

PRINCE BISMARCK.

It is too soon to declare a definite opinion upon Prince Bismarck, on the man and on his work. If we yielded to the impression of the moment, one would be inclined to believe that the future will not belong to such enterprises as he has taken in hand. In the struggle with Catholicism he has not succeeded; he wavers, he has sought to come to terms, and he has only drawn back because the conditions imposed by Rome were too hard. In the interior of the empire that he has founded, he cannot endure liberty. There, too, he draws back, and has recourse to the most violent compression. He dissolves all associations, he suppresses every newspaper that concerns itself with the interests of the workmen, he breaks up even a glee-club. Books that were published under the old régime are now confiscated, including even the works of one whom he admires, and whom he would fain have made his friend, Ferdinand Lassalle. This compression *à outrance* is a detestable policy, and offers no warrant for durability. It is out of all harmony with the spirit of the time. After many tackings in this direction and that, it will come to an end, and the ideas which it was intended to annihilate, will revive in greater force than ever. At the same time, the work to which Prince Bismarck has uniformly subordinated all else—the unity of Germany—that will survive. That is the product of the tendency to great ethnographic agglomerations which displays itself in the present epoch, and which was first proclaimed under Napoleon III. This force was at work long before Prince Bismarck, it will continue at work long after him. His success is due to the fact that he perceived this law, and that, instead of resisting it, as has been done by statesmen behind their time—M. Thiers, for instance, and Lord Beaconsfield—he made himself its instrument and its captain. Napoleon III., Bismarck, Cavour, agreed to reconstruct the map of Europe on the principle of nationalities. Only Bismarck and Cavour had the secret of effective action, whilst with Napoleon III. the action always halted after the conception.

In Germany a book has just been published which excites the keenest attention—*Graf Bismarck und seine Leute während des Kriegs mit Frankreich*. The book is interesting for more reasons than one. It is a curious composition, like Martin Luther's *Table Talk*, or the *Mémoires de Sainte-Hélène*. Nobody but Herr Moritz Busch, Bismarck's secretary, could have told all, like Las Cases writing at the dictation of Napoleon. Herr Busch is a clever journalist with a ready pen, well acquainted with foreign languages,

and an observant and experienced traveller. At the beginning of the campaign of 1870 he was attached to the Chancellor's staff. He executed for him the summaries from the foreign newspapers, he drew up under his inspiration, or from his dictation, telegrams and articles for the German press. He lived in the closest intimacy with Bismarck, taking his meals at the same table, residing under the same roof, and never leaving his side. He was not the only official filling the same post. We find along with him two other private secretaries, Herr Lothar Bucher, and Abeken. Herr Bucher had been the private friend of Marx and Lassalle, an influential and extremely capable Socialist. Herr Busch carefully noted down every evening the words that had fallen from Prince Bismarck during dinner or at tea. He reproduces them in his book *verbatim*, or sometimes in a summary. Of course we may be sure that he only publishes what he has been authorised to divulge to the public.

What deserves attention is this. The principal agents of Prince Bismarck during the memorable months of the French campaign are three publicists, two of them journalists, who do nothing all day long except summarise or compose newspaper articles. Opinion, as all the world knows, is in our days the great and supreme power, which in the long run directs events. Bismarck understands this, he has organized this new force on system, and he has insisted on getting it into his own hand. This is why he publishes the *Correspondence de Berlin*, written in French, and intended for the special use of foreign newspapers. It is a deep combination, ingeniously executed. This sheet of yellow paper contains all that the Chancellor has an interest in seeing reproduced in foreign countries—his speeches, any facts favourable to his policy or his views, everything that can produce a good impression. As a curious detail one may notice that this *Correspondence* is printed upon one side of the paper only, so that extracts from it can easily be cut out, and thus newspapers that are printed in French procure all that is placed under the heading of Germany, free of cost. This news, prepared at Berlin, passes into circulation, and appears even in the papers most hostile to German policy. It is because opinion is the queen of the world, that Prince Bismarck, when he started for the campaign, took journalists for aides-de-camp, and it is for the same reason probably that he now permits the publication of Herr Busch's book.

However hostile one may be to Prince Bismarck's policy, it is impossible not to be interested in spite of oneself in what concerns him. This is natural; the history of Europe for fifteen years has his personality for its pivot. It is he who is behind the events that we have seen unrolling themselves under our eyes. As Herr Busch says, even insignificant details strike us when they refer to him. Besides, the Chancellor is not dead. He is still the great factor in the

development of the drama that is proceeding in our sight. If, therefore, we can penetrate his views and his ideas, we shall see more clearly before us. This is what people seek with avidity in the table-talk reported by Herr Busch. He publishes, moreover, summaries of certain episodes that are now finished, according to the direct communication of the Chancellor, and these are of capital importance.

The Chancellor's mode of life is peculiar. He gets up late, towards ten o'clock, because he does not succeed in going to sleep till towards morning. At breakfast he takes tea and two eggs, and after that nothing until dinner, when he eats and drinks freely. Bismarck himself complains of such a regimen, but the habit is formed. In one of the conversations he tells how the nights pass. "My brain," he says, "is incessantly at work. All the combinations of politics come back to me as in a nightmare, and I see everything on its dark side. I fall asleep as soon as my head is on its pillow, but I soon awake and remain awake till dawn. Now and then a dream gives me rest for awhile. I see Varzin—all the trees that I know so well, and the blue sky, and I fancy that I am enjoying it all." Little wonder that sleep should flee from the Chancellor's couch! What varied occupations all day long, what anxieties, what terrible responsibilities weigh upon him every minute of every hour! Herr Busch thus describes the employment of his days:—

"The Chancellor's almost superhuman capability of working, whether creatively, receptively, or critically; of solving the most difficult problems, of instantly hitting upon the right thing to do and seeing the way to do it, was, perhaps, never so remarkably shown as during this time. And it was the more wonderful as but few hours' sleep were allowed for restoring his exhausted powers. As at home so in the field, unless an expected battle called him before daybreak to the King's side, the minister rose most frequently at a late hour, usually about ten. He had, however, sat up the whole night, and had only fallen to sleep when the morning light was shining through the windows. Frequently he resumed his full mental activity before he was fairly out of bed, perusing and annotating despatches, reading the journals, giving instructions to councillors and other fellow-workers, proposing questions and problems of the greatest variety, and even writing or dictating. Later, there were visitors to be received, or audiences to be given, or there was the King to be advised. Then came study of despatches and reports, correction of papers which had been ordered, jotting down of ideas with the large well-known pencil, composition of letters. There was information to be given by telegram, or communications to be made to the press, and in the midst of it all, perhaps, unavoidable receptions, which often must have been anything but welcome. Not till two or perhaps three o'clock, if a considerable halt on the march was made, did the Chancellor allow himself any relaxation, such as a ride in the surrounding country. After that, work again till dinner, between five and six. An hour and a half after dinner at the latest he was again at his writing-table,

and at midnight he was often to be seen reading or committing his thoughts to paper."

