EUROPE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

CHAPTER I

REACTION AND REVOLUTION IN FRANCE

(1815–1870)

Napoleon bequeathed to his successors the problem of reconciling two divergent aims: the establishment of a form of government acceptable to France combined with the pursuit of a policy acceptable to Europe. For over half a century this problem taxed to the utmost the resources of French statesmanship. The French people were resolved at all costs to break up the settlement of 1815, which was associated in their minds with contracted frontiers and loss of national prestige. The Powers were equally resolved to preserve this settlement in all its integrity, conscious that its violation would open the door to endless confusion and the peril of a European conflagration. Three different attempts were made to devise a satisfactory solution of the problem; each in turn met with failure. The position of the Bourbons was compromised from the outset by their dependence upon the Allies, in whose baggage-train, as it was scornfully said, they had returned to France. While the crisis which precipitated their ruin was provoked by the folly of their domestic administration, their fall would appear to have been inevitable sooner or later. The Orleans Monarchy adopted a foreign policy which was in diametrical opposition to the wishes of the nation, and the support of the middle classes only retarded, but could not avert, its
ultimate downfall. Napoleon III. was more fortunate in rallying French sentiment for a time to his throne, but his very success involved the alienation of Europe, whose apprehensions were awakened by his efforts to revive the glories of the First Empire; and in the end he, too, shared the fate of his predecessors. The record of these three successive attempts constitutes the history of France from 1815 to 1870; they furnish the thread which gives unity and coherence to the period.

The restoration of the Bourbon dynasty to the throne of France furnished the signal for the outbreak of political strife. The country was divided into two parties, and for fifteen years a struggle ensued which wore all the appearance of an epilogue to the more titanic conflict of 1789. The issues at stake merit attention, because in their light alone we can interpret the confused and troubled events which lead up to the cataclysm of 1830. On one side were grouped the Ultra-Royalists, the obstinate and relentless enemies of the French Revolution, inflexibly resolved not only to stem the rising tide of Liberalism, but to turn back the whole course of French historical development into reactionary channels. They represented the traditional policy of the émigrés who had always repudiated the Revolution, and all its works, being pledged to leave no stone unturned until they were once more entrenched in the stronghold of absolutism and privilege. Their fanaticism, the outgrowth of embittered memories, was inexplicable to the new generation which had grown up in the midst of social conditions that already seemed part and parcel of the immutable, unchanging order of the Universe. It was unintelligible even to moderate Royalists: "I do not understand your passions, your relentless hatreds," said Richelieu; "I pass every day by the house which belonged to my ancestors, I see their property in other hands, and I behold in museums the treasures which belonged to them. It is a sad sight; but it does not rouse in me feelings either of despair or revenge. You appear to me sometimes to be out of your minds, all of you who have remained in France." His counsels of moderation fell upon deaf ears. For twenty
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years the partisans of the ancien régime had openly or in secrecy nourished the passion of revenge, waiting for the day when the turn of the wheel of fortune would place the government of France in their hands and enable them to strike a blow at their enemies. In the moment of their triumph it required a magnanimity which only the best minds could feel not to abuse their power, and to sacrifice their own feelings for the general welfare of their country. Unfortunately neither magnanimity nor moderation was a virtue which the Ultra-Royalists had learnt to cultivate, and their excesses brought upon them signal retribution.

The leading idea of the Ultra-Royalist programme was nothing less than to revive the old order, together with certain modifications conceived not in the interests of the monarchy, but in those of the nobility. To achieve this design, they contemplated first of all the restoration of the Catholic Church to its former ascendancy, resting all their projects upon an alliance between Church and State, the altar and the throne. They proposed to endow it with whatever ecclesiastical property, confiscated at the time of the Revolution, still remained in the hands of the State; this was intended to form the nucleus for the growth of a landed Church, fortified by all the authority and prestige which the possession of land alone could confer. At the same time the direction of education, and the vast influence which springs from its wise administration, were given over to the charge of ecclesiastics. A bishop was appointed president of the University (1822), and entrusted with powers of control over the schools so extensive as to constitute almost a dictatorship of education. The Jesuits also were permitted to return to France, and to set up their own seminaries, where instruction was given gratuitously. Once the clerical party was established in an impregnable position, it could then assume the task of reconstructing the social and political system of France under the pretence of re-invigorating its spiritual and moral life. Under the cover of religious teaching the seeds of reaction would be sown far and wide, and the mind of the country thus pre-
pared for the complete transformation of the existing order. The work of the Church in teaching resignation and submission was to be supplemented by a vigorous censorship, which would enable the Government to repress every newspaper or other publication detrimental to the objects it had in view. Public opinion, fettered and controlled, was to be moulded on approved lines, and the nation was to be denied the right of free discussion lest it should awaken to a sense of the perils to which its liberties were exposed. Even foreign policy was to be exploited in a manner which would reconcile the French nation to the most sweeping changes in their domestic situation. The great writer, Chateaubriand, contended that the Bourbon dynasty would never strike deep root in the hearts of the people until it had covered itself with glory on the field of battle. "The white cockade will be established when it has once more faced the foe." Yet a stable monarchy and an endowed Church were only means to an end; primarily the Ultra-Royalists were fighting for the privileges of their own order. Nothing less than this was to be the price of their allegiance. They were bent on recovering their forfeited property and whatever rights the old nobility had possessed on the eve of the Revolution, but in addition they claimed a measure of political power from which hitherto they had always been excluded.

