at virtue and innocence as qualities belonging to a lower class of society.

Each of these men was striving to enlist Henry VIII. upon his side, by appealing to the cruel caprices of that vain, ostentatious, arrogant King, who in turn tried to use them for the furthering of his own desires and purposes.

It was a sort of triangular game between the three monarchs—a game full of finesse and far-reaching designs. If Charles attacked Francis, Henry attacked Charles, while the astute Charles, knowing well the desire of the English King to repudiate Katharine and make Anne Boleyn his queen, whispered seductive promises of the papal chair to Wolsey, who was in turn to establish his own influence over his royal

master by bringing about the marriage with Anne, upon which the King's heart was set, and then be rewarded by securing Henry's promise of neutrality for Charles, in his designs of overreaching Francis—and, after that, the road to Rome for the aspiring cardinal would be a straight one!

It was an intricate diplomatic net-work, in which the thread of Henry's desire for the fair Anne was mingled with Wolsey's desire for preferment, and both interlaced with the ambitious, far-reaching purposes of the other two monarchs.

All these events were very absorbing, and while they were splendidly gilding the surface of Europe in the first half of the sixteenth century, it seemed a small matter that an obscure monk was denouncing the Pope and defying the power of the Catholic Church. Little did Charles suspect that, when his victories and edicts were forgotten, the words of the insolent heretic would still be echoing down the ages.

A few years later, and the Apollo-like beauty and false heart of Francis I. were dissolving in the grave; Henry VIII. had gone to another world, to meet his reward—and his wives; and Charles V. was sadly counting his beads in the monastery of St. Jerome, at Juste, reflecting upon the vanity of human ambitions. But the murmur of protest from the unknown monk had become a roar—the rivulet had swollen into a threatening torrent. As it is the invisible forces that are the most powerful in nature, so it is the obscure and least observed events that have accomplished the most tremendous revolutions in human affairs.

But before all this had happened, in the year 1517, when it had not yet occurred to Henry's sensitive conscience that his marriage with Katharine, his brother's widow, was illegal, and while Charles V., that sedate young man, who "looked so modest and soared so high," was quietly revolving plans for the extension of his empire, Pope Leo X., the pious Vicar of Christ upon earth, and elegant patron of Michael Angelo and Raphael, found his income all too small for his magnificent tastes. It does not seem to have occurred to him that his tastes were too costly for his income; he simply recognized that something must be done, and at once, to fill his empty purse. But what should it be? A simple and ingenious expedient solved the perplexing problem. He would issue a proclamation to his "loving, faithful children," that he would grant absolution for all sorts of crimes, the prices graduated to suit the enormity of the offense. We have not seen the proclamation, but doubt not it was in most caressing Latin, for can anything exceed the velvety softness of the gloves worn on the hands which have signed papal decrees?

Simple lying and slander were cheap; perjury and sins against chastity more costly; while the use of the stiletto, of poison, and the hired assassin could be enjoyed only by the richest. It worked well. In the hopeful words of a pious dignitary, "as soon as the money chinks in the coffer, the soul springs out of purgatory." Who could resist such promise? Money flowed in swollen streams into the thirsty coffers, many even paying in advance for crimes they intended to commit!

Martin Luther was the one man who dared to stand up and denounce this tax upon crime, this papal trade in vice. The people had at last found a voice and a leader.

Protestantism, which had long been maturing in silence and in darkness, sprang full-armed into existence, and was the first thing to confront Charles when he assumed the Imperial crown.

He, no doubt, thought that he would soon be able to dispose of the new heresy, as had his royal father and mother in Spain disposed of heretic Jews a few years before. But this new specter of Protestantism would not down!

When Charles called together an assembly of states (or Diet) at Worms, in 1521, he supposed he was going to deal with one obscure monk, leading an obscure movement. But it assumed quite a different aspect when Luther, the culprit, was sustained by two great electors and many princes of his realm; and when a long list of grievances against the Papacy was formally presented by several states, which he was firmly told he would be required to redress!

The princes were in earnest. They began to seize church property, to send monks and nuns adrift, and to make free with gold and silver vessels and treasure belonging to the Church.

This time of confusion was used by one ambitious ruler for his own ends. The German, or Teutonic, order was a knightly organization created expressly to hold the frontier against the Slavonic people. After the year 1230 this order held Prussia, which they ruled like princes. The Margrave of Brandenburg, who was at the time of the Reformation Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights, realized his opportunity in the existing disorder. He made himself sovereign over Prussia, and annexed the possessions of the Teutonic order to his family.

But it was not alone the princes who saw their opportunity in this time of overturning. The wrongs of the peasants were very real and very grievous, and of long, long standing. The entire burden of taxation rested on them—the archbishops and the nobles and the *gentlemen* all being exempt!

When the Reformation began the *bauer*, or peasantry, believed that their hope lay in the abolishing of Catholicism and of the feudal system.

It takes a very small spark to fire a train of gunpowder. When the Countess of Lüpfen ordered the peasants on her estate to spend their Sundays in picking strawberries and gathering snail shells for pincushions, she dropped such a spark! They refused, and the revolt spread, gathering in fury as it moved like a cyclone through the German states. All throughout Germany there are to be seen, to-day, ruined castles which tell the story of this "Peasants' War" (1525). Hideous atrocities were committed, and, as has so often happened, the cause of a people whose grievances were real and heartrending was so stained with crime that sympathy with and pity for their sufferings were obliterated. Even Luther—whose followers they claimed to be—said of them, "they should be treated as a man would treat a mad dog."

The bold stand taken by Luther against this rebellion strengthened him with the princes. Not only Saxony, Hesse, and Brunswick and many free cities, but the Augustine order of monks, a part of the Franciscans, and a number of priests had embraced the new doctrine contained in the "Augsburg Confession," the creed or summary of belief which was prepared by Luther's friend, Philip Melancthon.

The principles asserted in this were that men are justified by faith alone; that an assembly of believers constitutes a Church; that monastic vows, invocation of saints, fasting, celibacy, etc., are useless.

Such were the chief points in the celebrated "Confession," which was signed by the Protestant cities and princes in 1530.

So while Charles was engaged in his great game of finesse with Francis I. and Henry VIII. for preponderance in Europe—while the Turks were pressing toward Vienna on the east, and the French into Flanders on the west, and while the Pope, who should have been his ally, jealous of his power was circumventing and weakening him so far as he could, worse than all else, the foundations of the Protestant Church were being permanently laid in Germany.

The two great aims of the Emperor were to restore papal supremacy over Christendom and firmly to unite Germany and Spain. But how could he do the one, when at the hour of a great schism in the Church, a jealous Pope was trying to weaken his hands? Or the other, when Germany was always suspicious of him because he was a Spaniard, and Spain because he was a Hapsburg?

Charles was profound in his methods, crafty and powerful; but circumstances were stronger than he. In order to succeed at one point, he had to weaken himself at another. He could do nothing in repelling the Turks or the French, unless aided by the Protestant states. And these states would only give assistance in exchange for concessions to their cause, while Francis I., as crafty as he, found a sure way to circumvent his rival in giving aid to the Protestants.

The new faith was spreading not only in Germany, but in Denmark, Sweden, and England. The movement in Switzerland diverged somewhat in character under Zwingli, another Reformer, and the new Protestantism began to have its own schismatics.

Calvin in Geneva rejected Luther's doctrine of *justification by faith*, and for it substituted that of *election*. The doctrine that men were predestined to heaven or hell was thereafter held by that branch of the Church known as Reformers, as distinguished from the Lutherans, while from the *protest* of Saxony, Brandenburg, Brunswick, Hesse, and fifteen imperial cities against the decree outlawing Luther and his doctrines, the name Protestants took its rise, which included Lutherans and Reformers alike.

The famous Schmalkaldian League was so called from the little Hessian town where the Protestant princes assembled in 1530 and made a solemn promise of mutual support against the Emperor; when they also entered into a secret treaty with Francis

I., and received promises of support from the Kings of England, Sweden, and Denmark.

In 1540 the strength of the Catholics had been re-enforced by the order of Jesuits, which was founded by Ignatius Loyola. This order made the suppression of Protestant doctrines its chief task.

Meyerbeer has, by his great opera, made so famous the strange tragedy enacted at Münster in 1534 that it must have brief mention, although it was only a bit of driftwood in the great current of events. A religious sect called the Anabaptists was led by a Dutch tailor, John of Leyden, who claimed to be inspired. The chief things he was inspired to do were to crown himself king, to introduce polygamy, and to cut off the heads of all who resisted his decrees! For more than a year the city was held by this madman and his associates; and then the tragedy was concluded by the torturing to death of the tailor-king and his chief abettors; their bodies being left suspended in iron cages over the Cathedral door at Münster. This grewsome story is the one used by Meyerbeer in his opera of "Le Prophète."

In 1552 Charles saw his ambitious plans for the government of the world failing at every point. By the treaty of Passau, religious freedom had been conceded to the Protestants; and while his army was needed to fight the Turks in Hungary, Henry II. of France (who had succeeded Francis I., 1547), in league with the Protestant states, was invading Lorraine.

Sick at heart and failing in health, the weary Emperor (1556) resolved to lay down the heavy crown he had worn for thirty-six years.

To his son Philip II. he gave the Netherlands, Naples, Spain, and the American Colonies, while the Imperial title, and the German-Austrian lands passed to his brother Ferdinand I.

The singular cause of his death, two years later, makes us wonder whether his unfortunate mother Joanna could have transmitted to her son the insanity which darkened her own life.

At the monastery at St. Juste to which the Imperial monk had retired after his abdication, he yielded to a morbid whim to rehearse his own funeral. The grave-clothes were damp. He was seized with a chill, and after a brief illness died (1558).

Charles had been thwarted in his two great aims of establishing the supremacy of his Church, and the permanent union of Germany and Spain. But perhaps his bitterest disappointment was in not being permitted to leave the Imperial crown to his son Philip.

His brother Ferdinand, although firmly Catholic, was a just and moderate prince, who had always favored conciliatory measures to the Protestants while the course of Philip II., in the Netherlands, soon showed how heavily his hand would have rested upon Germany. He appointed the Duke of Alva Spanish governor in that unfortunate territory. Never had cruel king more cruel agent in carrying out his policy. Torture,

fire, and sword were the instruments intended to subjugate, but which in the end brought about the independence of Holland.

The prelates of the Church in 1543 had come together in what was called the "Council of Trent," with the avowed object of reforming abuses which had crept into the Church. The real purpose, however, was to examine the foundations of that venerable structure, to discover where it had been injured in the assaults made upon it since 1517, and to strengthen it where it seemed to need new supports.

In 1563, after eighteen years' deliberation, the work of this Council was finished. The cardinal doctrines of purgatory, absolution, celibacy, invocation of saints, censorship of press, etc., etc., were reaffirmed, and terrible anathemas pronounced against such as should reject them.

Thus was created a chasm which nothing could ever bridge, eternally dividing the old religion from the new.

Another tremendously re-enforcing agent was at work in Loyola's Society of Jesus, which was to be to the Church what the brain is to the human body. In 1540 Loyola's ten disciples received the papal blessing. In 1600 there were ten million Jesuits, and in 1700 twenty millions!

CHAPTER X.

It was the invincible march of Protestantism in the land of its birth which brought about this buttressing of the old belief and this adopting of fresh methods for its efficiency.

When Ferdinand died in 1564 the great majority of the German people had become Protestants. The Empire was honeycombed with the new faith. Even in Austria, that everlasting stronghold of Papacy, the Catholics were in a minority. True to the traditions of the past, Bavaria, the home of the ancient Welfs, was the one thoroughly zealous and obedient champion of the Pope in all Germany.

It seemed as if the great conflict was almost over. But it had not even commenced!

The history of this great movement would have been very different, had it been carried on steadily under one leader. But it had four! Those devout souls who believed they had found in the simple gospel truths of Protestantism a religion in which all might unite were soon convinced of their mistake.

Lulled by the apparent triumph of the new faith, reformers set about the task of defining the belief and correcting the errors of Protestant doctrine. To the followers of Calvin the belief of the Lutherans became almost as abhorrent as Papacy itself, while the Lutherans were again subdivided into an extreme and a moderate party; the one following to the letter the doctrines of Luther, and the other the more modified views of Melancthon. Not only men but states were divided and in bitter strife over these differences, so that the Emperor Ferdinand had said, "Instead of being of one mind they are so disunited, have so many different beliefs, the God of truth surely cannot be with them!"