It comes out from Herr Busch's book that Prince Bismarck has one supreme aim, the greatness of Germany, and that to this aim he subordinates all the rest as simple means to his end. Even in his university days he dreamed of the unity of Germany:—

"I remember when in Göttingen, upwards of thirty years ago, laying a wager with an American concerning the probable union of Germany within twenty years. The stakes were, the winner to give the loser twenty-five bottles of champagne, the loser to pay a visit to the winner on the other side of the ocean. He betted Germany would not be united, I that it would be. When 1853 arrived, I recollected the affair, and intended to fulfil my part of the bargain. On making inquiries, however, I found that he was dead. I may add that the American's name was hardly suggestive of longevity—Coffin. The curious thing, however, is, that even so long ago as 1833, as the above narrative shows, I must have had a firm faith that that which, with God's help, has happened, would happen, although at that time I was thoroughly opposed to the political societies that were labouring for that end."

As for the means towards the end, this is how he sets forth his policy, at a dinner at Versailles, at which Thiers and M. Jules Favre were present; it was during the negotiations for the surrender of Paris:—

"We must adapt ourselves to facts, to the situation of affairs, to possibilities; we must serve our country according to circumstances, not according to our own opinions, which are often merely prejudices. On his entrance into political life, he had quite other views and aims than now. He has changed much since those early years. After reconsidering a point, he has often not hesitated to sacrifice his own wishes partially or entirely to requirements of the hour, in the public interest. We must not inflict personal inclinations and wishes upon the Fatherland. 'La patrie veut être servie, et pas dominée.'"

Thus, after the first rout of the French on the frontier, the resolution was taken to keep Alsace. Herr Busch gives a summary of the reasons alleged by Bismarck. "After 1815," he said, "we could not obtain from the Allies good frontiers. In three centuries Germany has been attacked twelve times by France. We should show generosity in vain. We have no gratitude to expect from the conquered. Sooner or later they will insist upon revenge. The only means of security is to give ourselves good frontiers." On another occasion, at dinner, he tells how all his ancestors have fought against France ever since the sixteenth century:—

"My father and three of his brothers fought in 1814. Then my grandfather was at Rossbach, my great-grandfather fought against Louis XIV., and his father also in the petty Rhenish wars of 1672 or 1673. Then several of our family fought in the Thirty Years' War on the imperial side, a few with the Swedes. Lastly, one served with the German mercenaries employed by the Huguenots."

We see how patriotism and family tradition act at the same time upon the Chancellor. He feels himself the true representative of Germany. On looking at what is passing, we might be tempted to believe that Prince Bismarck deceived himself. Germany without Alsace would probably have been more secure than with all the forts of Metz and Strasburg.

Herr Busch records certain facts which may explain one of the great political enigmas of the time. In May, 1875, Germany was preparing to exact the disarmament of France. I happened to be in Paris at that moment. Paying a visit to the Princess Orloff, who was persuaded of the imminence of war, I met Madame F., wife of a German minister at Brussels. This lady said she had seen the English Minister at the Court of Brussels on the eve of her departure from that city, and that having asked him when he was going for his summer holiday, he answered, "It will not do for us to leave our post; we shall be lucky if we are not driven away by French or German troops." One of my college friends, belonging to the Ministry of War, confirmed the fact of the gravity of the situation. "We are aware," said he, "what are the terms that Prussia is bent on imposing upon us: to reduce our army to 200,000 men, and to abandon all work on the fortifications. We are in no condition to resist, we shall withdraw our troops behind the Loire. It is for Europe to consider whether she wishes Germany definitely to occupy France." As we know, Europe did intervene. England actively used her influence at Berlin. The Emperor of Russia did still more, for he rushed in all haste to Berlin in person, along with his Chancellor, and after interviews which filled all Europe with excitement, Prince Gortschakoff launched his famous telegram—"Peace is now assured." These were the facts. What was the explanation? Two years ago Prince Bismarck declaimed with the greatest indignation against the calumnies of the newspapers on this subject. Quite recently, in a conversation with the *Times* correspondent, he declared that it was Prince Gortschakoff who sought to get credit for preserving the peace of Europe. Is this explanation admissible? Did England and Russia in 1875 dream a dream of imaginary danger? Was the famous despatch of Prince Gortschakoff a mere falsehood? Surely this is very difficult to believe. On the other hand, can we suppose that Prince Bismarck, who thinks so much of the judgment of history, would have the effrontery to deny an actual circumstance, the proofs of which are capable of being brought into the light of day? All would be explained by admitting the existence and the strength of a military party by the side of, and as it were over the head of, Prince Bismarck himself. Herr Busch reports to us at every instant the bitter complaints of the Chancellor, of the ignorance in which he was left by the generals. "I always learn

too late," he says, "what I ought to know before all others; the foreigner knows more than I do; and yet it is I who will have to treat about peace. How can I fix my plans, if I am ignorant of the facts which are to serve as their base?" He even complains of being put into bad quarters by the military people.

"In general the worst possible provision was made for the Foreign Office. The most uncomfortable lodgings were constantly assigned to the head of the department, and uncomfortable lodgings, as luck would have it, were always to be found. 'Yes,' says the Chancellor, laughing, 'it is really too bad, the way they behave to me. And what ingratitude on the part of these military gentlemen towards one who always served them so well in the Chamber at home! They shall see, however, how different I can be. I have come out to the field in the spirit of a loyal soldier; I shall return home in the spirit of a member of the Opposition.'"

On another occasion the Chancellor gives an account how he passed the night after the victory of Sadowa.

"The word was given that the gentlemen should find their own quarters. This was, however, more easily said than done. The houses were closed, and one would have needed pioneers to break open the doors. But these would not arrive before five o'clock in the morning.' 'Your Excellency knew how to help yourself at Gravelotte,' remarked Delbrück. 'Well, I went into Horsitz,' continued the minister, 'past several houses, and at last I found an open door. Having advanced a couple of steps over the threshold, I fell into a sort of wolf's pit. Fortunately it was not deep, and, as I soon became convinced, there was horsedung therein. At first I thought, How now if I never come out again? I was soon, however, aware, by reason of the smell, that something else was there. How oddly things sometimes happen! If that pit had been twenty feet deep and full, the next morning they would have had to look long for their minister-president. I got out again, and found shelter under the arcade of the market-place. I made a bed of a couple of carriage cushions, took a third for a pillow, and stretched myself in hope of getting sleep. When I had laid myself down I felt my hand touch something wet, and on investigation it turned out to be the filth of the cattle-market.'"