In opposition to the Ultra-Royalists were the moderate elements, pledged "to defend the Revolution and continue it without the revolutionary spirit." This party, in the words of their own leader, "dreamt of an alliance between order and liberty, between Legitimacy and the Revolution." Their attitude was in reality conservative, and their policy almost purely negative. They had no sympathy with extreme views, and accepted the monarchy imposed upon them by the arms of the Allies, willing to remain loyal to the King, so long as the King remained loyal to the conditions on which he held his throne. But the cardinal tenet of their faith, to which they passionately and resolutely adhered, was the determination never to relinquish their firm grasp upon the heritage bequeathed to them by the
Revolution. To restore the *ancien régime* with its political, social, and religious traditions was to undo the laborious work of a generation, and a second time to incarcerate the soul of the nation in the prison-house of bondage. The Moderates took their stand by the Charter, which Louis XVIII. had promulgated on his accession to the French throne. Its importance lay in the fact that it definitely repudiated the traditions of the *ancien régime*, and substituted in their place the traditions of the Revolution and the Empire. From the Revolution it took over as part and parcel of the law of France the principles of toleration, equality before the law, and admission to all public offices; from the Empire it borrowed the machinery of centralized administration. The Charter also gave the French people rights of control over the Government, which they had not possessed under the Empire. It established a legislative assembly consisting of two Chambers: one composed of peers, who were either hereditary or nominated by the Crown for life; the other chosen by election, though on a very narrow basis, the franchise being confined to those who paid £13 yearly in direct taxes. The executive alone could initiate legislation, but the Lower Chamber was allowed to reject its proposals and refuse taxes. Whatever its drawbacks, the Charter was at any rate a guarantee of constitutional monarchy and representative government; it was a social compact between the King and his people, while for all the moderate elements in the country it constituted a confession of political faith.

Between the partisans of the *ancien régime* and the upholders of the new order no reconciliation could be effected. It was impossible to harmonize their aims or their principles. One party or the other would have to succumb, for France could not continue indefinitely to be torn by their struggles for supremacy. In the long run, as we can now see, there could only have been one issue to the conflict, though the immediate course of events was determined by the personal attitude of the King. It was fortunate for the Bourbon dynasty that Louis XVIII. was under no misapprehension as to the temper of the nation or the precariousness of his
own situation, and steadfastly refused to throw in his lot with the extremists or to countenance their incendiary campaign. The condition of affairs, in fact, was parallel to that which existed in England after the Restoration of 1660. Alike in England and France the position of the restored monarch was endangered by the extravagance of those who were more royalist than the King, and whose reactionary violence and revengeful passions brought the monarchy into discredit. Alike in England and France the King, inclined to moderation and unwilling to go again on his travels, managed to steer his course safely between conflicting tendencies, and so postponed the crisis. And alike in England where Charles II. was succeeded by his brother James II., and in France where Louis XVIII. was succeeded by his brother Charles X., the bigotry of the new sovereign speedily provoked a storm of opposition which only subsided after it had driven the King headlong from his throne.