It is apparent now that the issue underlying all this upheaval was deeper than anyone then knew. The real struggle was not for the supremacy of Romanist or Protestant; not to determine whether this dogma or that was true and should prevail, but to establish the right of every human soul to choose its own faith and form of worship. The great battle for human liberty had commenced, and the Romish Church had been shaken to its foundations not because its doctrine was false, but because it was a *despotism*!

From the abdication of Charles V. to 1600 was a period of political tranquillity in Germany. The reign of two conciliatory sovereigns, Ferdinand I., and his son Maximilian II., tended to produce a surface-calm, which, although ruffled, was not broken by the stern and despotic reign of Rudolf II., who succeeded in 1576.

It was a half century of unfruitful and sullen waiting—waiting for a future which no one could divine. Protestantism was not blossoming; but the seed was germinating amid elements good and evil, strangely mingled together.

While the Reformation was the leading fact in Europe at this period, another event had created a new and pervading atmosphere, in which all else existed. The

impulse given to civilization by the taking of Constantinople by the Turks (1452), and the consequent disseminating of Greek culture throughout Europe, was a transforming event in the history of civilization. Literature, art, music, took on new forms and thrilled with a new life. The activity of the human mind manifested itself in everything. It was an age of great men and great things. Copernicus, followed by Tycho Brahe, Galileo, and Kepler, brought order into the heavens. The Medici in Italy, who were guiding these new and enriching streams which had set in from the East, helped to produce a wonderful art period, which swept in successive tides over Europe. Fainting and sculpture reached their climacteric. Music, still in its infancy, developed into the new forms of opera and oratorio.[1] And while these things were happening, a mysteriously inspired man—seeming to hold as in a crucible the wisdom distilled from all ages and all human experiences—was writing immortal plays in England!

The Teuton race does not take on the graces of life very quickly. The serious and sincere German mind must inspect the idea first, and then become thoroughly imbued with it, before the hand will act! But when the Teuton roots do begin to draw upon the soil, they strike deep and hold firmly, and know just what they are going to do with the rising sap; concerning themselves much more about that than the foolish branches and leaves!

So this new light did not at once flood Germany, but its influence was felt there. Thought was quickened, knowledge increased, art and science began to flourish, wealth accumulated, and the people became less simple and more luxurious in their ways of living. The King of Spain was occupied in his hopeless attempt to subdue the Netherlands, and Hungary and Austria were still struggling with the Turkish invasion.

Such was the condition at the beginning of the seventeenth century. In spite of the material advance there was a feeling of impending misfortune. But the magnitude of the coming disaster none then could have imagined or dreamed.

The fatal circumstance was that the Protestants were divided into two angry and hostile camps, at the very time when the Catholics, under the teachings of the Jesuits, were uniting with solid front against them. The Thirty Years' War would never have been undertaken against a united adversary who held four-fifths of Germany!

During the despotic reign of Rudolf II. the Protestants for their protection formed a Union with the Elector Palatine Frederick at its head. Thereupon the Catholic princes also united in a *Catholic League* under Maximilian of Bavaria. The forces were now gathering for the great explosion. Matthias had succeeded his brother Rudolf as Emperor.

When a great storm is impending, it takes only a trifling disturbance in equilibrium to precipitate it.

Such a disturbance occurred in Prague (1618) over a church which the Protestants were erecting. An angry mob armed itself, burst into the Imperial Castle at Prague, and flung out of the window two Catholic Bohemian nobles.

With this act of violence commenced the Thirty Years' War, which lasted through three reigns, those of Matthias, Ferdinand II., and Ferdinand III., and caused unparalleled misery in Germany.

Two years from that day the Protestant faith was obliterated in the realm of Austria, and the progress of a hundred years was wiped out. In three years more, not only Austria, but Germany, was in a worse condition than she had known for centuries—the wretched people, a prey to both parties, were slaughtered, robbed, driven hither and thither, and a country only recently rejoicing in its material prosperity was a waste and a ruin.

The Imperial troops were splendidly led by two great generals—Tilly and Wallenstein. The Protestant nations—England, Holland, Denmark, and Sweden—looked on in dismay as they saw a powerful and triumphant Protestantism being wiped out of existence in the land of its birth.

By 1629 Ferdinand II. considered his power re-established absolutely over all Germany. He issued what was called the "Edict of Restitution," which ordered the restoration of all Protestant territory to Catholic hands. Wallenstein, in addition to this, declared that reigning princes and a national diet should be abolished and all power centered in the Emperor! Indeed this Wallenstein was minded to play the dictator as well as general. He traveled in regal state, with his one hundred carriages, one thousand horses, fifteen cooks, and fifteen young nobles for his pages!

This taste for splendor was, like Wolsey's, his undoing. People began to fear the ambitious leader, and Ferdinand dismissed him. With rage and hate in his heart he retired to Prague to await developments.

Twelve years of war in horrible form had wrought utter ruin and broken the spirit of the Protestants. But help and hope suddenly came in 1630.

Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, with his heart all aflame with zeal to defend the falling cause of Protestantism in Germany, is the knightliest figure which adorns the pages of history.

We in this present age have reached a point of development when, without the quivering of an eyelash, we can hear of the destruction of suffering peoples, even if it involves the principles and things most sacred to us. Whether it be the effacing of Christianity in Crete, or of liberty in Cuba, the motto of practical men and nations is—"hands off."

Gustavus Adolphus had not learned that potent phrase. He was still in that undeveloped condition when the elemental impulses of the heart sway men's action. And without a regret, without an enfeebling doubt, he could turn his back upon a throne and an adoring people, in defense of an imperiled Protestantism in another land.

From the moment his foot touched the soil of Germany on that 4th of July, 1630, life and hope revived. The Emperor Ferdinand laughed and called him the "Snow King," who would melt away after one winter. But when one city after another was

stormed and taken, when he left behind him a path of religious liberty and rejoicing—when Tilly was no longer able to cope with this Snow King and Wallenstein had to be recalled, and when it looked as if the work of twelve years might be undone, then Ferdinand no longer laughed!

Wallenstein would only return upon conditions which actually made him the lord and Ferdinand the subject. Having thus become absolute master of the Imperial cause, he confidently set about the task of defeating Gustavus.

The Queen of Sweden had joined her husband in Germany. On the 27th of October, 1632, he took leave of her. As he passed through the country, the people fell on their knees, kissing his garments, calling him Deliverer. He exclaimed, "I pray that the wrath of the Almighty may not be visited upon me, on account of this idolatry toward a weak and sinful mortal."

Before the great conflict began he made an address to his Swedes, and then the whole army united in singing Luther's grand hymn, "A tower of strength is our Lord!"

For hours the battle raged furiously, and while the issue was trembling in the balance, the sight of the riderless horse of the Swedish King, covered with blood and wildly galloping to and fro, told the awful story. The terrified animal had carried him with a shattered arm right into the enemy's ranks, where he was instantly shot.

While Wallenstein was retreating to Leipzig, the body of this most royal of kings was lying under a heap of dead, so mutilated by the hoofs of horses as to be almost unrecognizable.

The Protestant cause had lost its soul and inspiration. But, in falling, the heroic king had so broken the enemy that there was a long pause in hostilities. And the wily general retired again to Prague, there to evolve new plans for his own aggrandizement.

At this crisis a new champion arose. It was not to be expected that Richelieu, who had been putting down Protestantism with an iron hand in France, would feel sympathy for the Protestant cause in Germany! But that wary primate and minister was not going to stand on a little matter of religion, when he saw an advantage to be gained for France!

He had long ago determined how this conflict should end. He did not intend to permit Imperial Germany under Ferdinand to rise to ascendancy in Europe.

With the weight of France thrown into the scale when the Imperial cause was already so shattered by Gustavus, it was easy to see how it must end.

Wallenstein secretly opened negotiations from Prague with the French ambassador, and steadily disregarded the Emperor's orders to return to his command. The project was that he should go over to the Protestant side in return for the crown of Bohemia.

A general whom the traitor trusted, in turn betrayed him to the Emperor. Six soldiers, under the pretense of bearing dispatches, entered his room.

"Are *you* the traitor who is going to deliver your Emperor's troops to the enemy?" shouted one of the men.

Wallenstein realized that his hour had come. He said not a word, but stretched out his arms and silently received his death-blow.

With an invading French army in Germany, under the famous Marshals Turenne and Condé, looking about for choice bits of territory for France, a religious war had become a political one. It lasted until 1648, when the "Peace of Westphalia" concluded the most desolating struggle in the history of wars.

And what had been gained? The very principle for which it was undertaken was surrendered. Entire religious freedom was granted to Protestants (excepting in Austria); four great states were lost to the empire; a population of seventeen millions was reduced to four millions, with Imperial authority abridged and broken.

France took Alsace, and Sweden Pomerania. Holland and Switzerland were recognized as independent States. The supreme power was invested in the Reichstag, and the several German princes were made almost independent. The empire, as a unity, had been reduced to a shadow.

The devastation which had been wrought by those thirty terrible years cannot be described. Its details are too awful to be dwelt upon. Famine had converted men into wild beasts, who formed themselves into bands, and preyed on those they caught.

Such a band was attacked near Worms and was found cooking in a great caldron human legs and arms!

The spirit of the people was broken. Germany had been set back two hundred years. And for what? Not to accomplish any high purpose, not even from mistaken Christian zeal, but simply to carry out the despotic resolve of the Catholic Church to rule the minds and consciences of all men through its Popes and priesthood. It was the old battle commenced six centuries before. Had Henry not gone to Canossa in 1073, there had been no Thirty Years' War in 1618!

[1] For a comprehensive understanding of this period see Chart of Civilization in Six Centuries, "Who, When, and What."

CHAPTER XI.

For seven hundred years, from the treaty of Verdun (843), to Charles V. (1520), Germany had held the leading position in Europe as the head of the "Holy Roman Empire." The reality had been gradually departing from that alluring title; and now, with the Peace of Westphalia, it was gone.

With a large body of its people accorded full rights, while they were engaged in open war upon the Roman Church, the last link binding Germany to Rome was broken. The Holy Roman Empire was now the German Empire.

And, in very fact, it was no empire at all, but a loose confederacy of miniature kingdoms, administered without any regard to each other, and in great measure independent of Imperial authority.

Great changes had taken place throughout Europe. Louis XIV. was King of France. In England Charles I. had lost his throne and his head, and Cromwell was laying the foundations of a power more enduring than that of Tudor or Stuart. Spain was rapidly declining, and the new Republic of Holland ascending in the scale. Sweden was supreme in the North, and Russia just beginning to be recognized as a power in Europe. Venice and the Italian republics were crumbling to pieces; while across the sea, on the coast of America, a few English, Dutch, and Swedish colonies were struggling into existence.

Richelieu was dead, but the fortunes of France were in the keeping of one quite as ambitious for her as was the Great Minister. There was a new aspirant for headship in Europe. When Ferdinand III. died, Louis XIV. tried hard to be elected his successor. He spent money freely among the Electors, and was only defeated by the sturdy opposition of Brandenburg and Saxony.

Of the people of Germany there is really nothing to tell in the years which followed the Peace of Westphalia. Spiritless and disheartened in their ruined cities, they seemed to have lost all national spirit and even religious enthusiasm. They languidly saw the Catholic Hapsburgs becoming absolute in the land, while the Court at Vienna and the smaller German Courts were absorbed in establishing servile imitations of the Court at Versailles. Churches and schoolhouses were in ruins, but palaces were being built in which the fashions of the French Court were closely imitated, and princes were trying to unlearn their native language and to install that of a cormorant French King, who was planning to devour their demoralized empire!

The one exception among the German rulers of this time was Frederick William of Brandenburg, the "Great Elector." This incorruptible German lost no time in learning French. As soon as peace was declared he set about restoring his wasted territory. He organized a standing army and built a fleet, and he used them, too, to recover Pomerania from Sweden and to circumvent the French King, and so enlarged his boundaries and strengthened his authority that Brandenburg, now next in size to

Austria, was treated with the respect of an independent power, and the name of Hohenzollern began to shine bright even beside that of Hapsburg.

From the year 1667 until 1704 Germany was the center of the Grand Monarch's ambitious designs. In 1687, while Prince Eugene was leading a German army against the Turks, and while German princes, excepting the Great Elector, were engaged in copying French fashions, two powerful French armies suddenly appeared upon the Rhine, and the great war which was to involve all Europe had commenced.