The Chancellor had been given to complaining of his quarters from old days. So far back as 1862, one of his letters records his grumblings about the quarters of the German embassy at Paris:—

"The house is nicely situated, but is dark, damp, and cold. The sunny side is taken up with stairs and *nonvaleurs*, everything is towards the north, and smells of drainage and dry-rot. Not a single piece of furniture is uncovered, no nook where one would like to sit down; three-fourths of the house are locked up, and covered up, like the 'best parlour;' and, without topsy-turvy-ing all, the arrangement not available for everyday use. The maids live three, the children two, stories high; the first-floor contains only the bedroom with a huge bed, and besides this, one old-fashioned drawing-room (style 1811) after the other, many staircases and anterooms. The actual dwelling-rooms are on

the ground-floor, looking to the north, next to the garden, in which I warm myself whenever the sun shines—at the utmost three times a week for a few hours. . . Besides this, in the whole first-floor, only one bedroom, and nothing else, and the whole home-life two stories high; narrow, dark, steep stairs, which I cannot pass on account of my breadth of shoulder—and without crinoline. The main-staircase goes only as far as the first-floor, but to make up for it, three ladder-like ones at both ends of the house up to the top. In this way Hatzfeld and Pourtales have existed all the time, but have also died there in the prime of life; and if I remain in this house I shall also die sooner than I want to. I would not care to live in it as a free gift, if only for the smell.”

And in the same interesting volume¹ we have the same complaints against people who do not measure the niceties of diplomatic requirements. Writing after Sadowa, he says:—

“Matters are going well with us; if we are not immoderate in our demands, and do not imagine that we have conquered the world, we shall acquire a peace, which will be worth the trouble. But we are just as quickly intoxicated as discouraged, and I have the ungrateful task of pouring water in the foaming wine, and to make them see that we are not living alone in Europe, but with three neighbours still.”

And again:—

“To-morrow we expect to be in Berlin. Great contention about the speech from the throne. The good people have not enough to do, and see nothing but their own nose, and exercise their swimming powers on the stormy waves of phrase. Our enemies we can manage, but our friends! They almost all of them wear blinkers, and see only one spot of the world.”

Instead of reporting in detail the different stories of the Chancellor on the subject of the Benedetti episode in 1866, Herr Busch thinks it his duty to give a mere summary of them. It is not unlikely, therefore, that we have before us a version that has been revised by Prince Bismarck himself. This version is confirmed by the revelations that have recently been published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* from the papers of M. Drouyn de Lhuys. We only see there, it would appear, that after Sadowa M. Benedetti would concede no more to Prussia than a slight rectification of the frontier. At Paris Herr von Goltz obtained nothing from M. Drouyn de Lhuys. “If you take what you require,” said he, “you will have to give us compensation on our bank of the Rhine.” Herr von Goltz went to see the Emperor in person, and obtained at once far more from him than Bismarck had hoped. Napoleon III. reckoned on indemnifying himself with Belgium and Luxemburg. This is what comes out in the story of Herr Busch. According to him, M. Benedetti at first demanded the cession of the left bank of the

(1) An English translation has recently been published by Sir Fitzhardinge Maxse. (Chapman & Hall. 1878.)

Rhine as far as Mainz. The last word of Prince Bismarck was, "Never! War sooner."

"Turn the attention of his Imperial Majesty to the point that such a war may, under certain circumstances, become a war attended with shocks of revolution, and that in face of revolutionary dangers the German dynasties would prove to be more firmly established than the dynasty of the Emperor Napoleon."

"Upon this conference of the 12th of August followed a concessory letter of the Emperor, and the curtain of the first act fell with the withdrawal of the demand for German territory. Only four days later, however, began the second act of the drama, the question of Belgium. In a letter of the 16th of August, which was brought to Count Benedetti, by a M. Chauvy, from Paris, and which contained 'le résumé le plus succinct et le plus précis possible' of his instructions, it runs—

"1. The negotiation is to be of a friendly character.
 "2. It must in essentials be confidential (here follow the names of the persons who are to take part in it).
 "3. Regard always being had to the probabilities of success, let your demands run through in order the three following phases:—In the first place, having brought into juxtaposition the question of the boundaries of 1814 and the annexation of Belgium, you must ask the cession of Landau, Saarlouis, and Saarbrück, as well as withdrawal from the duchy of Luxemburg, all by open treaty. Further, you should endeavour to procure an offensive and defensive alliance, which must be secret, as authorisation and support of our future incorporation of Belgium. Secondly, should the attainment of all the above ends appear to you impossible, you may abandon Saarlouis and Saarbrück, even Landau, that old eyry (vieuille bicoque), which might excite German feeling against us, and limit the open agreements to the duchy of Luxemburg, the secret ones to the union of Belgium with France. Thirdly, if the proposal for the absolute union of Belgium with France encounters too great difficulties, suggest an article whereby it shall be agreed, in order to avoid objections on the part of England, that Antwerp shall become a free town. But in no case are you to assent to the union of Antwerp with Holland or of Maestricht with Prussia. If Herr von Bismarck asks what advantage a treaty of this kind is to bring him, the answer would be simply as follows: He secures an important ally, he confirms all his recent gains, he only consents to the taking of what does not belong to him, and he makes no single serious sacrifice in return for the advantages he obtains. Thus, then, a public treaty, which assigns us Luxemburg at least; a secret treaty, stipulating for an alliance offensive and defensive; acquiescence in the incorporation of Belgium at such time as may seem fitting to ourselves; and promise of assistance, even with arms, from Prussia—there you have the general terms of the contemplated compact."

"To this Benedetti replies, on the 23rd of August, 1866, that he fully understands the imperial proposals, and has found it necessary to limit the negotiations to Luxemburg and Belgium. He adds that instead of two treaties one has been proposed, to be in part public, in part private. The proposals thus revised gave satisfaction at Paris, but some time was taken for their detailed consideration. The main points insisted on continued to be—the immediate acquisition of Luxemburg, and the ultimate annexation of Belgium to be

secured by an alliance offensive and defensive. The result of the further deliberations at Paris appears in the following remarks contained in a fresh letter to Benedetti:—

“This combination is all reconciling; it puts an end to the painful tension of feeling in France, through the attainment of an immediate satisfaction, and the direction of attention to Belgium. It also preserves as much secrecy as is necessary in respect of the alliance, as well as of the projected annexations. If you think that even the cession of Luxemburg should be concealed till the very moment when we lay hands on Belgium, I desire you to justify such an estimate of the position of affairs by observations in detail. An indefinite postponement of the cession of territory might lead to an ominous acceleration of the Belgian question.”