From the first moment of the restored monarchy, the Ultra-Royalists began to formulate their programme, and to stir up a flood of political passions. A general election was held after the entrance of the Allies into Paris, when the revolutionary elements had been intimidated into passive acquiescence, and resulted in a sweeping majority for the reactionaries. The new Chamber of Deputies, called by Louis the *Chambre Intouchable*, was vindictive and in-temperate, and the energies of the Government were almost completely absorbed in a fruitless attempt to curb its intolerant fanaticism. Talleyrand and the Liberal ministry were at once compelled to resign, and their place was taken by the Duc de Richelieu. Richelieu had shown himself a wise administrator in the service of the Tsar whose confidence he enjoyed, and his accession to office was a pledge of more favourable terms in the peace negotiations with the Allies. His statesmanlike moderation was also the best augury for the stability of the Bourbon monarchy, but this quality did not recommend him to the Chamber which

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1 "There seems but one opinion," wrote Castlereagh, "that if the Allied troops were to withdraw, his Majesty would not be on his throne a week": *Correspondence of Castlereagh* (1853), third ser. iii. 32.
pressed upon the minister the most violent and objectionable proposals. The irreconcilables would brook no talk of compromise; they demanded the wholesale proscription of all who had incurred the taint of revolution, and the concessions made to their clamour only had the effect of stimulating them to increased exertions. They also proposed that the claims of Napoleon's creditors, who had lent money to the State on public security, should be met by the payment of only three-fifths. This breach of faith would have been equivalent to a declaration of national insolvency; it would have ruined the credit of France, and made it impossible to raise money to liquidate the war indemnity. Confronted with a grave financial crisis, the King accepted the advice of Decazes and suddenly dissolved the Chambers (1816). The step was a bold one; but it was justified by success. The verdict of the country expressed in the clearest terms its disapproval of the Ultra-Royalist programme, and a decisive majority was returned in support of the Government. The monarchy, brought to the brink of a precipice by the violence of its professed adherents, who cloaked their selfish schemes of territorial and political aggrandizement under the mask of disinterested and zealous loyalty to the Crown, had drawn back in time to avoid the catastrophe which was destined to overtake it fourteen years later.

The domestic situation was now completely transformed; the stormy career of the extremists had been arrested, and the peril of a reactionary régime for the moment passed away. The relations between the executive and the legislature now became harmonious, and they co-operated in the readjustment of the electoral machinery, and in the settlement of financial problems. Abroad Richelieu's administration inspired the Allies with such confidence that, at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle (1818), France was freed from the army of occupation. This was a great diplomatic triumph for the minister, but a group of Liberals were coming to the front, and their growing strength in the Chamber forced his retirement.

Decazes was placed at the head of the Government, which now leaned upon Liberal support. The most striking
measure of the new ministry was the abolition of the censor-
ship and the emancipation of the press, and in the debate
on freedom of religious discussion the Minister of Justice,
de Serre, uttered memorable words: "What is man, that
feeble and passionate being, that he should offer to the
 Almighty the help of his arm? Does he pretend to usurp
His strength or to offer the aid of his own weakness? ... 
The vanity of this presumption has often been shown. The
centuries that are gone teach in bloody character its terrible
results." 1 All political omens pointed in a favourable
direction, and seemed to promise an enlightened administra-
tion, when a new turn was unexpectedly given to the course
of events by the murder of the Duke of Berry in 1820. He
was the younger son of the Comte d'Artois, the heir to the
throne; and, as his brother was childless, his assassination
involved the prospect that the elder branch of the Bourbons
would become extinct. The crime was the work of a
fanatic, Louvel, but it was immediately seized upon as a
pretext for discrediting the Liberal ministry, and Decazes
was overthrown. His fall from power changed the current
of French history; it proved the starting-point of a reaction
which gathered increasing strength until it provoked another
revolution in 1830.

The moment was not yet ripe for the Ultra-Royalists
to return to power, and the administration was therefore
entrusted to Richelieu. The censorship of the press was
restored, and an electoral law passed which suppressed
secret ballot, narrowed the franchise, and gave a double
vote to the landed interest. The result was a Royalist
majority, which compelled Richelieu to retire, and placed
in power Villèle, the leader of the Ultra-Royalists. His
tenure of office lasted from 1821 to 1827, and afforded him
an opportunity to carry out the programme whose main
features we have already described. Yet while Villèle's
policy was purely reactionary, his methods were more subtle
and astute than those which had wrecked his party in 1816.
He did not wish to alarm the country by an open manifesta-