It was not love for Germany which brought Holland, England, Spain, and Sweden into this war with France, but fear of the advancing power of a King who aspired to be supreme in Europe.

In the year 1700, an event occurred which intensified the situation. Charles II., the last of the half Castilian and half Hapsburg kings of Spain descended from Charles V., died without children, and that country was looking for the next nearest heir in foreign lands from which to choose a new king. Of the two it found, one was son of the Emperor of Germany and the other grandson of Louis XIV. It was a choice of evils for Europe; as in one case the German Empire with Spain annexed would be a preponderating power, as in the time of Charles V.; and in the other, the grasping Louis would be far on the road to the very end which Europe had combined to defeat!

Inflammable oil, poured on fire, does not make a fiercer blaze than did this question of the *Spanish Succession* at that time. The embarrassing thing for Louis was that, when he had married the Infanta, he had solemnly renounced the throne of Spain for her heirs! But the Pope, with whom the ultimate decision lay, had more need of the rising house of Bourbon than of the waning Hapsburg, so, after "prayerful deliberation," he concluded that the King might be absolved from that little promise, and that Philip V. was rightful King of Spain.

There was rage in Vienna. The Emperor Leopold I. and his disappointed son the Archduke Karl declared they would wrest the throne from Philip and have vengeance upon Louis, who with swelling pride was declaring that "the Pyrenees had ceased to exist."

When Leopold called upon the German states to arm, the Great Elector of Brandenburg was dead. But his son Frederick took advantage of the opportunity. He would assist the Emperor on one condition, that he be permitted to assume the title of King! An embarrassment arose in the fact that traditional custom permitted only one King among the Electors (King of Bohemia), and therefore the Elector of Brandenburg could not be also King of Brandenburg.

The difficulty was overcome by adopting for the new kingdom the name of his detached duchy of Prussia, that province which had been snatched from Russia by the Teutonic knights long before, and had then been appropriated by that masterful Hohenzollern who was then head of the Order, as his own kingdom. It was this high-handed proceeding which thereafter inseparably linked the name of Hohenzollern with that of Prussia.

So, in 1701, the Elector and his wife traveled in midwinter to Königsberg, almost in the confines of Russia, where he was crowned Frederick I. of Prussia, and then returned to Berlin in Brandenburg, which thereafter remained his capital. And so it was that Prussia—the name of a small Slavonic people on the frontier—became that of the entire kingdom of which Berlin was the capital.

England and Holland were in alliance with Leopold—not for the sake of setting up the Hapsburg, but rather to put down the great Bourbon who began to wear the prestige of invincibility. England entered the alliance languidly at first, but when the French king threw down the glove by recognizing the exiled Stuart (son of James II.) as the heir to her throne, she needed no urging and sent the best of her army into Germany under the command of the man who was going to destroy that prestige of invincibility, and to hold in check the arrogant king.

Marlborough and Prince Eugene formed a combination too strong for Louis. Marlborough's great victory at Blenheim in 1704 virtually decided the contest, although it continued for many years longer. He was created Duke of Marlborough and received the estate of Blenheim as his reward.

But the long war outlived the enthusiasm it had created. England grew tired of fighting for the Hapsburgs; there were court intrigues for Marlborough's downfall, and finally he was recalled, and cast aside like a rusty sword. Louis, too, had grown old and weary, and so in 1713 the Peace of Utrecht terminated the long struggle. Philip V. was left upon the throne of Spain, with the condition that the crowns of Spain and France should never be united.

The disappointed Archduke Karl had now succeeded to the Imperial throne as Karl VI. If the life of a nation be in its people, there was really no Germany at this time. There was nothing but a wearisome succession of wars and diplomatic intrigues, and new divisions and apportionments of territory. Prussia was expanding and Poland declining, while Hungary and Naples, and Milan and Mantua, were fast in the grasp of Austria. Indeed, to tell of the territorial changes occurring at this period is like painting a picture of dissolving elements, which form new combinations even as you look at them.

At the North, too, there were these same changing combinations, where had arisen two new ambitious kings. Charles XII. of Sweden and Peter the Great of Russia were at war; and Denmark and Poland were lending a hand to defeat the Swedish King. Peter the Great was extending his Baltic provinces and preparing to build his new capital of St. Petersburg (1709); but Charles XII. was defeated by Prussia and Hanover, in his attempt to make of Sweden one of the great powers of Europe. His death in 1718 ended that dream.

Not since the infamous Irene's deposition at Byzantium had there been a woman on the throne of the Cæsars. When Karl VI. issued the decree called the "Pragmatic Sanction," providing that the crown should descend to female heirs in the absence of male, he forged one of the most important links in the chain of events. This secured

the succession to his little daughter Maria Theresa, who was born in 1717. The link had need to be a strong one, for there were to be twenty years of effort to break it. But it held.

At about this same time there was another important link forging in Prussia, where Frederick William I. had succeeded his father Frederick I. as king. By these two events the long spell was to be broken.

Volumes have been written about this fierce, miserly King Frederick William and his coarse brutalities. But his reign was the rough, strong bridge which led to a Frederick the Great, and the reign of the Great Frederick was that other bridge which led to a powerful and dominating kingdom of Prussia,—from which was to spring a new German Empire!

If Frederick William was a tyrant of the most savage sort, on the other hand he organized industry, finance, and an army. If he was a miser in his family, he brought wealth and prosperity to his people. If he beat and cudgeled his own son for playing the flute, he left that son a kingdom and an army which were the foundation of his greatness.

His hatred for all that was French, for art, for the formalities and even the decencies of life, was an enraged protest against the prevailing affectations and artificiality of his time.

We can imagine how the polished and refined Court at Vienna must have regarded this Prussian King. Austria, entirely Catholic, in a state of moral and intellectual decline, sat looking backward and sighing for the return of the spirit of the Middle Ages. Prussia, altogether Protestant, had set her face toward a future which was to be greater than she dreamed.

In 1736 Maria Theresa was married to Francis of Lorraine. In 1740 she succeeded her father Karl VI., on the Imperial throne; and that very same year Frederick William of Prussia died, and was succeeded by his son, who was to be known as Frederick the Great.

Through the barren period succeeding the Thirty Years' War some vital processes were going on; indeed that most vital of all processes, thought, was active. Broken into fragments as by an earthquake, the people had been left without one healing touch from the hands of their infatuated rulers. It was a sorry spectacle to see those German princes gayly arraying themselves in French finery while their country was a ruin. Did they not know that a wound might better not heal at all, than to begin by forming new tissue at the top!

Whatever capacity Germany had for being, was in those neglected fragments. If she ever developed into greatness it must be along the line of their elemental tendencies, and by being German, not French.

So a nation, helpless, broken, disorganized, out of harmony with itself and with others, could not act, but it could think. And in this time of chaos and confusion there

commenced mighty stirrings in the thought of Germany. Slumbering in that chaos were the germs of wonderful music and a wondrous literature.

The gloomy and despondent Spinoza had found peace in discovering that the reality of things was not in political overturnings, nor in the disappointing facts and phenomena which we call life, but in the *Eternal Order*, of which we are all a part.

He might have discovered the same sustaining truth in religion; but Spinoza's mind led him to seek it instead in a philosophical system which should harmonize the discordant facts of existence. This was the foundation of German speculative philosophy, which took possession of the German mind and which by progressive steps was to lead to a union with a science, *founded* upon the despised facts of life—and finally, whether they wished it or not—a harmonizing of both with RELIGION.

With deeply philosophical mind the great German, Leibniz, was investigating the truths of the natural world; and Handel also belongs to this time of soul-awakening during a period of national neglect and depression, while at this very time there was also borne in a stimulating wave from England, where Newton had revealed the fundamental law and the "ETERNAL *order*" of the *physical* universe.

It would seem like a dim twilight to us if we should go back to it now; but then these new lights were very dazzling, almost blinding people with their splendor.

CHAPTER XII.

It was into such a world as this that Frederick the Great was ushered in 1712. Few children, be they princes or peasants, have ever had a more unhappy childhood. If he had not been born to be a King, Frederick's tastes would have led him to be a musician or a poet. A son whose chief pleasures consisted in playing the flute, and reading French books, became an object almost of aversion to the austere Frederick William. In the midst of severities past belief Frederick obtained most of his education in secret, at the hands of French *émigrés*, who formed his taste after French models, the influence of which could be traced throughout his life. His passion for music was pursued also in the same secret way.

The tyranny and the beatings to which he was subjected became at last so intolerable that, when he was eighteen years old, Frederick determined to run away. His adored sister Wilhelmine was his confidante. His bosom friend, Lieutenant Von Katte, was his accomplice. A letter to Von Katte, written at this time, fell into other hands and was sent to the King.

The barbarities which followed make one think this Hohenzollern should have been in a madhouse instead of on a throne. It was a small matter that he beat his son until his face was covered with blood, for he had done that before; but he sent him as a prisoner of state to Prussia. He then annulled the sentence of imprisonment passed by the court-martial upon Von Katte, and ordered his immediate execution. To inflict more suffering he ordered that the hanging take place before the window of the cell where his son was confined!

When this was carried into effect the young prince fainted, and lay so long insensible that it was thought he was dead.

The King then insisted that he be tried by court-martial; and when the court decided that it had no authority to condemn the Crown Prince, he overruled the decision and ordered his execution.

The horror and indignation caused by this extended as far as Vienna. The Emperor Charles VI. informed the King of Prussia that the Crown Prince could only be condemned capitally at an Imperial Diet. The King answered, "Very well; then, I will hold my own court on him at Königsberg. Prussia is my own and outside the confines of the empire, where I can do as I please."

But the fury of this madman was abating. He did not resent it when a daring attendant reminded him that "God also ruled—even in Prussia." Finally he was satisfied with humiliating his son by making him work for one year in the lowest position in the departments of the government.

At the wedding festivities of his sister Wilhelmine, Frederick secreted himself among the servants in humble attire. He was discovered, and the King, who must have been in a genial mood that night, pulled him forth from his hiding, and leading him to

the trembling queen said, "Here, madam, our Fritz is back again!" And the reconciliation made three aching hearts glad.

For the ten succeeding years Frederick was permitted to reside in his own castle near Potsdam, and the relations with his father became kinder and almost cordial. The son in his castle pursued his philosophical studies, corresponded with Voltaire, and played the flute to his heart's content.

But he did other things too, as the future demonstrated. The study of profound subjects, conversation, and intimate friendships with learned men, trained his active mind to wonderful acuteness, and when he applied this to the study of history, when he read of the dignity of kings, and of what stuff greatness was made in the past—he formed his own ideals for the future. When Frederick William died in 1740 he was prepared to take the reins of government with a comprehensiveness of grasp of which his austere father was incapable, and with clearly defined plans to make Prussia great.

Six months later Maria Theresa succeeded to her father's throne. She had no fear of this young flute-playing King of Prussia, and was fully occupied in defending her own Imperial rights, which were assailed by the Elector of Bavaria, who claimed to be Emperor Karl VII., by virtue of a descent superior to hers.

But the war of the *Austrian Succession*, in which she was soon involved, was quickly overshadowed by a greater conflict, which was immediately commenced by the bold and ambitious young Prussian King.

He claimed, by virtue of some obscure transaction in the past, that Silesia belonged to him. But he gallantly offered, if it was returned to him, to support Maria Theresa's cause in the fight with her kinsman of Bavaria over the succession.

The offer was rejected, and almost before the ink in the correspondence was dry, a Prussian army, with Frederick at its head, was in the heart of the disputed province.

Two characteristics marked Frederick's movements—the perfect secrecy with which they were planned, and the swiftness with which they were carried out. He formed his own plans, and even his Prime Minister did not know of their existence until he was ordered to execute them. The cunning methods then prevailing in Courts, by which foreign ambassadors defeated designs while they were maturing, were powerless against this young King, as none but himself knew what was going to happen. He gave his personal and unremitting care to every detail of government, and astonished his people by the prodigies of labor he performed, and the sacrifices of his time, rest, and comfort.

Of course this ancient wrong done his family in the matter of Silesia was only a pretext. Frederick had made up his mind at Potsdam that Prussia must be solidified by bringing together her detached provinces, and he had long ago drawn a new map in his mind, which should include Silesia.

Nature had endowed him with a bold and aspiring genius. He had a consciousness of strength, combined with a belief that he was a chosen instrument appointed by fate

to perform a definite work: the raising of Prussia to the first rank in the German empire.