“At the close of the letter Benedetti is empowered, if he thinks it necessary, to proceed for some time to Carlsbad. Count Benedetti answered this letter on the 29th of August. Here, for the first time, he gives expression to a doubt whether Prussia's sincerity in the matter is to be reckoned upon. He observes that he is met by a certain fear on the part of Count Bismarck lest the Emperor Napoleon should be making use of such negotiations, in order to excite suspicion in England with respect to the policy of Prussia. He says, ‘What amount of confidence can we on our side repose in people who are capable of such calculations?’ He calls attention to the presence of General Manteuffel in St. Petersburg, and fears ‘that Prussia may be seeking assurances in other quarters. Prussia needs, as Herr von Bismarck asserts he has told the King, alliance with *one* great power; if there exists a disinclination for an alliance with France, it can only be because provision has already been made, or is about to be made, elsewhere.’ Benedetti thinks the moment has arrived for repairing to Carlsbad for a fortnight, where he will hold himself ready to return to Berlin on receipt of a telegram from Herr von Bismarck. During his absence, however, the President of the Council also left Berlin, not to return before December. The secret negotiations were thus suspended for several months. Later on they were resumed at different times, but always at Benedetti's suggestion. The conduct of France, at the time of the controversy concerning the Belgian railways, renders it far from incredible that she had not, even at that date, abandoned all hope of obtaining the adhesion of North Germany to her pet project.”

Herr Busch records the judgment of the Chancellor on the course that Napoleon III. ought to have taken in 1866. “He wanted courage and energy to execute his plans. At the beginning of hostilities against Austria, he ought to have seized what he wished to obtain by the Benedetti treaty, and to have kept it as a pledge against future events. We could not have stopped him, and it is not very likely that England would have done so. In any case, he could have awaited her with a firm foot. If we proved victorious he ought to have led us on to push our advantages even to excess. But he has never been anything but a dreamer.” It is clear, then, that at that time Bismarck would have sacrificed Belgium to secure the aid of France. The idea, no doubt, came from the Tuileries, but he never repelled it.

At another dinner, the Chancellor spoke also of the Luxemburg affair of 1867. He says that he advised the King to yield, and he defends his policy against those who were at that time for war—that is to say, evidently, again the military party. The troops of Bavaria, Baden, even Wurtemberg, were not ready, and we were not sure of their support. “While I was at the Tuileries,” he added, “at the time of the Exposition, I said to myself,—Who knows whether, if we had had war at that moment, the French would have been at Berlin, or our armies at Paris.” Count Moltke had none of these doubts. On the return of the King of Prussia from this same visit to Paris, Moltke stayed at Brussels. After a dinner at the Court, they talked over their coffee of the recent Luxemburg incident. “As a man,” said he, “I cannot but rejoice that we have escaped war. But as a soldier and a Prussian, I regret it. We were ready, and the French were not. In three weeks I should have led our armies up to the walls of Paris.” The generals present all exclaimed at this; they thought that he was intoxicated with his great success of the previous year in Bohemia, and that he had lost his balance. “Bring a map,” answered Moltke, “and I will show you our campaign.” He then pointed out almost the exact stages of 1870, except that one of the German armies, debouching from Luxemburg, which was then in the power of Germany, turned Metz. When we think that the French troops had not then their chassépots, we are inclined to think Count Moltke was right. At this time it seems that Bismarck did not know the full power of the arm at his disposal, or else he would have acted at that moment. He foresaw that Napoleon would be forced by dynastic interest to make himself master of Belgium, and to go to war with Prussia. “The quarrel picked with Belgium about the railways,” added the Chancellor one evening, “proves that Napoleon had not given up his ideas. I should like to reunite Luxemburg to Belgium, whose neutrality was guaranteed by England. We should thus have fortified the German element in that country against the *Fransquillons*, and we should have got a good frontier, but I found no support.”

As it happens, in one of Prince Bismarck’s published letters, he is found to express so far back as 1859 and the Italian campaign, the same confidence which Moltke expressed in 1867. We need hardly apologise for introducing the whole of the letter, to which this is the tail. Count Bismarck was then at St. Petersburg :—

“PETERHOF, 28th June, ’59.

“From the date at the head of this letter you see I am up again. I drove here this morning to take leave of the Empress-Dowager, who sails to-morrow. I find that she has really something motherly in her amiable and natural manner, and I can speak out to her as if I had known her from childhood. She talked with me to-day for a long time about all sorts of things. She lay,

dressed in black on a couch, in a balcony with a view on the fresh foliage, knitting with long needles at a white and red woollen shawl, and I could have listened for hours to her deep voice and honest laughing and scolding, so homelike was it to me. I had come in evening dress, and only for a couple of hours; but as she finally said she did not wish to take leave of me yet awhile, but that I probably had an immense deal to do, I declared: 'Not the least;' and she: 'Then stay here until I start to-morrow.' I took the invitation with pleasure as a command, as it is charming here and so stony in Petersburg. Imagine the heights of Oliva and Zoppot all connected by park and garden, and with a dozen mansions and terraces; fountains and ponds between, with shady walks and lawns right down to the sea; blue sky and warm sun with white clouds; out over the green sea of tree-tops, the real blue sea, with sails and gulls. I have not enjoyed anything so much for a long time. In a few hours the Emperor and Gortschakoff come, when a little business will probably intrude on the idyl; but, thank God, it looks a little more peaceful in the world in spite of our mobilisation, and I need be less anxious touching certain resolutions. I am sorry for the Austrian soldiers. How must they be led that they get beaten every time? and again on the 24th! It is a lesson for the Ministry, which they, in their obstinacy, will not take to heart. *France, less than Austria, should I fear, for the moment, if we had to take up war.*"

But let us return to the events of 1870. Herr Busch gives many interesting details as to the battles at Metz and at Sedan, and of the interviews between Napoleon and Count Bismarck. But all this is well known. The only point to be noticed is that the Chancellor expected to find himself attacked by Victor Emmanuel, who would have liked to march to the succour of France, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his minister. I am told in Italy, where I am writing these pages, of a saying of Signor Sella. He is, it appears, one of the two Italian politicians who predicted the success of Germany. The King was indignant at his resistance to a policy of action. "I would have you know," cried the King, "that we do not conduct the affairs of a great state like those of a cloth factory." Signor Sella, who happened to be largely interested in cloth manufacture at Biela, answered, "Your Majesty will allow me to say, that a state ought no more than a factory to take in hand a piece of business, in which it is sure to make a loss."