1 Cited, Lady Bienerhassett, "The Doctrinaires" in Camb. Mod. Hist
k. 59.
tion of his far-reaching designs. He curbed the headstrong impatience of his followers, who had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing, and who still believed it possible to ignore all the changes which had taken place in France since the Revolution. It is almost incredible that Villèle, a sober-minded administrator and skilful politician, should have attempted a task which upon the face of it might seem foredoomed to failure. But whether or not he misjudged the temper of the nation, he at any rate thought the experiment worth trying, and it must be confessed also that his adroit tactics came very near to realizing his calculations. In his campaign to undo the work of the Revolution, Villèle relied upon two powerful forces: the Church and material interests. With the aid of the first, he designed to utilize religious instruction as a vehicle for political propaganda, to uproot the memories of the Revolution, and to inculcate those principles of public morality which would serve as his justification for restoring the old order. With the aid of the second, he hoped to conciliate national opinion and to divert the energies of the people from political channels to the pursuit of material welfare. From the standpoint of the reactionaries the project was well conceived, and showed an intelligent grasp of the situation, while in the execution of it Villèle—adopting expediency as his guiding principle—withstood the temptation to employ hasty and ill-considered measures. He went to work cautiously and with moderation; step by step the ground was prepared, step by step the edifice was reared. The dangers which menaced the liberties of the French people during the period of Villèle's administration were greater, because more insidious, than those which confronted them in 1815, and only at the last moment did they extricate themselves from the meshes of the net which was being skilfully woven round them. Villèle's failure, indeed, was due not to the wisdom of his opponents, but to divisions in his own ranks. It was the rashness of his supporters which ruined their party when victory lay almost completely within their grasp.

The policy of the ministry, as we have said, was to regain for the Royalists their lost privileges by slow and imper-
ceptible stages; accordingly the reaction was gradual. In 1822 the censorship of the press was strengthened, and the conduct of trials for offences against the press law was taken out of the hands of juries. This measure stifled public opinion. It invested the Government with the control of all anti-clerical and anti-aristocratic publications, and enabled it to suppress any writings which might serve to keep alive the revolutionary spirit. At the same time heavy tariffs were levied on imported commodities, to the satisfaction of the landed proprietors and wealthy manufacturers, and the direction of education was given over to the Church. While Villèle by the prudence of his financial and economic administration was thus consolidating the power which the rash act of a fanatic had conferred upon the Royalist party, Chateaubriand insisted that to make their position impregnable something more was needed. It was necessary to revive the glories of the Empire, to restore to the tarnished arms of France something of the brilliance imparted to them by the victories of Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena. Even Napoleon had recognized that the surest method of repressing dissatisfaction at home was to achieve military success abroad, and one object of his wars had been to divert men's thoughts from the despotic character of his domestic rule. The French people must be compensated for the loss of their revolutionary heritage—equality and political rights—by the revival of French ascendancy on the Continent. Chateaubriand held the opinion that France, like Rome, would be content to sacrifice liberty for empire. With this conviction he forced Villèle's hand, and at the beginning of 1823 a French army was sent across the Pyrenees to the assistance of the Spanish king, whose subjects were in open revolt. This exploit reflected great credit upon the monarchy, and in the enthusiasm which it evoked it was not observed that France had been fighting on the side of absolutism, and that French troops had been employed to overthrow the forces of Liberalism.

Chateaubriand now began to dream of gaining fresh laurels, and his thoughts turned towards the Rhine, but at this point Villèle drew back. He had been induced with
difficulty to give a reluctant assent to the war with Spain, and though he had turned to good account the popularity which victory had brought the Government, he refused to embark upon the more ambitious projects which the fertile imagination of the great writer was already conceiving. Like Walpole, whom he resembled in his caution and in his reliance upon the fruits of a sound financial system to build up the strength of the ruling dynasty, Villèle was averse from war and foreign enterprises. If his policy was less spectacular than that of the war-party, it had at least greater elements of stability. Chateaubriand, whose sanguine temperament underrated the obstacles imposed by practical politics, was dismissed from the Cabinet, and the Government continued without ostentation its work of social and political retrogression. To strengthen his hold over the legislature, the minister created twenty-seven new peers in order to weaken the Liberal majority in the Upper Chamber, and he also carried through a septennial act by which Parliament was henceforth to sit for seven years; hitherto members of the Lower House had retired in annual batches of fifties. In this way the instrument which Liberalism had forged in its own interests—the parliamentary system—was now turned against it. The nation itself through its accredited representatives was to place the chains of political slavery round its neck; and law, the parent of liberty, was transformed into a vehicle of reaction. Secure for the moment of his parliamentary majority, and strengthened by the accession of Charles X. in 1824, Villèle could now bring forward the measures embodied in the Ultra-Royalist programme. The most important was the indemnification of the émigrés, who had gone into exile at the outbreak of the Revolution and had fought in the ranks of their country’s enemies. The permanence of the French Revolution had been due primarily to the economic changes which accompanied it—the transference of estates from the large landowners to a multitude of peasant proprietors.