When we see Frederick's ideal of a despotic personal government, with a divinely appointed ruler leading his country to greatness, independent of ministers and advisers,—it is easy to recognize the model which is being studied by a certain young ruler in Europe to-day!

There was another strong personality on the throne at Vienna. To have her crown threatened by a powerful combination, and at the same time a war of conquest waged against her in her own Austria, was a heavy burden to be borne by a young girl of twenty-four years. But Maria Theresa maintained herself with astonishing bravery and firmness. She listened to the counsels of her ministers, and then decided for herself; even her husband Francis being unable to sway her judgment.

France, Spain, and Saxony sustained the claims of the Bavarian Archduke to her throne; and when a French army was on the Danube and Vienna threatened, she fled to Hungary and made a personal appeal to the Hungarian Diet to stand by her. She promised the restoration of rights for which they had been contending, and by her personal charm and radiance captured the wavering nobles, who placed on her head the crown of St. Stephen. They cheered wildly as she galloped up "the king's hill," and waved her sword toward the four quarters of the earth in true Imperial fashion.

Then she appeared before the Diet in their national costume with her infant son Joseph in her arms, and in an eloquent speech depicted the dangers which beset her, and the enthusiastic nobles drew their sabers, shouting, "We will die for our *King*, Maria Theresa!"

This saved Vienna. The support of Hungary arrested the advance toward the capital, and the invading army moved instead on to Prague, where her rival was crowned King of Bohemia, and later at Frankfort was proclaimed Emperor Karl VII.

While these distracting combinations were engrossing the young sovereign, Frederick had invaded Silesia, and when the second Silesian war ended in 1742, Prussia held that province, and was enriched by 150 large and small cities, and about 5000 villages.

England, Holland, and Hanover now came to the support of Maria Theresa against Karl VII. and his French ally.

The wary Frederick saw that, with such a coalition, Austria's success was certain, and he also saw that, if victorious, her next step would be to try to recover Silesia. So he offered to join France in support of Karl VII., and threw himself into the war of the Austrian succession.

This lasted three years longer and was concluded by the Peace of Dresden (1745), which again confirmed Prussia in the possession of Silesia, left Maria Theresa's husband wearing the disputed Imperial title as Francis I., and to Frederick left the more unique and renowned title of "the Great," which was bestowed by acclamation on his return to Berlin.

Frederick's first care was to heal the wounds inflicted by the two Silesian wars.

It is interesting to speculate upon what this man might have been, had his childhood been spent in an atmosphere of kindness and love, and had his heart and intelligence been symmetrically nurtured and trained.

But he was trained as the tree is trained which is blasted in its youth by lightnings, then twisted and distorted by hands which defeat its natural tendency upward and sunward!

An eager and impressionable boy with warm affections, acute intelligence, and a strong sense of justice had been subjected to inhuman barbarities in his own home. In his heart-hunger he turned to pursuits for which he had a passionate love, and was nourished in secret upon a poisonous diet. A nature which in the fire of his youth had been full of generous enthusiasms was embittered by suffering, and then became cold and cynical under the teachings of Voltaire.

So fascinated had he become with this man that he regarded him as the most exalted of beings, and his friendship a treasure above all others. Faith, hope, love, and filial respect were, through this influence, destroyed in the germ before they had time to unfold; and in the place of everything sacred was a cynical cold-blooded search after what these philosophers of the eighteenth century were pleased to call—*truth*. And the way to discover this truth was to analyze, dissect, and then to demolish!

So there had been created a strangely composite man, compounded of elements native to himself, to that undeveloped barbarian Frederick William, and to Voltaire! Joined to a strong practical common sense in the management of affairs was a passion for insincere, unsound, and shallow French ideals. And combined with the most despotic and arbitrary of wills, was an inflexible regard for the right of the humblest. While he despised the beliefs of Protestant and Catholic alike, he declared "I mean that every man in my kingdom shall have the right to be saved in his own way." And he secured that right for his people, too!

His rule was a despotism, but it was a despotism of intelligence and justice. He called himself the first official servant of the state, and no clerk in his kingdom gave such faithful service as he. He arose at four o'clock in the morning. He made himself personally acquainted with every village and landed estate in his kingdom, which he treated as if it were a great private enterprise and interest, for which he was responsible.

He was a reformer without heart; a King intent upon the well-being of his people, without tenderness; a leader prepared, if need be, not to lead, but to drag Prussia with a rough hand up the rugged path of virtue and prosperity; and determined to make his nation great, whether it wanted to be or not!

There were many pleasanter companions and gentler fathers in his day. There were sovereigns who did not terrify wrong-doers and children on the street with uplifted canes. But this Frederick, with character scarred and distorted, was the one

man in Europe who was converting a kingdom into a POWER, and the one man of his age whom history would call GREAT!

But such a being as this, one who has turned to adamant in heroic mold, cannot sympathetically comprehend the finer currents about him. There was going on, quite unnoticed by King Frederick, an awakening in the German mind, and while he was building a structure of material greatness, there had commenced, unobserved by him, another structure, which was to be the chief glory of Germany.

The passion for speculative thought awakened by Spinoza was stirring the German soul to its depths. Kant had found that Spinoza's *Eternal Order* must be a *Moral Order*. That the moral instincts which guided mankind, and were the all in all, were the God in us, the in-dwelling of the Divine. Thus was embodied the essence of Christianity in a new and speculative philosophy.

Klopstock and Lessing were creating a national literature, which revealed for the first time the strength, resources, and unsuspected beauty of their own language, and which was for the first time being used to express a genius untouched by foreign influence.

But all unconscious of this new, rushing stream of life, Frederick was entertaining Voltaire, spending his evenings in listening to the latest satirical verses of that vain and gifted Frenchman, and laughing at the latest witty epigram from Paris.

It had been one of Frederick's dreams, in his youth, to have his great friend some day reside in his Court. In 1750 this was realized, and the King and the poet settled down to what was to be an everlasting banquet of sympathetic tastes and opinions, seasoned with mutual admiration and friendship!

Frederick felt that he was something of a poet himself, and that he was only prevented by cares of state from letting the world find it out. The wily Frenchman had been the literary confidant of his royal friend, and many pages of verses had been submitted to him during their long correspondence, and had received flattering commendation from the great critic. So one of the pleasantest features in this closer companionship was expected to be this drop of honeyed praise to sweeten the evening after the day's work was done.

But Frederick's verses bored Voltaire very much, and the royal host began to discover that his great guest was selfish, and cold, and jealous, and even malignant. The nimbus of fascination began to fade. He could be cutting and satirical as well as Voltaire. The great poet was no less hungry for praise than he, and it was an easy matter to yawn and be bored by his verses, too. And so they became gradually estranged, and finally enemies. They parted in anger, and Voltaire returned to France, to write bitter satires about the King, whose character and ideals he had been one of the chief agents in forming.

There was then in Germany a man whose glory was to outshine Voltaire's or that of any contemporary in Europe, even as the sun does the stars. But Frederick's ear

could not detect music in his own language, nor was his stunted soul attuned to the native and sublime harmonies of Goethe's genius.

CHAPTER XIII.

There had been a time when two nations in Europe could fight each other to the death without disturbing their neighbors, but since there had developed in the sixteenth century that larger unity of European states, there was no such isolated security.

So when, in 1755, England and France came into collision over the boundaries of their American colonies, the shock was felt all over Europe. Just as the earthquake which swallowed up Lisbon at that very time had made the shores of Lake Ontario tremble, so the peace of Germany, which had lasted for eleven years, was broken by an event in far-off Canada.

The two contending parties, England and France, began after the fashion of the time to look about for allies. Maria Theresa, who had invitations from both countries to join them, was considering which could best serve her own private interests. England, since 1714, had been ruled by Hanoverian kings, which practically annexed her to Hanover. It was by no means sure that she could get assistance from that nation in recovering Silesia—which was to be the price of her alliance. She decided that her best policy was to secure the aid of Louis XV., who would be glad to help her in her plans against Frederick, in return for the assistance of Austria in this war with England.

As astute and profound as any statesman in Europe, this wonderful Empress adopted means and methods entirely feminine to carry out her immense design.

She knew that Elizabeth, Empress of Russia, was mortally offended with the King of Prussia, on account of some disparaging remarks he had made about her, so she deftly used that to her own advantage. Then—perfectly understanding how to reach the enslaved Louis XV.—she wrote a flattering letter to Mme. de Pompadour, then in the full tide of her ascendency over the king.

With the greatest secrecy these negotiations were carried on, and at last the compact between the three great powers was concluded and everything ready to commence a war upon Prussia in the spring of 1757; even to the agreement as to the way in which they should cut up and divide among themselves the kingdom of Prussia!

Frederick, through secret agents, was perfectly well informed of their plans. He saw that his ruin was determined upon, and could only be prevented by unhesitating courage. He determined to anticipate them. Before the allied armies were ready, he made one of his catlike leaps into the neutral territory of Saxony, and was in Dresden, half way to Prague, with seventy thousand men.

This so disconcerted the plans of the allies that there was a pause, and conferences were held, in which it was concluded to ask Sweden to join the coalition. Finally, that almost forgotten body, the Diet of the German Empire, formally declared

war against Prussia, and the Third Silesian War, or the Seven Years' War, had commenced.

As the avowed object of this great combination was not the recovery of Silesia but the dismemberment of the kingdom, to deprive Frederick of his royal title, and to reduce him to a simple Margrave of Brandenburg, it is easy to see the incentive he had to great deeds.

England and a few small German States were his allies; but, as George II. heartily disliked him, he received small assistance from him, and stood practically alone with half of Europe allied against him.

There were great victories and great defeats during the seven years which followed. There were times when the cause of Prussia seemed lost, and other times when that of the Allies appeared hopeless. But the tide of victory more often set toward Frederick's standard than that of his adversaries. He defeated the Austrians at Prague; the Imperial and French army at Rossbach; a Russian army at Zorndorf; and these and a hundred other names stand in the annals of Prussia for monumental courage, daring, and sacrifice.

In the confused narrative of advancing and retreating armies, of battles and of slaughter, but one distinct impression remains. That is amazement—amazement that so many thousands were willing at the bidding of one ambitious man to die, to lay down their bodies in that heap of dead, for Prussia's greatness to rise upon! That not one was ready to reproach him for having brought these calamities upon them for the sake of Silesia; but instead, with twenty thousand still lying unburied upon one field, that they respond with infatuated enthusiasm to his appeal for more!

But Prussia owes her rise to just such infatuation as this. *Acquisition* and *conquest* are written on her foundation stones, the chief of which were laid by her Great Frederick.

It is pleasant to tell of peace once more. The Allies, wearied of the long war, gradually withdrew from Austria. Being unable to carry it on alone, Maria Theresa was compelled to abandon her dream of ruining Frederick. With bitterness of heart and humiliation she consented to give up Silesia forever as the price of a peace she did not desire. In 1763, the articles were signed (the Peace of Hubertsburg) and the Seven Years' War was over.

Frederick was now called "the Great" throughout Europe; and Prussia took her place among the "Five Great Powers."

The next thing to be done was to repair the desolation left by seven years of war. Nearly fifteen thousand houses were in ashes. So many men had been consumed in the army that there were not enough left to till the fields, nor horses to draw the harvest.

The practical King, anticipating this, had been enforcing the cultivation of the much despised potato; and this useful tuber saved Prussia and Silesia from famine, and some of their neighbors as well. For as many as twenty thousand famishing

people came from the trampled and burnt corn-fields of Bohemia to feed upon the Prussian potato and live.

Again the people set about the oft-repeated task of repairing the devastation of war. Indeed for 150 years they had always been either enduring the horrors of a great conflict, or healing its wounds and building up the waste places it had made. Can we wonder that they were strong and serious? The weaklings were winnowed out by these great storms, and the chastened souls of those who survived knew little of pleasure. Religion, which had once been their solace and refuge, had lost much of its power on account of the bitterness of sectarian strife.

A few men groping for a solution of the problems of sin and suffering, and for the meaning of this troubled existence, thought they had found it in the new philosophy. France, under the teachings of Voltaire and Rousseau, had cast off the restraints of religious faith without providing any substitute, but Germany, more provident, was building a spacious house for the soul's refuge when the old was demolished; untrammeled freedom of thought was inscribed upon its doors, and PHILOSOPHY was enshrined within!

All this tumultuous inner life was growth: the growth and unfolding of a great and earnest soul; and the awakening of new capacities for being and doing. There was a rapturous surprise in discovering these capacities, and speculative thought and literature became an absorbing passion.