It was during the siege of Paris, while Bismarck *und seine Leute* were established in the house of Madame Jeffé, that Herr Busch was able most easily to gather up the Chancellor's table-talk. On the 29th October, at dinner, the Chancellor tells how Napoleon has asked of him that Marshals Bazaine, Lebœuf, and Canrobert should be allowed to join him at Wilhelmshöhe. "I see no harm in it," said he; "I will recommend the thing to the King. There will be four of them—just enough for a game of whist. So many extraordinary things happen in these days, that it may come to pass that Napoleon will assemble the Legislative Chamber and the Senate at Cassel, to

deliberate on peace. Then I will call together the Reichstag at Versailles. The various parties will all come, except the Fortschritts-partei. These are like the Russians, who want to eat cherries in winter and oysters in summer. When a Russian goes into a shop he asks for *kak nje bud*, that is to say, What they have not got."

At this time Napoleon believed himself sure of returning to France with the support of the army, and Count Bismarck thought so too. It was still with him that he thought of negotiating the treaty of peace.

The prolongation of the siege of Paris stirs his liveliest impatience. He presses without cessation for the bombardment. "Oh, if I were sovereign," he cries, "I should know how to be heard, but I am not sovereign. I am never consulted, or I would go hang myself rather than consent to all this sentimental business." We feel that he is afraid of the intervention of Europe, but he did his best to protect himself on the side of the East by assuring himself of the support of Russia—through the revision of the treaties of 1856.

At the moment when Russia announced that she desired to recover her freedom of action in the Black Sea, busy negotiations took place between the Chancellor and Mr. Odo Russell, who had been despatched to Versailles as English envoy. Count Bismarck liked Mr. Odo Russell. "At first," he said, "I distrusted him. I have always found that Englishmen who speak French particularly well are people to beware of, and Odo Russell speaks and writes it perfectly. Still, he is frank and natural; I am well satisfied with him. He speaks German too as well as French." The English envoy pressed him to defend the Treaty of 1856. "But I have no interest in it," answered he. Mr. Russell proceeded to ask him to engage to remain neutral in case of a conflict between England and Russia. "I answered him," said the Chancellor—

"Such an engagement belonged to the department of hypothetical politics, to which I was no friend. Everything depended upon circumstances. For the present we saw no reason for taking part in the affair. That ought to suffice him. For the rest, I was not of the opinion that gratitude had no place in politics. The present Emperor had shown himself friendly and well-disposed towards us; Austria on the other hand had hitherto been rather unsociable and sometimes very ambiguous; and as for England—well, he knew what we owed to her. The friendliness of the Emperor was the result of old relations, such as family ties; but it owed its force to the perception that our respective interests did not clash. How it might be in the future no one could say, and so it was better to be silent on the point."

The Chancellor added, "They accuse the Russians of being ambitious, but this time they could have asked for far more than the freedom of the Black Sea." He defends himself from the desire that is imputed to him of seizing one or other of the French

colonies. "They are good for nothing, except to be a source of disquiet. As for us in Germany, colonies would be very much like the silk robes and zibelines of Polish nobles who had not a shirt to their backs."

On the 1st of December, at dessert, we see that the idea of an enormous war indemnity has already taken form in his mind. They spoke of French gold pieces. He took one up on the end of his finger as if to weigh it.

"A hundred million double-Napoleons, that would be about the cost of the war up to the present time—later it would cost more—four thousand million francs. Four thousand thalers in gold would weigh a hundredweight, thirty hundredweight could be drawn in a waggon by a good pair of horses. I remember, I once had to take home from Berlin fourteen thousand thalers in gold; it was pretty heavy! We should want at that rate about eight hundred waggons."

This would seem to show that the Bonapartists are in the right when they declare that if France had made peace earlier she would have paid two milliards instead of five. But who would have consented to the mutilation of the territory before the last resources had been exhausted? Such a peace would never have been ratified by the country, and this accusation against the Republican government has no foundation.

In one of his conversations Prince Bismarck speaks of his religious sentiments. He does not believe in morality independent of religious beliefs.

"How people could live together in any orderly way, each one doing his own work and letting others do theirs, without faith in a revealed religion, in a God who intends goodness, in a supreme judge and a future life, is above my comprehension."

"If I ceased to be a Christian, I should not remain at my post another hour. If I could not repose trust in God, I should not heed earthly masters. I should have something to live upon, and should be fine gentleman enough!"

"Why should I strain every nerve and labour incessantly in this world, expose myself to perplexities and annoyances, if I did not feel the burden of a duty imposed by a divine being? If I did not believe in a providence which had destined this German nation for something good and great, I should instantly retire from the diplomatic profession, or rather should never have entered it at all! Orders and titles are no incentives to me."

"The public stand that I have made for ten long years against all possible absurdities has been due solely to the firmness of my faith. Take this faith away from me, and you take away my fatherland. If I had not been rigorously orthodox, if my religion had not had a supernatural basis, the German Federation would never have had its present chancellor."

The Chancellor winds up this tirade of true emotion in the following words: "How willingly would I go away! I love the life of the fields, of the woods, of nature. Take away from me my belief in

God, and to-morrow morning I pack my portmanteau, set off for Varzin, and grow my corn." This point is worth remarking. We find here again an aspect of resemblance between the Chancellor and the father of Frederick II., so strikingly depicted by Carlyle. A true son of nature, violent, harsh, even ferocious, down to his very sallies and pleasantries, but pious and guided by the sentiment of duty according to his lights.

The readers of Prince Bismarck's letters in the volume to which we have already referred, will remember the reply which he once made to the remonstrances of a devout friend against a certain want of godliness in walk and conversation. The reply is long, but it is too curious to be omitted from any study of this singular personality.