1 “The invasion of Spain,” wrote Canning, “was his [i.e. Chateaubriand’s] work, not Villèle’s”: A. G. Stapleton, George Canning and his Times (1859), 553.
It was impossible after an interval of thirty years to dispossess the new owners of the soil, and an alternative device was adopted to satisfy the claims of the *émigrés* without disturbing the territorial settlement of 1790. The rate of interest on the National Debt was reduced from 5 to 4 per cent. (1825), and the economy thus effected enabled the Government to compensate the old nobility for the losses they had sustained by the sequestration of their possessions. This was followed by other measures relating to the foundation of religious bodies and the admission of Jesuits into France. But the open alliance between 'the altar and the throne,' and the growing pretensions of the priest-party, awakened the apprehensions of the nation, and the Chamber of Peers—the stronghold of Liberalism—began to display more determined powers of resistance. The attempt to alter the law of succession in favour of the eldest son, a proposal which foreshadowed the building up of great estates, was defeated; and a similar fate overtook the proposal that all publications must henceforth bear the royal imprimatur. The ministerial defeat was acclaimed with enthusiasm; and, when the King reviewed the National Guard, cries were raised from the ranks: "Down with the ministers." It was a portent of the future, but the ministry wilfully shut its eyes to its significance. Undaunted by the set-back which his policy had suffered, Villèle replied by disbanding the civic militia, re-establishing the censorship of the press, and nominating seventy-six new members for the Chamber of Peers in order to swamp the Liberal opposition. These measures constituted a departure from the course of prudent reaction which Villèle had hitherto followed. They were in reality signs of weakness and declining influence. Their violence, however, failed to overcome the hostility of the extremists, led by Chateaubriand, who regarded everything that Villèle did as coming from a tainted source. To some extent these men were actuated simply by personal motives, dislike of the minister, or resentment at their exclusion from office. But they rested their opposition primarily on grounds of principle; they vigorously denounced the pacific policy and back-stair
intrigues of Villèle, which in their eyes accounted for the tardy progress of the reactionary movement. They clamoured for more drastic methods, and in their exasperation were even induced to make common cause with the Liberals. Villèle resolved to stamp out the disaffected elements in his own camp, whose factious conduct was a more serious menace than the insignificant minority of Liberals, and appealed to the country. A majority adverse to the ministry was returned at the general election (1827), and Villèle, overthrown by the combined efforts of his opponents, resigned office.

The successor of Villèle was Martignac, who attempted to conciliate public opinion by opportune concessions. He abolished the censorship of newspapers, and deprived the Jesuits of the power to give public instruction. The policy of compromise met, however, with no support either from the Liberals or from the Ultra-Royalists. There was no longer any room, in fact, for moderate men; Martignac, in trying to please both parties, pleased nobody, and so fell between two stools. The Liberals demanded that the basis of the franchise should be broadened. In the elections of 1827 they had only recruited their depleted forces with the aid of their most dangerous opponents, the Ultra-Royalists, whose sole desire at the moment had been to keep out ministerial candidates. They could enjoy, therefore, no real political security until they were rendered completely independent of assistance, which had only come to them by a singular caprice of fortune. Martignac professed to meet the Liberals half-way, and to soothe the administrative ambitions of the nation, by extending the franchise in provincial assemblies. His proposal was rejected by the extremists on both sides of the Chamber; it was not progressive enough for one party, it was too progressive for the other. Accordingly the two parties, while unable to agree on any constructive programme, again united to overthrow the ministry (1829).

Matters had now reached a crisis. Charles X. found himself confronted by the dilemma which had faced Louis XVIII. thirteen years before, the claims of the present and
the claims of the past. He could accept once and for all the rôle of a constitutional sovereign, and openly dissociate himself from the insidious attempts of his supporters to subvert the principles of the Revolution, or he could definitely throw in his lot with the Ultra-Royalists, and make a final bid to emancipate himself from the checks imposed upon his power by the Charter. The issues for which political parties had been contending in France since the Restoration were at last clearly defined: aristocratic pretensions and clerical domination on one side; equality and secularism on the other. The King did not hesitate long in making his choice. He had always been the mainstay of the reactionary party, a thorn in the side of his temporizing and prudent predecessor. "What can you expect?" Louis XVIII. had said, when the Comte d'Artois forced him in 1821 to accept Villèle as his minister; "he conspired against Louis XVI., he conspired against me, he will end by conspiring against himself." To a generation which held the theory of popular rights Charles X. now opposed the doctrine of divine right; to progress he opposed reaction; to the Charter he opposed the prerogatives of Louis XIV. "I told you," he said to Martignac, "there is no way of dealing with these men; it is time to call halt." The day for moderate counsels was past, and when the King summoned to the administration Polignac, an uncompromising partisan of the old order, he flung down the gage to the whole nation, and made the breach irreparable. His action proclaimed to the world that he had burnt his boats behind him. Henceforth professions of ministerial responsibility would no longer serve to shield the Crown or to disguise the fact that monarchy itself was now on trial. Men began significantly to recall the fate of James II. "There is no such thing as political experience," declared Wellington; "with the warning of James II. before him, Charles X. was setting up a government by priests, through priests, for priests."