CHAPTER XIV.

At the close of the Seven Years' War, Maria Theresa had spent the twenty-three years of her reign in a fruitless struggle with Frederick. Instead of dismembering his kingdom and reducing him to a plain Margrave of Brandenburg, she had lost Silesia and was compelled to listen to the praises of her enemy resounding through Europe and to hear him called "the Great."

It was a bitter pill for her nine years later, when she had to confer with the Prussian King as an equal, over the partition of Poland, and to see him further enriched by a goodly slice of that unhappy country.

But before that event, and just two years after the conclusion of the war, Francis I. died (1755). He had worn the title, but she had wielded the power and guided the events ever since that day when, with her infant son in her arms, she had captured the Hungarian Diet at Presburg.

And now that son was Joseph II. But the scepter was still in reality to remain with her while she lived, and in fact her name was to be the last ray of splendor which should illumine the throne of Austria. But these were sunset glories after a long and troubled day, while in Prussia was the brightness of the dawn.

That friendship with Louis XV. so eagerly sought by Maria Theresa led to a very momentous alliance of a different sort. The Empress and the French King together arranged a marriage between her fair young daughter Marie Antoinette and Louis, the young Dauphin of France.

How should the Empress of Austria, born, nurtured, and fed in the very center of despotism—not hearing or heeding the current ideas about human rights and freedom—entirely misunderstanding the past, the present, and the future—how should she suspect the terrific forces which were accumulating beneath the throne of France, or that it would become a scaffold for her child? Hapsburg and Bourbon, to her mind, were realities as fixed and enduring as the Alps.

She saw no special significance in the fact that thirteen English colonies in America were in rebellion and setting up a novel form of government for themselves. That was England's affair, not hers, and would in time, like other rebellions against properly constituted authority, be put down.

She did not live to see the end of this struggle, nor the events to which it led in France. Her death occurred in 1780. Her son, Joseph II., strange to say, was imbued with the new ideas of human rights. Great was the astonishment of Frederick and of Europe, when this young man set about the task of establishing a new and progressive order of things in Austria; and it was a strange spectacle to behold a Hapsburg trying to force upon his people reforms they did not desire, and rights which they did not know how to use.

His plans were high and noble, but he failed to see that they were too sweeping and too suddenly developed to be permanent. His people were not ripe for

emancipation from old shackles, which they had grown to like and venerate. In striving to free the church from the Jesuits, and to emancipate the serfs in Hungary, he had accomplished nothing, and had created chaos. Depressed by the failure in his great design of reformation, Joseph's health gave way. He died in 1790 and was succeeded by his brother Leopold II.

It is not to be supposed that Frederick felt much sympathy with the free young Republic established in America. And if he sent a sword of honor to Washington in 1783, it was because he recognized the greatness of the man; and perhaps, too, because he felt a malicious pleasure in the humiliation of George III.!

The intellectual awakening which this King had failed to understand had wrought a mighty change in Germany. Lessing had been the first to break away from an enfeebling imitation of French *Sentimentlalism*. The genius of Goethe and Schiller awakened a new spirit in literature, that of *Romanticism*, and there commenced that intellectual convulsion known as *Sturm und Drang*, or storm and stress period. While Goethe and Schiller were supreme in the kingdom of letters, Herder and the Schlegels were great in history and criticism; Humboldt and Ritter in geographical science; Fichte, Hegel, Schelling, and Kant in philosophy; Fouqué and Tieck in imagination, and Jean Paul Richter in the mysterious ether of transcendental thought.

When Karl August called Goethe to his Court in Saxe-Weimar, among that group of other illustrious authors, and gave to Weimar the name of the "German Athens," it was a Golden Age for Germany.

It is interesting to recall that it was Luther who gave the first impulse to this movement, by revealing to the people the riches of their own tongue. In his translation of the Bible, and in his hymns, so grandly simple, he created the modern German language.

The influence of Luther was felt in another art, too. The enthusiasm awakened by the singing of his hymns revolutionized the form of ecclesiastical music. In this Golden Age in Germany music, too, had become a great art, with such immortal names as Mozart, Gluck, Haydn, and Beethoven; and the period of great orchestration also had commenced.[1]

Although Frederick's tastes led him so strongly to letters and to music, these two arts had attained this rich development in Germany without any assistance from him. When he died in 1786 the monument he left was a Kingdom of Prussia; equal in rank with any of the Great Powers of Europe, enlarged in territory, rich in population, with a great army and an overflowing treasury.

As Frederick the Great had no son, this splendid inheritance passed to his nephew Frederick William II.

With the new ascendency of Prussia in the German Empire, a process which had long been going on was accelerated. That empire had become a fiction, a form from which the substance had long ago departed; almost its only remaining relic being an Imperial Diet, where thirty solemn old men supposed they were holding the venerated

structure together by weaving about it, and repairing, the thin, worn threads of tradition.

The German Empire had in its best time existed by grace of God and force of circumstances, more than by reason of a sound and perfect organism. It always struggled with fatal inherent defects. Its life currents never flowed freely and had been growing more and more sluggish for centuries. And now, they had ceased to flow at all. There was no vital relation whatever between its various parts. Of national feeling there was absolutely none. Lessing, one of the greatest Germans of that time, said, "Of the love of country I have no conception!"

And what was there to inspire patriotism in this great empty shell of despotism! The shattered lifeless old structure was wrong at its very foundation. It was built upon feudal injustice; that injustice which compelled the people to bear the whole burden of taxation, from which it exempted the nobility and the clergy. England had long ago redressed this grievous wrong. France was just preparing to free herself from it by a tremendous convulsion. Germany had been offered emancipation at the hands of her enlightened and gracious Emperor Joseph, but so spiritless and benumbed had she become that she could not understand his message.

He was attempting a vain task in trying to infuse new life into the empire. There were no living channels to convey the current. The only thing to be done with it was to sweep it away—and the man and the time for doing this were close at hand. The surface calm which existed while Leopold II. was repairing the disorder left by his reforming brother Joseph, was the calm which precedes the hurricane.

[1] See Chart of Civilization in Six Centuries, "Who, When, and What."

CHAPTER XV.

The energies which were to transform the face of Europe had been gradually centering in France. They commenced when Voltaire and Rousseau made it the fashion to scoff at the Church. Then, as religion and morality are closely allied, virtue became also a subject of ridicule. The spirit animating this was supposed to be a reforming spirit. It was an effort to free the people from the fetters of ecclesiasticism. Naturally, this led to assaults upon other fetters, other prevailing abuses. The vices of the Court were held up to view—its extravagance and luxury; all of which people were reminded that *they* had to pay for.

Just at this time the Colonies in North America threw off the English yoke because of this very matter of taxation unjustly imposed, and France enthusiastically helped them to establish a free republic and to humiliate her rival!

Frenchmen returned from the United States and contrasted the fresh vigor and purity of its institutions with the decrepit corruptions in France. The current began to flow very swiftly now. A Richelieu or a Louis XIV. would have been powerless to arrest the mad forces which quickly developed. What could the feeble, well-intentioned Louis XVI. do! He was like a skiff caught in the rushing rapids of the Niagara River. It was only a question of how long he could hold on to passing twigs and branches before he should go over the precipice. In 1793 Europe read with shuddering horror of his execution, and nine months later Maria Theresa's daughter—the beautiful, the adored Marie Antoinette—sat in a cart with her arms pinioned behind her, as she was driven to the scaffold.

The men who had guided this storm in its beginnings had themselves been engulfed in it, and a French republic was proclaimed which had been erected upon a tragedy unparalleled in Europe.

It was a horrible avenging of centuries of wrong and oppression. But its purpose was thoroughly accomplished. No vestige of the old tyrannies remained. If France was again enslaved, the fetters would have to be forged anew!

The powers of Europe were not only filled with horror and indignation at the means by which this was accomplished, but they saw with alarm a pestilential republic, in imitation of that one across the sea, at their very doors.

They formed a combination, called the First Coalition, for its overthrow. If the states of Europe had really acted in concert, the life of the new republic would have been very brief. But Austria was jealous of Prussia, and Prussia was jealous of the close friendship forming between Austria and England, withdrew from the alliance, and made peace with the French republic.

Catherine, Empress of Russia, for reasons of her own also declined to join the coalition. While all Europe was thus engaged she thought it a good time to settle some scores with the Turks and to look after Poland, where a revolution was in progress. So, while the German Empire was engaged in suppressing republicanism in France,

Frederick William II. of Prussia offered his services to Catherine to overthrow the independence of Poland.

Kosciusko vainly defended that unhappy country. With the fall of Warsaw, 1794, it ceased to exist as one in the family of nations.

So Austria had been left practically alone to put down the new republic, which was developing wonderful strength while these languid and inefficient efforts were being made against it; for even Austria was diverted by what was going on in Poland, and fearful that she was not going to get her share of the spoils.

Marie Antoinette's brother Leopold had died the year before his sister's execution and his son Francis II. was Emperor of Germany. The government of this new republic which had caused such a stir in Europe was a very simple affair. Five men who were called Directors were at its head, and an obscure young man of twenty-six, named Napoleon Bonaparte, had been given command of the army, with Italy as its field of operations.

No doubt Francis thought it would be an easy matter to deal with France after the more important matter of the partition of Poland was disposed of. Little did he suspect that the time was approaching when he would, at the bidding of that young man, take off his Imperial crown, and that Napoleon Bonaparte would rise to ascendency in Europe upon the ruins of the German Empire.

In 1796 the young Corsican led a ragged, unpaid army into Italy. Without supplies, and almost without ammunition, he had audaciously planned to make the invaded country pay the expenses of the war waged against it.

He pointed to the Italian cities, and said to his soldiers, "There is your reward. It is rich and ample; but you must conquer it." He knew the French character and how in words brief, concise, forcible to address them like another Cæsar addressing his legions; to create incentives to glory, and to inspire enthusiasm as never man did before.

He also knew the infirmities of his adversaries, and how to play upon them as Cæsar did upon the rivalries and jealousies of the Gauls, and so to make the characteristics of Frenchmen, of German, and of Italian all serve him. He knew how to confound the enemy with new and unexpected methods, which rendered unavailing all which military science and experience had before taught.

In a brief time central Italy lay open before him, and princes, trembling at his vengeance, were suing for peace and offering money and treasure to procure it. Even then he was planning to make of Paris another Rome, and to adorn her with the jewels which had been worn by the proud Italian cities. So he demanded rare collections of paintings as the price of safety. The Duke of Parma laid at his feet priceless treasures of art; and even the Pope purchased neutrality by the payment of twenty-one million francs, one hundred costly pictures, and two hundred rare manuscripts.

When the treaty of Campo Formio was signed in 1797, Napoleon had won fourteen battles, and had subjugated Italy. The German Empire had lost all of its

Italian possessions, which were now grouped together into a Cisalpine Republic, under the protectorship of France. Another Helvetic Republic was set up in Switzerland under the same protectorate. And then Napoleon scornfully tossed Venice as an apple of discord into the lap of the Emperor, in exchange for the Netherlands. And another republic under a French protectorate was created in Holland.

As the left bank of the Rhine had already been ceded to France, that country, which had been only four years before in a state of political chaos, was at the head of Europe.

What would she not do at the bidding of the man who could accomplish such things? He dramatically conceived the idea of crippling England by threatening her Asiatic possessions, and led an army into Egypt. There every bulletin, every address to his army, added to the glamour of his name. Even the Pyramids were made to serve his consummate art and ambition!

Although his fleet was destroyed by Nelson and his army left in perilous position, he was needed at home, and returned with all the arrogance of a conqueror. He was appointed Generalissimo over the army by an enraptured France, and then swept aside the five Directors and appointed himself and two others Consuls.

A second coalition was now formed against France, consisting of England, Russia, and Austria, and there followed another campaign in which Napoleon made permanent the results of the previous ones in Italy. By the treaty of peace in 1801, the three republics created by him were formally recognized, and the princes of Germany, in compensation for their losses, had apportioned among them the dominions of the priestly rulers.

Thus at one blow were abolished one hundred states governed by archbishops, bishops, and other clerical dignitaries, and one of the foundation stones of the empire, laid by Charlemagne himself, was shattered.

This extraordinary man, dreaming of universal empire, superstitiously believed that Fate intended him to hold Europe in his hand. But we can see now that he was designed by that remorseless Fate for a very different purpose, and a very brief office. He was a terrible instrument, which she intended to use for one specific purpose, and then to cast him aside.