"Though my time is very limited, I cannot refuse to answer a question which is put to me in Christ's name, and out of an honest heart. I am heartily sorry if I give offence to believing Christians, but I am certain that in my position this cannot be avoided. I will not stop to remark that there are undoubtedly a great number of Christians in the parties opposed to me by political necessity, who are far ahead of me on the way to salvation, with whom, notwithstanding, I have to live in strife, by virtue of matters which are, on both sides, purely of this earth; I will confine myself to your own remark: 'Not a single thing committed or omitted remains unknown to the outside world.' Where is the man who, in such a position, would not give offence, justly or unjustly? I grant you here more than is the case, for your assertion of remaining unknown is not correct. Would to God, that besides that which is known to the world, I had no other sins upon my soul, and for which I only hope for forgiveness, trusting in the blood of Christ. As a statesman, I am not, according to my feeling, sufficiently indifferent; cowardly rather; and that because it is not easy, in the questions which come before me, always to gain that inward clearness of vision on whose soil confidence in God springs up. He who calls me an unconscientious politician does me wrong; let him first put his own conscience to the proof on this battle-field. With regard to the Virchow affair, I am past the time of life when one takes advice from flesh and blood in such matters. When I stake my life for a matter, I do so in that faith which I have in long and severe struggling, but in honest and humble prayer to God strengthened; a faith which no word of man, even that of a friend in Christ and a servant of his church, can overthrow. As regards church-going, it is incorrect that I never go into God's house. I have been for almost seven months either absent or ill; who, then, has observed it? I willingly confess it might occur oftener; but it is not so much from want of time, as consideration for my health that it is omitted, especially in winter; and to those who feel themselves called upon to be my judge in this matter I will willingly give minuter information about it; you yourself will believe me without medical details. . . You see, from the circumstantiality with which I give you information, that I take your letter as a well-meant one, and that I do not seek, in any way, to raise myself above the judgment of those who own the same belief as myself. But from your friendship, and your own Christian knowledge, I expect that you will recommend to my censors the practice of caution and charity on future occasions; we

all have need of them. If among the total number of sinners who come short of the glory of God, I hope that his mercy may not take away from me the staff of humble belief, with which I try to find my way in all the dangers and doubts of my position; this confidence shall neither make me deaf to reproving words of friends, nor angry against uncharitable and arrogant censure."

He talks on one occasion of his student days and his duels. "I must have fought more than twenty times," he said, "without being wounded once. I knew well enough how to speak and write Latin, but now I should have some trouble to do either, and I have entirely forgotten Greek. I cannot understand why they keep up that old language. It is because scholars do not wish to lessen the merit of what they have spent so much time in learning. They pretend that it is for the sake of its grammatical forms; but Russian is as rich in forms as Greek, and at least that would serve a practical end."

Another day at tea he says that the Berlin newspapers complain that they always have worse information than the English newspapers, and he asks Herr Busch how that is. "It is," answers Herr Busch, "because the English have more money: so they are everywhere the first. They are recommended to persons in the highest station, and military people don't know how to keep secrets!" "Then," answered the Chancellor, "it is the fault of circumstances, and not mine. Write an article to explain that to them."

On the 30th of November Mr. Odo Russell dines at the Chancellor's table. The conversation turns on the facilities that ministers might have for making money on the Stock Exchange, by availing themselves of news which they have before other people. Events often cheat calculation.

"'I was entrusted,' he said, 'with the office of conferring with Napoleon about the Nuremberg affair. It must have been in the spring of 1857. I had to ask him what attitude he would assume in relation to the matter. Now, I knew that he would declare himself in a favourable sense, and that meant war with Switzerland. On passing through Frankfort I called upon Rothschild, with whom I was acquainted, and requested him to sell certain stock for me, as I felt sure a fall would soon set in. 'I would not advise it,' said Rothschild. 'The stock has good prospects, as you will shortly find.' 'May be,' I said, 'but if you knew what I know you would think differently.' He replied, 'that might be so, but still he could not advise the sale.' I, however, knew better, sold my stocks, and continued my journey. At Paris Napoleon was very pleasant and amiable. Certainly he could not accede to the king's wish to be allowed to march through Alsace and Lorraine, as that would cause too much excitement in France; but, for the rest, he fully approved of the undertaking. It could only give him satisfaction, if the democrats were cleared out of their den. So far, then, I had been successful. But I had not calculated upon the change of policy which had meanwhile occurred at Berlin—probably through taking Austria into account—and the affair was given up. No war resulted. The stock continued to rise, and I was left to lament that I no longer held any share of it.'"

The judgments of the Chancellor on French statesmen are far from indulgent. After his first interview with Thiers, he talks about him to his secretaries. "He is a charming man, extremely intelligent, full of wit, but he is worth absolutely nothing as a negotiator, not even to bargain for the sale of a pair of horses. He lets you surprise him; he betrays all that he has felt; nothing is easier than to get from him whatever you wish. I have made him tell me a quantity of things, as for instance that in Paris they have only food for three or four weeks."

One evening at dinner, at which Mr. Odo Russell was present, he insists on the difficulties that beset the position of an English minister at Berlin. "He needs to have great power of attention, and much tact." Then he comes to the French ministers, Ollivier and Grammont. "If I had been unlucky enough to have done what they have done, I would have enlisted in a regiment, or I would have turned franc-tireur, at the risk of being shot. It is inconceivable how Napoleon should have taken such a man as Grammont for his minister." "Napoleon," said he another day, "whatever one may think of the *coup d'état*, is really very kindly, full of sensibility, or even sentimentality; it is only his intelligence and his information that are below the mark. Though he was brought up in Germany, he is very ignorant of geography, and he nourishes all sorts of fantastic dreams. In July, in the beginning of the war, he remained three days without coming to any definite resolution, and to-day even he does not know what he wishes. With us he could not pass the examination of referendarius. He was always expecting a revolution at Berlin. I said to him, 'Sir, in Prussia it is only kings who make revolutions.' He said of me, 'Bismarck is not a serious personage.' I did not remind him of the saying at our interview at Donchery."

Here is an outbreak against diplomatists: "As for their correspondence, it is all paper and ink, and nothing more. What is terrible is when they think it their duty to write at length. They send you ordinarily cuttings from old newspapers. One has a better idea of the situation from the press, though for that matter governments know how to use this also. There, at any rate, things are clearly set forth; only one must know the tendencies and the influences in each country. The chief things, after all, are private letters, and confidential, and above all personal, communications. All that is never said in despatches."

Prince Bismarck has always remained a true type of a country gentleman; he loves his woods and his fields, he is thrifty, like every good Prussian, he knows how to count, he complains of being straitened.

"I was better off before I was Chancellor. The ennoblement has ruined me."

I have been pinched ever since. Formerly I used to look upon myself as simply a country gentleman, but now, belonging in a way to the peerage, I find that claims upon me are increasing, and my estates bring me in nothing. As ambassador at Frankfort I had always something over, and at St. Petersburg, too, where there was no need to keep up any style, and I really kept up none. He spoke often of the pine-meal and pasteboard manufactory of Varzin, about which he seemed to be very sanguine. The proprietor pays him interest for money which he has sunk in mills and other plant. How much would that be? somebody asked. 'From forty to fifty thousand thalers. He pays me for the water-power, which had not been utilised before, two thousand thalers annually; he purchases the pine-logs, which I could hardly myself turn to account; and after the expiration of thirty years he will have to return me all the mills in as good a condition as when he received them. There is only one there now, but there will soon be another at the point where the water falls with more force, and later on a third.' What is the precise nature of the manufacture? Pasteboard, for bookbinding, packing, band-boxes, and the like, chiefly for Berlin; also pine-meal, which is sent to England, where, after being dissolved and mixed with other materials, it is converted into paper; and he described everything as if he were in the trade himself."