Polignac announced his determination "to reorganize society, to give back the clergy their weight in State affairs, to create a powerful aristocracy, and to surround it with privileges." It was easier, however, to define his pro-
gramme than to carry it into execution; and in the conduct of affairs the minister showed himself irresolute and vacillating. "He has made up his mind," it was wittily said, "but he does not know exactly to what." He fell back upon schemes of foreign aggrandizement in order to dazzle the eyes of the French nation with visions of glory and empire. An army was sent to Algiers, and its conquests laid the foundations of French dominion in North Africa. It is possible that this policy might have borne fruit. There were precedents in the history of the Revolution to justify the expectation that a vigorous offensive abroad would strengthen the hands of the executive in coping with the difficulties of the situation at home. But it was necessary not to strike before the iron was hot; and Charles made the fatal error of choosing the wrong moment for taking action. The Liberal deputies had protested in an Address to the Crown against a ministry holding office when it was not backed by a parliamentary majority. The King interpreted the protest as an insult to the monarchy, and dissolved the Chambers (1830). In the elections which ensued the Government lost over fifty seats, and was now in a hopeless minority in the Assembly. This was the occasion appointed for the coup d'état. An article in the Charter empowered the King "to make the regulations and ordinances necessary for the execution of the laws, and for the safe-guarding of the State." Under the cover of this provision, Charles issued on July 25 three Ordinances: (1) setting aside the recent elections as null and void, and summoning a new Chamber; (2) narrowing the franchise; and (3) silencing the press. The next day Paris, at the instigation of the journalists, broke out in revolt and erected barricades. While the signal for insurrection was given by journalists, the movement itself was organized by republicans, who had prepared for the day of revolution by establishing secret societies among the population of Paris. The ministry, taken by complete surprise, was unable to coerce the capital into submission, and a provisional Government was set up at the Hôtel de Ville under the famous revolutionary leader, Lafayette. The King now sought to revoke the Ordinances,
but it was too late; and, after a futile attempt to save his
dynasty by abdicating in favour of his grandson, he passed
into exile.

The Revolution of 1830 was an event of great significance
in the history of France. On the surface it appeared to
involve no considerable changes. Although the insurrec-
tion was planned and carried through by democrats, the
latter found themselves thwarted in the objects for which
they had fought in the streets of Paris. (The elder line of
the Bourbon House was set aside, but its place was supplied
by the Orleans branch. Despite the change of dynasty,
the monarchy itself was not overthrown, thanks to the skill
with which the politicians manoeuvred the course of events)
The provisional Government, installed in the Hôtel de Ville,
was composed of republicans; and in their eyes the Revolu-
tion was intended as an act of defiance not only to the
Bourbons, but to the European Powers who had forced upon
them the national humiliation of 1815. The situation, how-
ever, was complicated by the fact that the very circum-
stances ultimately responsible for the downfall of the
Bourbon monarchy made it impossible to establish a republic
in its stead. A French republic in 1830 would have been
interpreted as a challenge to Europe; and with the memories
of 1789 still fresh in their minds, the Allies would have taken
immediate steps to ward off the threatened danger. Thus
the republicans found their hands tied; and, while register-
ing in the Chamber their protest against the monarchical
system, they were unable to win any effective support in
the country. Under these circumstances the Liberal
deputies were able to arrogate to themselves the power of
shaping the destinies of France, and they devised a com-
promise which, in default of an alternative solution, gained
the acquiescence of the democrats. The Crown was offered
to Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, who was a Bourbon, but
had fought in the ranks of the revolutionaries at Jemmapes.
This conciliated democratic opinion, which was flattered by
the deference which the new King ostentatiously paid to its
prejudices, while it also served to allay the apprehensions
of the European Powers. (Moreover, not only did the in-
surrection of 1830 fail to destroy the monarchy, but the modifications effected in the Constitution were insignificant. They hardly made even a pretence at giving substance to the lip-professions of the politicians in favour of popular sovereignty. The King was deprived of the power conferred by Article 14 of the Charter to make ordinances in exceptional emergencies, and the right to initiate legislation was confided to the Chambers; Catholicism ceased to be the established religion, and press restrictions were abolished. But the crying need for the extension of the suffrage, which was confined to a mere fraction of the population—28 millions being represented by 100,000 electors—met with no adequate response, and the people were excluded from sharing in a government which their efforts alone had made possible.