This work was the destruction of the Romano-Germanic Empire. That lifeless mass, whose oppressive weight had crushed the life and hope out of Central Europe for centuries, needed some tremendous force from without to break up its time-encrusted rivets. And that force was now in the hands of a workman who supposed he was engaged in rearing a great edifice for himself. Instead of which he was overturning, and plowing, and harrowing Germany, and preparing the ground for new forms of political life; and nothing more effectually pulverized the old tyrannies than this secularization of the priestly dominions. When, added to this, we see the extinction of a multitude of petty states and the abolition of the special privileges of

nearly a thousand "Imperial" noble families, we realize how he was relieving Germany from the incubus which had paralyzed her for centuries.

CHAPTER XVI.

The eighteenth century closed upon a strangely altered Europe. France was the ruling power on the Continent. Prussia had hidden herself in a timid neutrality, and left Austria to fight with foreign allies for the life of the empire. That battle had been a losing one, and now Francis II. sat upon a trembling throne and bore a title which had no longer any meaning.

But Napoleon was building his own edifice. In 1803 he had himself declared First Consul for life, and in 1804 he assumed the title of Napoleon, Emperor of the French. His coronation took place at Paris, where he compelled the Pope to come and perform that ceremony.

Then, after changing the groups of Italian republics into a Kingdom of Italy, he crowned himself, after the fashion of the Emperors whose successor he meant to be, with the Iron Crown of Lombardy.

He had entered upon the most daring scheme ever attempted in Europe: to convert the whole Continent into one vast empire, with the kings and princes over the several nations all subject to him.

Then there was a third coalition from which Prussia still held aloof, and which was composed of England, Austria, Russia, and Sweden. Alexander I. was now Emperor of Russia, and the timorous and unpatriotic policy of Prussia was guided by Frederick William III., who had succeeded his father Frederick William II.

The Prussian King, influenced by antagonism to Austria and by the hope of obtaining safety and reward for Prussia, stubbornly maintained his attitude of neutrality, while the German Empire was receiving its death-blow at Austerlitz. That "battle of the three Emperors," as it is called, was a paralyzing defeat to the Allies.

Prussia ignominiously received Hanover as her reward, and seventeen German states, including Bavaria, Baden, Würtemberg, and Hesse-Darmstadt, formally separated themselves from the German Empire and declared themselves subject to the French Emperor. This was known as the Rheinbund.

The German Empire was now reduced to three separate bodies: the Rheinbund, a federation of states giving willing allegiance to Napoleon; *Prussia*, practically in alliance with her destroyer; and *Austria*, helpless in that destroyer's grasp, while he, sitting in the Imperial Palace at Vienna, dictated terms of peace.

The Empire was broken beyond repair. On the 6th of August its dissolution was formally announced. Francis II. abdicated the Imperial crown and assumed the title of the "Emperor of Austria."

It was not the people of Prussia who bartered their allegiance to the fatherland for peace and for Hanover. It was their King and princes who brought this stain upon them, and their beautiful Queen Louise, mother of the late Emperor William, had pleaded in vain with the King to pursue a loyal and patriotic course.

The punishment came swiftly. The insatiate conqueror had no thought of leaving a great state like Prussia undisturbed. And soon it developed that his plan was also to create a northern bund under his protectorate, which would be composed of the Prussian states on the northern coast.

Forced in her own defense to take up arms, Prussia suffered a terrible defeat at Jena, 1806. The conqueror for whose friendship Frederick William had sacrificed his country was in Berlin. The beautiful Prussian Queen who, he knew, had used her influence against him, was treated with the grossest insolence, while for the cowed people recently in revolt, and now prostrating themselves, he did not restrain his contempt.

The Peace of Tilsit (1807) determined the full measure of Prussia's retribution. Her Polish acquisitions were made into a "Grand Duchy of Warsaw," under a French protectorate. One half of the rest of her territory was converted into a kingdom of Westphalia, over which Napoleon's brother Jerome was king. To the remainder of Prussia was assigned the burden of an immense indemnity, and the maintenance of a French army in her territory.

But the cup of humiliation was not drained until later when, standing with the Continent under his feet, Napoleon compelled the Prussian King to join the Rheinbund with what was left of his kingdom, to furnish France with troops, and thus to become tributary to his designs upon Europe.

Napoleon in the meantime, in an hour's interview with Alexander of Russia, had by the magic of his influence secured that Emperor's friendship. All this excellent man was fighting for was the peace of Europe! And he disclosed to Alexander his plan that they two should be the eternal custodians of that peace; which was to be secured by restraining the arrogance of England; and that was to be done by destroying her commercial prosperity. All of Europe was to be forbidden to trade with that country. There was to be a Continental blockade against a "nation of shopkeepers." Alexander was completely won, and he promised not to molest his new friend in his benevolent task.

The provinces dependent upon France were now divided up into kingdoms and principalities, and to make his own control over them more assured, Napoleon placed members of his own family and personal friends upon the various thrones.

His brother Louis was created King of Holland. His brother-in-law Murat was made King of Naples; Eugene Beauharnais, his step-son, Viceroy of Italy. Jerome Bonaparte, as we have seen, was King of Westphalia, and his brother Joseph he had already made King of Spain, in the time he could spare from more important matters in Germany.

And what was the real sentiment in Germany concerning this man at such a time? We hear that ninety German authors dedicated books to him and that servile newspapers were praising him; and we know that one of the immortal compositions of Beethoven was inspired by him. But we must recollect that he was too colossal and

too dazzling to be accurately measured, except from a distance. Even yet we are almost too near to him for that, and the world is as divided in its estimate of Napoleon as of the true meaning of Shakspeare's "Hamlet." It is an eternal controversy. He was a monstrous creation; colossal in his plans, colossal in his grasp of the forces about him, colossal in ambition, in selfishness, in cruelty, and in intelligence.

Napoleon realized the value of hereditary grandeur. He had been able to climb without it; but the sons who would succeed him as masters of Christendom must have the dignity of ancestry to fortify them. No blood but the Hapsburg was fit for this great office. He swept away Josephine as remorselessly as he had the Pope in Rome, and compelled Francis II. to bestow his daughter Marie Louise upon the man who had stripped him of his Crown and his Empire, and who was steadily absorbing what remained of his dignity.

The marriage took place in 1810, and with his Hapsburg Empress, Napoleon established a temporary court at Dresden.

Then there commenced the process which was intended finally to engulf all the separate German kingdoms in one universal abyss. The Kingdom of Holland was first annexed to the French Empire; then North Germany was swallowed up in the same way; the same fate evidently being intended next for the Rheinbund. The satellites had begun to fall into the sun!

CHAPTER XVII.

To the man guiding these astounding changes it seemed a very small matter then that a handful of Tyrolese peasants were in revolt against the French King in Bavaria; nor that a small group of philosophers, poets, and men of letters, were consulting together in Prussia over the shame of their betrayal by their rulers, and considering plans for guiding a popular movement for the emancipation of Germany.

But these were the first stirrings of a force Napoleon had not before had to contend with. He had fought with kings and princes and proud aristocracies clinging to their ancient splendor and possessions, but his armies had never been face to face with *patriotism*.

He had not met it, because it did not exist in the German Empire until he himself made its existence possible by breaking up the old stifling tyrannies. Now a few patriotic and courageous men all over Germany were combining, and inciting the people to revolt; an association called "The League of Virtue" was created. Then the Tyrolese peasants were subdued and their leader Hofer was shot in cold blood by Napoleon's orders. The King of Prussia was ordered to suppress the "League of Virtue," and French spies supposed they were uprooting patriotism by reporting it as treason to France.

Napoleon was at this moment at the climax of his greatness. He decreed that Rome should be annexed to his empire, and that his infant son should receive the title "King of Rome," which title should thereafter belong to the oldest son of the French Emperor. What if this did bring curses upon his name? He was now beyond the reach of blessings or curses from men; and probably was rather pleased than otherwise when Alexander I. threw off their sentimental friendship and defied him, by abandoning the plan of a Continental blockade for the ruin of England.

Now he was free to develop his gigantic plan. Does anyone suppose that the conquest of Russia was all of that plan? Far from it! There is every reason to believe that it was his intention, after Russia was subdued, to press on into Asia and to expel the English from their precious India!

Not since the days of Attila had there been seen such an army as was led into Russia—six hundred thousand men, of whom only one out of twenty was ever to return! And was it the lives of Frenchmen that he was spending so lavishly? Not at all. This great host was composed chiefly of Germans, Austrians, Prussians, Saxons, Bavarians, Swiss, who should have been fighting for their own liberation at home.

Lest Prussia should revolt in his absence the wary Napoleon garrisoned that kingdom with sixty thousand French troops, and took the sons of Prussia with him for the great human sacrifice in Russia.

It was the 7th of September when the great army moved. On and on they marched for two months through a silent and deserted land, only to reach at last a mysteriously silent city. Had a whole people fled at his approach? Napoleon took up his quarters in

the Kremlin. Suddenly fires broke out in a hundred places. The city became a roaring furnace. In vain did they try to stay the conflagration. In a few hours Moscow, his rich prize, was a mass of ruin and ashes.

Napoleon waited for a message from Alexander begging for peace; but none came. Then the snowflakes began to fall and fierce winds began to sweep down from the north. At length his stubborn pride had to bend. He sent his messengers to Alexander—still there was no answer. Provisions were failing, and there were leagues and leagues of deep and white snow between him and food for his famishing soldiers.

Then the Russians came. How could this starved, benumbed, frightened wreck of a great army stand before the Cossacks? The story of that "retreat" could never be written. Men, hollow-eyed and gaunt with misery, flung away their arms and fought with each other like wolves for a morsel of bread or a dead horse.

On the 5th of December Napoleon quietly slipped away, leaving the freezing, famishing victims of his ambition to make their own way back as they could; knowing that for all, save a fragment, of that mighty host the snow must be a winding sheet.

When Frederick William III. accepted that last humiliation and sent a Prussian army in the train of the conqueror to fight his battles, while Frenchmen guarded Prussians at home, the indignation was deep and wide-spread. Three of his best generals, Blücher and two others, resigned.

The Prussian contingent in the great invading army, which was under General York, had escaped many of the horrors of the retreat; and had returned with seventeen thousand out of the sixty thousand which had entered Russia.

This Prussian commander, as soon as he crossed the line with his soldiers, on his own responsibility abandoned the French and arranged a treaty of neutrality with the Russian general. Frederick disavowed the act, but it was received by the people of Prussia with wild enthusiasm. York called an assembly together at Königsberg, and boldly ordered that all men capable of bearing arms should be mustered into the Prussian army.

The force of public sentiment revealed by this was too overwhelming for the King to oppose. It swiftly swelled into a popular uprising in which all classes took part. It was the first great patriotic movement in Germany; and to Prussia belongs the glory of having initiated it. It was the Prussian people who converted their whole male population into an army and their country into an arsenal, and with one voice, and animated by one heart, refused longer to bear the degradation put upon them by their King. Hitherto the people had been led by their rulers. Now for a brief time they were going to be leaders, reluctantly followed by kings and princes.

Within five months two hundred and seventy thousand men were under arms and Frederick had been obliged to declare war against the Emperor of the French, in alliance with Russia and Sweden. Austria remained neutral, but the Rheinbund, with only two exceptions, still held to France.

Napoleon by the irresistible magic of his influence assembled an army nearly as large as the one he had just sacrificed in Russia. The campaign opened in April (1813). By June his star seemed to be waning, and Austria offered to mediate a peace. Napoleon insulted Metternich, who brought the proposals, and Francis II. joined the allies against his son-in-law. In October the end arrived.

The battle of Leipzig was to the people of Germany what Jena and Austerlitz had been to Napoleon. The news of this great victory was electrifying. From the Baltic to the Alps the air resounded with rejoicings.

There are no persuasions needed to make people leave a sinking ship. Jerome Bonaparte fled from his kingdom of Westphalia—the Rheinbund dissolved—Holland, Switzerland, Italy fell away. Wurtemberg joined the allies and the great movement for emancipation became national, not Prussian.

The allied princes offered to Napoleon that the Rhine, the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the sea should be the frontiers of France. Still believing in his invincibility, he scorned the proposition. His star had certainly deserted him, for while he was collecting his broken forces in Germany, and while hope was reviving over small victories, the allied armies, unknown to him, were advancing on Paris!