People often attribute to Prince Bismarck schemes of inordinate conquest, like those of Napoleon I. In the conversations reported by Herr Busch he seems wiser. They said to him one evening that after Koniggratz he could have obtained greater advantages, perhaps Austrian Silesia, or even Bohemia. The Chancellor answered,

"Possibly. But, money—what more had they to give? Bohemia, now, would have been something, and there existed people, who had that in their minds. But we should only have got into difficulties over it, and Austrian Silesia was not of much value to us. Just there regard for the imperial house and attachment to Austria are very strong. In these matters the proper question is, what will be useful, not, how much can be got."

The dramatic part of Herr Busch's book is that which concerns the negotiations for the armistice and the peace with Jules Favre and Thiers. Vanquished by hunger, Paris asked to capitulate. But the Chancellor insisted on attaching this capitulation to a provisional treaty. Then comes the debate as to the conditions, and we all know how hard they were. What could the negotiators do? The Chancellor held them in a grasp of iron; all resistance was impossible. On Monday, the 23rd of January, M. Jules Favre comes to Versailles to treat. The Chancellor conducts him to the King in the evening, and then returns to take tea. He seems delivered from all his troubles. He whistles a hunting song—a song telling how the stag is down. "Do you know the tune?" he says to his cousin Bismarck Bohlen. "Surely," answers the other: "has the chase been good?" "Yes," replies the Chancellor; "it is all over." This hunting air at such a moment makes one shudder. It is like a touch in Shakespeare.

A few days after, he recounts certain details of his interview with Jules Favre. "I said to him, 'You have been betrayed by fortune.' He understood the phrase, but replied simply, 'To whom do you say that? In less than three days I also shall be counted among the betrayers; I cannot answer for my life!' I submitted an idea to him: 'Then provoke an insurrection, while you have an army to put it down.' He looked at me with affright, as if he would have said, 'But you are a drinker of blood.'" M. Thiers is treated still more harshly. On the 22nd of February Prince Bismarck recounts to his secretaries some points in their conversation. Here is one that is very characteristic. "At one condition that I laid before him, he was overcome by indignation, and cried out, 'Mais c'est une indignité!'"

"I was not at all put out by it, but resumed in German. He listened for some time, and evidently did not know what to make of it. Then he began in a querulous tone: 'Mais, Monsieur le Comte, vous savez bien, que je ne sais point allemand.' I replied, now in French: 'When you spoke just now of *indignité*, I found that my knowledge of French was defective, and preferred therefore to speak German, in which language I know what I say and hear.' He immediately understood what I meant, and wrote down as a point to be conceded what I had demanded, and what he previously had styled an indignity. And yesterday," he continued, "he spoke of Europe as certain to interfere, if we did not moderate our demands. I replied: 'If you talk of Europe, I shall speak of Napoleon.' He took no heed of that; there was nothing to fear in that quarter. I bade him remember the Plébiscite and the peasants, and the officers and soldiers. The Guard could only recover its position under Napoleon, and in certain easily conceivable eventualities, the soldiers, now prisoners in Germany, might be won over by hundreds of thousands, and it would only be necessary to send them armed over the frontier, and France would be imperial again. . . . If they granted us good conditions, they might even have an Orleans if they liked, although we were well aware that in that case the war would begin again in two or three years. If not, we should mingle in their internal affairs—which we had avoided doing hitherto—and they would have Napoleon again. That must have had its effect, for to-day, when he was on the point of bringing up the subject of Europe again, he suddenly stopped and said, 'Excuse me.' For the rest, I like him extremely; he has a good head, excellent tact, and can state a point remarkably well. I am often very sorry for him, too, for his position is a deplorable one. But nothing can avail him."

Prince Bismarck might have understood that when a man is reduced to deliver up his country in its last throes to a conqueror, he may well feel some emotion. In any case the work of Thiers survives him. He paid the ransom for the deliverance of France, and by preserving it from anarchy he restored it to its true position in Europe, and enabled it to win a sympathy which was never given to it under the Empire. We may doubt whether Thiers would have found any solace in the kind of reflection with which in 1859 Bis-

marck wound up some very gloomy meditations upon the prospect of his country being dragged into war in the wake of Austria, and for Austrian purposes. "As God wills!" he writes; "after all, everything here is only a question of time, nations and individuals, folly and wisdom, war and peace; they come and go like the waves, but the sea remains. There is nothing on this earth but hypocrisy and jugglery; and whether fever or grapeshot tear off this fleshly mask, fall it must sooner or later; and then, granted that they are equal in height, a likeness will, after all, turn up between a Prussian and an Austrian, which will make it difficult to distinguish them. The stupid, and the clever too, look pretty much alike when their bones are well picked. With such views, a man certainly gets rid of his specific patriotism; but it would indeed be a subject for despair if our salvation depended on them."

We may now perhaps best conclude with one or two extracts, taken almost at random from Herr Busch's pages, but all serving to illustrate this or the other trait of a strongly marked character.

"Somebody observed that the soldiers had somewhere terribly cudgelled a curé who had been discovered a traitor. The minister praised again the energy of the Bavarians, and added, 'One should either treat these people as considerately as possible, or make them harmless; one or the other.' And after a little reflection he added, 'Be polite by all means up to the last round of the gallows-ladder, but still the man is hanged. We can be rude only towards friends, when we are certain that they don't take it amiss. How rude is one, for example, towards one's wife, in comparison with other ladies!'"

There is some confusion between truth and expediency in the first of the two following extracts, and in both there is a curious regard for public opinion, though in the latter it is treated with forced contempt:—

"I had the pleasure to telegraph news of a fresh victory of the German arms, that is to say, Garibaldi had yesterday got a severe thrashing near Dijon, and the troops of Prince Frederic Charles had on the same day defeated a French force exceeding their own in number, by Beaune la Roland. When I submitted the second telegram to the Chancellor, he observed, 'Many hundred prisoners says nothing. Many hundred means at least a thousand, and if we give the loss on our side as a thousand men, but only say of the enemy that he has experienced a greater loss, that is a piece of clumsiness which others may permit themselves, but not we. I beg of you in the future to make your telegrams a little more politic.'"