None the less, it would be a mistake to minimize the importance of the Revolution, even while we avoid any exaggerated emphasis upon its popular character. It resembled the English Revolution to the extent that its significance was negative rather than positive. Alike in 1688 and in 1830 no real advance was made in the direction of democracy, since the political changes were unaccompanied by parliamentary and economic reforms, without which democracy must remain a transparent fiction. But in England and in France the divine right of the nation was henceforth substituted for the divine right of kings. There could be no question that Louis Philippe, like William III., ruled by the will of the people; and, in any struggle between the King and the nation, the latter was bound to prevail. “The King will respect our rights, for it is of us that he will hold his own.” Once and for all, France rejected the principle established at the Vienna Congress—the principle of ‘Legitimacy.’ The excesses of Charles X. completely obscured the great benefits which the early years of Bourbon administration had conferred upon France—in the words of Decazes: “The establishment of the constitutional regime; the liberation of the territory [from an army of occupation]; the liquidation of the enormous debt which the culpable folly of the Hundred Days had imposed on France; the re-
establishment of peace and security." The downfall of the Bourbon dynasty involved also the final rejection of the Ultra-Royalist programme. Whatever political power had been acquired by the clerical and aristocratic factions was now extinguished. In short, the Revolution of 1830 was the complement of the Revolution of 1789; for the future, the achievements of the revolutionary spirit—the principles of equality, secularism, and constitutional liberty—rested on secure foundations. The Charter was no longer a royal concession extorted from the weakness of the Crown and revocable at will; it had become the inalienable birthright of the nation.

The Orleans dynasty governed France for eighteen years. The period is important for the development of French institutions and the working of the representative system; but while the fortunes of parliamentary warfare swayed now to one side, now to another, the issues at stake were widely different from those which had torn the country asunder in the days of the Bourbon regime. The political and social fabric of the Revolution was no longer endangered by men of the stamp of Villèle or Polignac, and the various elements in the Assembly contended for power, rather than for principle. The protagonists of the struggle were Guizot, the leader of the Conservative party, and Thiers, the leader of the Liberal party. Both alike accepted the July monarchy, and were pledged to defend the existing form of government in all its integrity against the partisans of the legitimate monarchy on the one hand, and against republicans on the other. It is difficult to define their views with precision, since each was compelled by the exigencies of the parliamentary situation to trim his sails and seek the cooperation of those with whom they were fundamentally at variance. Guizot made overtures to the clerical interests. Thiers held compromising relations with the Radical party. Neither recognized that, in coquetting with their common enemies, they were undermining their own position and that of the monarchy itself. Their foreign policy was marked by the same indecisive and temporizing qualities. The diplomacy of Guizot rested on an entente cordiale with
England, a compact between the two Liberal Powers of Western Europe against the three Eastern and reactionary Powers; yet in 1846 he wilfully severed the alliance in order to establish French predominance in the Spanish peninsula. Thiers favoured a vigorous offensive abroad and opposed the entente cordiale; but while reviving the traditions of the Empire, his policy wore largely the appearance of a device to cultivate popularity and oust his opponents from office. The real trend of events which culminated in the overthrow of Louis Philippe must be sought for, not in the details of these party conflicts, but in the domain of foreign policy and in the gradual democratic awakening. The Revolution of 1848 came as a surprise to both parliamentary leaders, who were so preoccupied with the differences which divided them that they had lost all touch with reality. The ease with which the Revolution was accomplished is explicable only on the assumption that the Government and the official Opposition had grown completely insensible to the forces which were silently working outside the parliamentary arena for their destruction. It is necessary to give some account of these forces in order to grasp the inner significance of the period which lies before us.