He learned it too late. History holds no picture more powerfully impressive than that of this man waiting at Fontainebleau, twelve leagues from Paris, still believing in his power to retrieve, and unconscious that he is already deposed! And the magic of his influence, the power of the spell he cast over mankind, is illustrated by the fact that even now, knowing him to have been a tyrant and a scourge as we do, rejoicing in his defeat as we must, we still cannot look at that picture without a moistened eye and almost a regret at his downfall!

Alexander, and Frederick William, and the allied armies were in Paris, which had capitulated, and at their bidding had consented to the deposition of Napoleon.

On the 6th of April, 1814, Louis XVIII., brother of the murdered Louis, was proclaimed King of France, and to the man who had been master of Europe was assigned—the island of Elba on the coast of Italy.

But in March of the following year, while sovereigns were still wrangling over the disorder he had left, and while Talleyrand was scheming for his new master as faithfully as he had for the old, the startling news came that Napoleon had landed in France. Louis XVIII. vanished into thin air before the man whom the people were receiving with wild acclamations of delight.

Europe again united, and again Napoleon was seen advancing, as of old, with a great army. Blücher was in command of one division of the allied armies and Wellington of the other.

The battle of Waterloo began on the morning of the 18th of June, 1815. To England was to belong the glory of Napoleon's final downfall. Wellington accomplished his defeat, and then Blücher came in time to make that defeat an annihilation.

The mistake of the year before was not to be repeated. From that moment until his death at St. Helena, in 1821, Napoleon was a prisoner and an exile. He had finished the work he had been appointed to do, and Fate had flung him aside!

CHAPTER XVIII.

Now came the difficult task of reconstruction and redistribution of territory. In what form should they arise out of this chaos? The dream of the people, like that of Hermann eighteen hundred years before, was of a German UNITY; not a renewal of the empire, but a great and new national life, in some firmer and truer form than it had yet known. But these were only dreams, vague and without any practical ideas as to their realization.

In the meantime men well versed in the arts and tricks of governing were deciding how all should be arranged. The plan proposed by Metternich, that master of diplomacy, who was minister to the Emperor of Austria, was the one adopted.

There was to be a confederation of thirty-nine German states. The *Act of Union*, by which this was effected, had a pleasant sound to the ear of the German people. But the Union existed only in a mutual defense against foreign foes, and a mutual aid in keeping the people of Germany well in check! The one outward and visible expression of this *Unity* was in a *General Diet*, to be held at Frankfort, under the presidency of Austria!

And this was what the *people* who had liberated their country were to receive as their reward! They were in no way recognized; were to possess no political power; the right of suffrage was not bestowed, and the Diet was prohibited from making any change in this form of confederation, except by a *unanimous* (*!*) vote. The German people were practically effaced and lost sight of in an autocratic confederation of states, with the Austrian Empire at its head.

That empire had received back its Italian possessions. Prussia had recovered Westphalia and her territory on the Rhine, and given up her Polish territory to Russia. Belgium and Holland had been merged into a kingdom of the Netherlands. Saxony, Wurtemberg, and Bavaria, which states had been made kingdoms by Napoleon, were permitted to remain such. Switzerland was a republic; and by the successful diplomacy of Talleyrand, Alsace and Lorraine, those insecure possessions, passed to France.

Such were some of the territorial adjustments. That the rulers of these kingdoms were reactionary in their purposes soon became apparent. One of the first acts of the King of Wurtemberg was to court-martial and cashier the general who had gone over to the German side at the battle of Leipzig! If none had gone over to the German side, where would have been the kingdom of Wurtemberg? In Mecklenburg the people were openly declared serfs. The Elector of Hesse-Cassel gave evidence that he was looking backward by putting his soldiers into the dress of the last century and powdered queues, and almost without exception the sovereigns were trying to construe the provisions of the *Act of Union* in a way to give the least liberty to the German people.

The currents of German thought and feeling move slowly, but they are deep and persistent. They had never been intemperate in their desires for freedom, but had simply asked for a government which should be more in conformity with the existing views of human rights. Their disappointment had been profound and bitter. The fathers earnestly talked over their wrongs at home, while their more fiery sons at the universities made speeches, sang songs, and banded themselves together into societies, with mottoes and badges and insignia, all under the same inspiring ideas,—UNION AND FREEDOM.

This began to look like Revolution. The freedom of the press was abolished. The formation of societies among students and mechanics was prohibited, and the universities were placed under the immediate control of the government. A savage police system was established. Hundreds of young men were thrown into prison, and hundreds more fled the country.

But while this repression produced a calm surface, it did not change the conditions beneath. In the meantime a "Holy Alliance" had been formed between Russia, Austria, and Prussia, for the purpose of repressing aspirations toward liberty in other lands, where this pestilential modern spirit was also rife.

But in 1830 there was a popular uprising in France. Charles X., another brother of the murdered Louis, had been pursuing a reactionary policy precisely similar to the one employed by the sovereigns in Germany. It was too late to do that in France. The people with small ceremony flung the Bourbon aside, and set up a constitutional monarchy with Louis Philippe at its head. This stirred anew the latent feeling in Germany. The people did not rise in a body, but so threatening did it appear that the Diet quickly yielded certain reforms and concessions for fear of more extreme resistance.

Francis II. died in 1835, and was succeeded by an almost imbecile son, Ferdinand I. In 1840 Frederick William III. of Prussia also died, and Frederick William IV., his son, became King. Metternich was now guiding the affairs of Austria, and William von Humboldt was the adviser of the new Prussian King, who inspired the people with a hope of better things. But while this King fostered science and art, he gave little care to the redressing of political wrongs, and things drifted toward a crisis.

Again a revolution in France reacted upon Germany. In 1848, Louis Philippe was cast aside as unceremoniously as had been his predecessor, and a Republic was proclaimed, with Louis Napoleon, nephew of the great Napoleon, at its head.

This new Bonaparte was a son of Louis Bonaparte, whom his imperial brother had made King of Holland. He married Hortense, the daughter of Josephine. So Fate intended that a child of the discarded Josephine, and not of Napoleon, should rule over France.

The proclamation of a republic in France awoke the slumbering forces of revolution in Europe. Not in one place, nor in two, did the fires spring up, but simultaneously in every German state. Hungary, led by Kossuth, was in revolt, and

fighting to the death to be freed from the Hapsburgs. In Italy Victor Emmanuel, the young King of Sardinia, was trying to drive the Austrian governor of Milan out of the kingdom, and when checked, he shook his sword at the advancing Austrians and said prophetically, "*There shall yet be an Italy!*" And while these things were going on in Italy and in Hungary, men were fighting in the streets of Vienna. The ozone of freedom had penetrated even to that last stronghold of despotic sentiment. The Emperor Ferdinand abdicated in this time of agitation, and his young nephew, Francis Joseph, ascended the Austrian throne.

The things the people were demanding in every state were: freedom of speech and of the press; the right of every man to bear arms; of all to assemble when and where they liked for political or other purposes; trial by jury; and the abolition of the hated Diet, with a complete reorganization of the state governments.

The princes were terrified. It seemed as if their expulsion, like that of Louis Philippe, was at hand.

And so it was, and would have ensued, had the people known their power or how to use it. But gradually the opportunity was lost. Concessions were made, new liberties were gained, but the *Unity* they hungered for was to come in another and unexpected way, and for ten years the confederation was to exist practically unchanged.

Still, although the fruits of their efforts seemed meager in comparison with what had been hoped, there had been one great concession made. The Diet, under the pressure of the crisis, had consented to steps which led finally to the formation of a National Parliament.

When that parliament met at Frankfort, German patriots believed the hour of liberation had struck. Full of hope and confidence they thought the end was attained, when six hundred men of character and intelligence came together to formulate a new plan of union based upon *The Sovereignty of the People*!

But such a task requires something more than patriotism and enthusiasm, and theoretic views about human rights. It needs practical political experience, and clearly defined plans for action. After vainly trying to harmonize conflicting opinions a plan of union was finally adopted, and Frederick William IV. was elected "Hereditary Emperor of Germany."

All save the smaller states refused to accede to the proposed plan, and Frederick William himself declined the proffered title, saying, "They forget that there are princes still in Germany, and that I am one of them."

So the attempt at reorganization was a miserable failure, and the national parliament gradually dissolved. In the meantime the revolutionary fires in Europe had burned out. Hungary was again submissive in the grasp of the Hapsburgs, and Austria was also once more supreme in Italy; while the French republic, which had lighted this conflagration, had become a monarchy.

The national party had developed no great leader, had shown no ability to grasp its opportunity. The people, disheartened and in sullen disappointment, saw the old Bund-Diet restored at Frankfort, in 1851, and found themselves back in a slightly improved and amended confederation, still under the headship of Austria.

Then Louis Napoleon's assumption of Imperial power, in 1851, gave renewed strength to the German rulers. It demonstrated the instability of popular governments, and the sure return to the good old methods of their fathers, as soon as the temporary madness of the people had subsided.

So all things conspired to depress aspiration and to make the hopes awakened in 1848 a tantalizing delusion. It was not night, but it was a very dark and dreary day for patriotism in Germany. The country was under a spell which no one knew how to break.

In 1857 Frederick William IV. was stricken with apoplexy, and his brother, Prince William, was appointed Prince Regent.

The new emperor of the French, with oppressive sense of the greatness of his name, was looking about for opportunities to be Napoleonic. In 1856 he had formed an alliance with England against Russia. The fact of the alliance of itself gave weight to the rather flimsy fabric of his greatness, while the results of the Crimean War added much to its solidity. In the year 1859 Italy was vainly struggling to free herself from the grasp of Austria. Mazzini, the exalted dreamer, and Garibaldi, the soldier and patriot, with Cavour, the no less patriotic statesman, though with different ends in view, were working together for the destruction of the Austrian yoke, which must be preliminary to any form of Italian nationality. The astute statesman saw in the ambition of Napoleon III. a means to that end.

When Napoleon promised an "Italy free from the Alps to the Apennines," and when the splendid victory of Magenta was quickly followed by that of Solferino, and when the young Francis Joseph, with tears in his eyes, ordered the retreat of his defeated army over the Mincio, the dream of centuries seemed about to be realized. Then came the startling news that the two emperors were in consultation at Villafranca over the terms of peace! Venice was not to be liberated. There was to be a consolidation of the Italian kingdoms "under the honorary Presidency of the Pope"—whatever that meant—and a "general amnesty" was declared. It was with sullen rage that the disappointed patriots saw Nice and Savoy handed over to France, and Rome garrisoned with French troops, while a French emperor was posing as the liberator of an Italy which was not liberated! But although the mills of the gods were moving slowly, they were going to grind exceeding fine. Victor Emmanuel and a regenerated Italy were not far off, and for Germany there was at hand a new era.

Frederick William IV. died, and in 1861 William I. was crowned King of Prussia.

CHAPTER XIX.

King William's youth was far behind him. He had already spent a long life (sixty-four years) and had never expected to occupy a throne. He had not the brilliant qualities of his brother, he did not concern himself much about science or letters; but he was profoundly impressed with the responsibilities of his position; and it at once became apparent that Prussia had a wise and sagacious King, who would make her well-being his sole care and ambition.

His first act was a thorough reorganization of the army. Then he looked about him for a man wise enough and strong enough for him to lean upon. Baron Otto von Bismarck-Schönhausen had just returned from St. Petersburg, where he had been Prussian ambassador.

He was a conservative of the extreme type, hated and feared by the liberal and national party no less than Metternich. But no man better than he comprehended the policy of Austria, and all the complicated threads composing the web of German politics.

The choice of this man for minister to the King augured ill for the liberals. The outlook had never been darker than at this hour before the dawn.

But great political storms, like storms of another sort, are full of surprises. The ominous storm clouds we have feared roll away and vanish in calm, and the little ones, not larger than a man's hand, suddenly expand and darken our sky. A fateful storm was gathering for Germany in the duchy of Schleswig-Holstein.

Of the nature of the Schleswig-Holstein entanglement someone (Was it Beaconsfield?) wittily said that there were only two men in Europe who understood it, himself and another; and the other was dead. But that was a mistake. There was a man in Prussia who understood it, and who lived to use it for his own far-reaching designs.

The principal threads in the tangled web were as follows:

The two adjacent dukedoms of Schleswig and Holstein, which constitute a sort of natural bridge about 150 miles long and 50 miles wide, between Denmark and Prussia, are, by the way, the land of nativity for the Anglo-Saxon race, the Angles having inhabited Schleswig, and the Saxons Holstein, at the time they so kindly protected the Britons from the Picts and Scots.