"On one occasion he observed to Reggenbach, 'I have just looked through the cuttings from the journals. How they fly out against the treaties! They won't say a good word for them—the *National Zeitung*, the *Kölnische Zeitung*. The *Weser Zeitung* is as usual the most reasonable. How truly must we put up with criticism. But we are responsible if anything comes to pass, while the critics are irresponsible. It is all the same to me whether they blame me,

provided the matter is only successful in the Imperial Diet. History may say, The wretched Chancellor might have managed things better; but I was responsible.' ”

There is an odious flavour about the following :—

“The Minister continued : ‘I think that if the Parisians have once obtained a supply of provisions, and are then put on half rations and obliged to feel hunger again, that will prove effectual. It is the same as with the whipping-post. When a man there is beaten for some time without a pause, it loses its effect. But when the process is interrupted and then recommenced, that is anything but agreeable. I know that from my experience of the criminal court. There beating was still practised.’ ”

Nobody will be surprised at the value set on parliamentary eloquence by such a man as Prince Bismarck—*impiger, iracundus inexorabilis, acer* :—

“The gift of eloquence has spoiled much in parliamentary life. So much time is needed, since all who think they can do something must have their say, even when they have nothing new to bring forward. There is too much talking in the air, and too little to the purpose. Everything is already arranged in the party meetings, and so they speak in the house solely for the public, to whom they want to show what they can do, and still more for the newspapers, which are expected to praise.” “The day will yet come when eloquence will be regarded as a quality injurious to the State, and punished when it is guilty of a long speech.” “We have one assembly,” he continued, “which practises no eloquence, and which has nevertheless done more for German interests than any other—that is the Federal Council (*Bundesrath*). I remember, indeed, that at first some attempts were made in this direction. But I cut that short—at last I addressed them somewhat in these words : ‘Gentlemen, we have nothing to do here with eloquence, with speeches which are intended to convince, because everybody brings his conviction with him in his pocket—that is to say his instructions. It is mere waste of time. I think we had better confine ourselves to the representation of facts.’ And so it was. Nobody attempted a long speech after that. For this reason business was dispatched much more quickly, and the Council has really accomplished much.”

An incident of the entry into Paris is worth recording :—

“The Chief related at dinner that he had gone into Paris with the troops, and had been recognised by the people. Nevertheless, no demonstration against him followed. There was one man, however, who scowled at him in a very noticeable way. The minister at once rode up and begged a light of him, and the request was readily acceded to.”

Prince Bismarck’s contempt for France is sometimes brought in by head and ears, as witness an illustration from the classics :—

“The conversation turning upon mythology, he said that ‘he never could take to Apollo.’ He had ‘flayed a man (Marsyas) out of pure conceit and envy, and shot dead the daughters of Niobe from similar motives. He is,’ he con-

tinued, 'the genuine type of a Frenchman; he is one of those who can't bear that any one should play the flute better than themselves.' His being on the side of the Trojans, too, did not recommend him. His man would have been honest Vulcan, or, better still, Neptune—perhaps on account of the *Quos ego!* which however, he left unsaid."

The following jottings may fill up a hearty and rather coarse picture:—

"We had before us cognac, claret, and sparkling hock. Somebody mentioned beer, and thought we ought to have this too. The minister replied: 'We don't want that. The extensive use of beer is a thing to be regretted. It makes people stupid, lazy and feeble. Our democratic pot-house politics are traceable to its influences. A bottle of good brandy were preferable.'"

"On the road to Busancy the Chancellor said: 'The whole day I had had nothing but ration bread and bacon. Now we got a few eggs—five or six. The men wanted to have them boiled; I, however, like them raw. Accordingly I appropriated a couple, smashed them with my pommel, and refreshed myself. At daybreak I enjoyed the first warm food I had tasted for thirty-six hours; it was only pea-soup, offered me by General Göben, but it seemed most delicious.

"Later there was a roast fowl, 'whose toughness was, however, too much for the best tooth.' It had been offered to the minister by a sutler after he had purchased an undressed one from a soldier. Bismarck had taken the former, paid for it, and had given the man in addition the one purchased from the soldier. 'If we meet again in the war,' he said, 'you can return me the fowl roasted. If not, I hope you will restore it in Berlin.'"

"On the road we caught up some fagged Bavarians, common soldiers, who were dragging themselves slowly along under a scorching sun. 'Ho, countryman!' called out the Chancellor to one of them. 'Would you like a drink of Cognac?' Of course he would, and so would another, to judge from his longing eyes, and a third too, and so they drank, and a few more too, each a draught out of the minister's travelling-flask, and then out of mine. A cigar apiece appropriately closed the proceedings."

One old story will bear re-telling:—

"I asked the minister about the celebrated cigar-story. 'At the sittings of the military commission, when Rochow represented Prussia at the Diet, only Austria smoked. Rochow, being a passionate smoker, would certainly have liked to do likewise, but did not venture. When I came, I too longed for a cigar; and as I saw no reason why I should not have one, I begged a light from the president, and my request seemed to strike him and the other gentlemen with astonishment. It was manifestly an event for them. Now only Austria and Prussia smoked. The other gentlemen thought the matter so important, that they sent home a report upon the point. The matter required much consideration, and for half a year only the two great powers smoked. Then Schrenkh, the Bavarian ambassador, began to support the dignity of his position by smoking. Nostitz of Saxony would have liked to join us, but

seemed not to have received permission from his minister. On the next occasion, seeing the Hanoverian Bothmer indulging himself, he seems to have come to an understanding with Rodberg; for he presently took a cigar from his case, and smoked away. There were only left Würtemberg and Darmstadt. But now the honour and importance of their states imperatively demanded a similar right; and so at the following sitting the Würtemberg delegate took out a cigar—I see it before me now, it was a long, thin, yellowish thing—and smoked half of it as a sacrifice to the Fatherland.'

Herr Busch's book confirms the general impression that has been made upon European opinion by the figure of Prince Bismarck. His force is evident: he is very superior to the ministers, the diplomatists, and the sovereigns of his epoch; he dominates them from the heights of his ascendancy. His superiority seems to consist in this, that he has perceived clearly what are the forces now active in Europe, and now effective in working the various transformations of Europe—the principle of nationalities, democratic aspirations, the press—and he has found out the secret of using them all in turn, and making them his instruments. His conception is definite and precise. He knows clearly what it is that he wants, while the others have only fugitive and flitting gleams. He has a will, while around him people have only velleities. His execution is rapid, violent, assured, merciless. His passion is evidently the greatness of his country. He attaches no great value either to honours, or wealth, or pleasures. But he is hard, and pays little heed to the lives of men. War has no horror to him. The German of the primitive time survives in him; or, rather, he appears among us like the god Thor of the Scandinavian Olympus, bearing in his hand his iron hammer, and unchaining the tempests.

EMILE DE LAVELEYE.