So it is probable that every member of the Anglo-Saxon family has some ancestral root running back to that fertile strip of pasture land.

It had for many years been under the Danish protectorate, the King of Denmark being, by virtue of his position, also Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, just as the German Emperor is now King of Prussia by virtue of his imperial office.

But this little people was by no means merged with the Danish by this arrangement; on the contrary, they preserved very jealously their own traits and ancestral traditions. Among these was the exclusion of women from the royal succession—the Salic law, framed by their Frank ancestors centuries before on the banks of the river Saale, being part of their constitution. Hence, when King Frederick

VII. of Denmark died in 1862 without male heir, and King Christian IX. became King, the people of the two dukedoms hotly refused to recognize him as their lawful ruler, but claimed their right of reversion to Duke Frederick VIII., who was in the direct male line of succession.

Had the Salic law prevailed in Denmark, this Duke Frederick (father of the present young Empress of Germany) would now be King of Denmark instead of Christian IX. But it did not exist, so Christian, father of the Dowager Empress of Russia—of the Princess of Wales—and of King George of Greece—became, in 1862, lawful King of Denmark, with rights unimpaired by female descent.

Schleswig-Holstein revolted against being held by a ruler who, according to her constitution, was not the terminal of the royal line, and insisted upon bestowing herself instead upon the German Duke Frederick VIII. Denmark naturally resisted. Salic law or no Salic law, the dukedoms were hers, and should stay. Of course Austria, as the head of the German confederation, had to be consulted, and she thought well of uniting with Prussia to compel the cession of the twin dukedoms, which would have been quickly absorbed had not the European powers intervened and forbidden this encroachment upon the rights of Denmark.

It was just at this crisis that Bismarck was appointed prime minister of Prussia, and commenced his series of brilliant moves upon the European chessboard.

King Christian of Denmark, pleased with his success in retaining the refractory states, determined to go still farther; that is, to adopt a new constitution separating these Siamese twins, which should, in fact, detach Schleswig from Holstein, incorporating it permanently with Denmark.

This was in direct violation of the treaty with the Great Powers made in London, 1852, and afforded the needed pretext for war.

The moment and the man had arrived. Bismarck, with the intuition of a good player, saw his opportunity, pushed up the pawn, Schieswig-Holstein, and said, "Check to your king."

The Prussian and Austrian troops poured into Denmark, and in a few short weeks the blooming isthmus had ceased to be Danish and had become German.

Austria generously said, "We will divide the prize. Schleswig shall be Prussian, and Holstein Austrian."

Could anything be more odious to the Prussians? The long arm of Austrian tyranny stretching way over their land, up to their northern seaboard! It might better have become Danish. But all things come to him who waits, and—Bismarck waited.

Neither Austria nor the German people had the slightest comprehension of the Minister's deep-laid plans. When he said that the German question could "only be settled by blood and steel," the people construed it as the brutal utterance of despotism. And when it looked as if they might be involved in a war with Austria over this paltry Holstein affair they were stunned, and believed that a desperate man was

leading Prussia to her ruin for his own ambitious purposes. What could they with their nineteen millions of people do against Austria, with her fifty millions!

But Bismarck cared not and heeded not. He was too intent upon his game. He knew what no one else seemed to know, that there was no chance for Germany until she was emancipated from Austria.

Again he pushed up his useful little pawn and said "check," but this time to the Emperor of Austria. Ah! here was a game worth watching. Europe and America, too, were willing to let their morning coffee get cold in studying the moves. Francis Joseph did not see as far into the game as his astute adversary, whose keen eye was focused at long range upon a renewed Germany, in which there should be no Austria.

The conflict was short (only seven weeks), but the preparation had been thorough. The 3d of July will long be remembered by Germany. King William was there; the Crown Prince was there, now become "Unser Fritz," by his superb military achievements, the ideal prince and soldier of modern Europe; and Königgrätz, like Waterloo, decided the game. Francis Joseph was checkmated. A galling servitude to Austria existed no more. What wonder that the people were glad, or that Unser Fritz was their idol, and Bismarck became their demigod!

A great physician correctly diagnoses the disease before he treats it. Bismarck knew why the attempts at a German union had been futile. He knew such a union never could exist until Austria was eliminated from it.

An overwhelming revulsion in sentiment followed. The man whom the despotic element had leaned upon became the adored leader of the liberal party. He had no sentimental theories about human rights. His personal tendencies were toward despotism rather than freedom. But he had the acuteness to recognize the advantages which would be derived from a liberal policy and the ardent support of the *people*.

A new confederation of states was formed called the *North German Union*, with a parliament elected by the people. It was composed of all the states except Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and Baden.

The several states were united under a general Federal Government, somewhat like that of the United States of America, of which the King of Prussia was *President*, and Bismarck was *Chancellor*.

This new union was Protestant and Prussian, and forever separated from all that was Catholic and Austrian. In five short years what a change! Truly, "blood and iron" had proved a wonderful tonic for Germany!

In the year 1763 Prussia won the province of Silesia after a seven years' war with Austria. Just one century later, in 1866, a war of seven weeks with that same power placed her at the head of a firmly consolidated German nation. A result so astonishing from a conflict so brief must ever be a phenomenon in history; and had it been necessary, seven years would not have been too long to struggle for such a reward.

And what of poor little Schleswig-Holstein, that land of our race nativity? If she had indulged in any innocent expectation of benefit from such brilliant espousal of her

cause she was disappointed. And she must have realized that she had been only the humble hinge upon which the door of opportunity had swung open for Germany.

CHAPTER XX.

There was a man in France to whom these overturnings were especially distasteful. Napoleon III., sitting in brand-new splendor upon his newly created throne, was industriously engaged in building up an empire and a reputation upon Napoleonic lines. These lines of course were despotic. So the triumph of liberalism in Germany, the creation of a new political power with Austria and despotism cast out, was a severe blow to his policy and to his prestige. It weakened him in Europe, where he aspired to headship, and at home, where he should be considered invincible, not alone in arms, but in statecraft.

The Crimea, Magenta, and Solferino had been splendid decorations to his reign; but they looked tame and insignificant since this transforming *Seven Weeks' War*. Then, too, his magnificent scheme of an empire in Mexico, with a Hapsburg ruling under a French protectorate—that had miserably failed. And now there had suddenly arisen, as if out of the ground, a new political Germany, which rivaled France in strength. Frenchmen began to ask whether this man was, after all, such a great leader, and destined to wear the mantle of his uncle!

Obviously the thing to do was to recover his waning prestige by a splendid victory over this new power of which Prussia was the head.

If the Emperor had any misgivings they were swept away by the beautiful Empress Eugénie, who, intensely Catholic, saw in the ascendency of Protestant Prussia, and the humiliation of Catholic Austria, an impious blow at the Catholic faith in Europe.

So the war was determined upon. Only one obstacle existed. There was nothing to fight about! But that could be overcome, and in 1870 a pretext was found.

Queen Isabella had been expelled from Spain, and there existed that perennial source of disturbance in Europe, a vacant Spanish throne. From among the several candidates, Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern, a relative of William I. of Prussia, was chosen.

The French ambassador Benedetti received instant orders to demand of King William that he should prohibit Prince Leopold from accepting the offer.

The King made answer that "not having advised it, he could not forbid it." However, to the disappointment of the Emperor, the Hohenzollern prince voluntarily declined, and the way to a war seemed closed again.

But the Empress Eugénie was intent upon her object, and the war-fever had taken deep hold upon the people of France. So the fateful dispatch was sent to Benedetti—"Be rough to the King."

The kindly old King William was peacefully sunning himself at Ems, when the ambassador discourteously approached him and made an abrupt demand for a guarantee that no Hohenzollern should *ever* occupy the throne of Spain. The words and the manner were offensive—as they were intended to be.

The King, recognizing an intended impertinence, without replying turned away and left Benedetti standing. Here was the opportunity. The telegraph swiftly bore the news that the French ambassador had been publicly insulted by the King of Prussia. France was in a blaze of indignation. These Prussians should be taught that the great French Empire was not to be insulted with impunity.

Not a shadow of doubt existed as to the result. The French army was invincible, and the southern German states would be glad at the deliverance. They would welcome an invading army, and perhaps Hesse and Hanover also would revolt and the new Prussian confederation would fall to pieces in their hands. The birthday of Napoleon I., the 15th of August, must be celebrated in Berlin!

Such were the wild expectations when the French army moved, bearing away with it the boy Prince Imperial, that he might witness for himself his father's triumphs, and receive an object lesson, as it were, in avenging insult to the imperial dignity, which would one day be in his keeping!

This was the way it looked in France. How was it in Germany? There was no north and no south German. Men and states sprang together as a unit, showing how vital was the bond which had existed only for four years. It was no longer a German race combining with a common purpose, but a German nation instinct with one life, and solemnly resolved to defend it or to perish. In only eleven days an army of four hundred and fifty thousand soldiers was under the command of Moltke, with the Crown Prince Frederick William leading one of the three great divisions.

In less than three weeks, instead of waging an aggressive war in Germany, the French were fighting for their existence on their own soil.

In less than a month the French Emperor was a prisoner, and in seven months his empire was swept out of existence; the Germans were in Paris—and King William, Unser Fritz, Bismarck, and Von Moltke were quartered at Versailles.

France had given up Alsace and Lorraine, had agreed to pay an indemnity of *five thousand millions* of francs, and was glad to have peace even at that price!

The surrenders of Metz (August 4), and of Sedan (September 2), were monumental disasters, and history would be searched in vain for such a crushing defeat of a proud and strong nation as was consummated by the Treaty of Peace signed at Paris on the 10th of May, 1871.

Even the three southern states, Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and Baden, had participated in this Franco-Prussian war. So the last barrier to a completed union was removed, and a dramatic climax occurred in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles on the 18th of January, 1871.

In that very hall where Richelieu, and Louis XIV., and Louis XV. had schemed to entangle and cripple and rob Germany, and where Napoleon I. had plotted the destruction of the German Empire, Ludwig II., King of Bavaria, in the name of the rest of the German states, laid their united allegiance at the feet of King William of

Prussia, begging him to assume the crown and with it the title of "Hereditary Emperor of the German Empire."

It is a curious fact that Bavaria, which had always been a thorn in the side of the Empire, which from the time of the first Duke Welf had stood for all that was conservative and despotic and reactionary, should have taken the initiative in the final act which set a seal upon the triumph of liberalism in Germany. It was recompense full and ample for the trouble she had given in the past!

The return to Germany was a march of triumph. The popular enthusiasm knew no bounds. It was less than ten years since those days of gloom and depression. What a change had been wrought! Was it all done by blood and iron? They had been mighty factors certainly, but they had been used by a masterful intelligence, which had also recognized the power of *patriotism*. The empire which was immediately organized was simply a renewal of the *North German Union*.

The dream of Hermann had at last been realized. There was a United Germany.

When in 1888 Emperor William I. sank under the weight of years and the crown rested upon the head of his son Frederick, that adored prince was no longer in the full tide of victorious youth, but being borne by a swiftly ebbing tide beyond the reach of earthly honors. He was a stricken and indeed a dying man when the opportunity came to carry out the policy he had intended for Germany.

What that policy was we shall never know, nor whether it would have been a safe and a wise one. We are sure it would have been beneficent, for no gentler, kindlier prince ever had power and opportunity.

The distrust of him manifested by the conservative party, and notably by Bismarck, and one still nearer to him, leads us to believe that he leaned too strongly toward the ideal of the patriots of 1860. But we shall never know. We can only conjecture whether in Frederick's death Germany escaped a danger or missed an opportunity.

The unseemly dissensions, the heartbreaking complications, which tormented this dying man make one of the saddest chapters in history; and his reign of five months can scarcely be matched in suffering. At last it was ended. The untarnished soul and tortured body parted company, and William II. reigned in his stead.

It is not the province of history to pass judgment upon the living. When the young Emperor William II. dismissed his great chancellor, he assumed the full responsibility of his empire. Whether he has the intelligence and the wisdom required to control, unaided, the forces at home, or to guide his bark amid the whirl of European currents, later histories will tell.

But one thing is very certain. Time spent to-day in riveting antiquated chains upon Germany is time thrown away; and the ruler who desires his work to be permanent must turn his back upon medievalism and must realize that the true source of abiding power in his country is that sentiment which emancipated her from Napoleon in 1814, and which in 1871 made of her a UNITED GERMANY.