The fundamental cause of Louis Philippe's unpopularity was his refusal to accommodate himself to the prejudices of the French people, to shape his diplomacy on lines acceptable to the nation at large. The settlement of 1815 had left behind it humiliating memories; and ultimately, therefore, the strength of the Orleans dynasty would depend on the extent to which it gratified the national pride by the vigour of its foreign enterprises. On two occasions it was furnished with an opportunity to satisfy the French yearning for glory; it was the unpardonable offence of the King that, on each occasion, he stood between the nation and the satisfaction of its desires. The first opportunity came at the moment of his accession to the throne. Paris in 1830, as in 1789 and again in 1848, was the storm-centre of Europe; revolutionary outbreaks in the French capital convulsed every State and rocked every throne on the Continent. Hence the downfall of the Bourbons was the signal for
movements which had long been maturing in other countries to assert themselves. Belgium declared her independence of Holland; Poland broke out in revolt against Russia; even Germany and Italy witnessed faint stirrings of national sentiment. The fate of these movements seemed to depend upon the part which France would play. The King was called upon to make a momentous decision whether he would remain passive or give the lead to all the revolutionary elements of disaffection. The destinies of the Orleans House hung in the balance; and, while the prudent policy of Louis Philippe may have preserved his dynasty for eighteen years, it created an irreparable breach between the throne and the people, which the passage of time served only to widen.

The French people demanded that the monarchy should intervene on behalf of the oppressed nationalities. They were hostile to the settlement of 1815 which had wounded so deeply their national pride, and they still clung to the intoxicating memories of the Napoleonic Empire. Moreover, the populace of Paris, after passing through a period of chastened emotions, had suddenly burst out into a flood of insurgent passions; and their uncontrollable impulses not only swept away a dynasty, they also awakened the old missionary ardour which a generation before had sought to kindle the flames of revolution throughout the world. History was repeating itself; and burning with zeal for republican propaganda, France—as in the days of the Convention—was prepared to issue a challenge to the monarchical system and bid subjects everywhere rise up against despotism. It is hardly profitable to speculate what would have been the outcome, if Louis Philippe had given free rein to the popular passions. The result could scarcely have been other than disastrous, for the three Eastern Powers—Russia, Prussia, and Austria—would have immediately drawn together in a coalition against France. It is also unlikely that the French people, after the exhaustion of the Napoleonic Wars, and lacking the stimulus which had enabled them to drive back the invaders of their soil in

1 See below, Chapters II, V, and VII.
1793, would have been able to offer effective resistance. In any case, Louis Philippe steadfastly refused to embroil himself with Europe, and give the reactionary Powers a pretext for intervening in the domestic affairs of France. He was determined at all costs to avoid war, or, as he said, "to unmuzzle the tiger." In spite of the sympathy of the French people, he gave no countenance to the insurrections in Poland and Italy, and he declined the crown of Belgium for his son. His diplomacy was skilful, because it reconciled continental Governments to the July monarchy, and quenched the danger of a European conflagration, but its finesse was lost upon the nation, which never forgave the disillusion it had suffered.

In 1840 the international situation afforded a second opportunity to the Orleans monarchy to abandon its pacific policy and identify itself unreservedly with the national aspirations. The military achievements of Mehemet Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, had aroused the unbounded enthusiasm of the French people, who were carried away by the idea that upon his shoulders had fallen the mantle of Napoleon. The King for the moment wavered, and to satisfy popular clamour placed at the head of the ministry Thiers, who had pledged himself to champion the cause of Mehemet Ali "as a matter of great patriotic interest, a great question of the national honour." But Louis Philippe, who never relaxed control of foreign policy, recognized that the hostile preparations of Thiers involved the prospect of a European war, for the Powers had called upon the Pasha of Egypt to renounce his ambitious designs upon Turkish territory. After a few months, when the popular agitation had subsided, Thiers was dismissed. Guizot was summoned to power and remained in office till the Revolution. In his tortuous diplomacy the nation found little occasion for pride or satisfaction; Lamartine summed up the situation in a telling phrase, *La France s'ennuyait*; and from the boredom of the French people sprang the Revolution.

While Louis Philippe fought his subjects single-handed on matters of foreign policy, imposing an unpopular peace upon a nation in love with glory, his conduct of internal
affairs was equally not calculated to conciliate public opinion. The foundations of the monarchy crumbled silently away beneath his feet, until the ease with which the King was overthrown was a revelation even to his enemies. Chateaubriand and Thiers alike had recognized that military splendour abroad was necessary to allay the discontent occasioned by repressive action at home. But Louis Philippe, and his minister Guizot, thought it possible to deprive the nation of political rights, while refusing it compensation in other directions. Guizot described his 'system' as "resistance at home to the revolutionary movement, and such moderation abroad as enforces respect for existing treaties, while avoiding all interference in the affairs of other States." It was a fatal mistake, however, to suppose that the 'revolutionary movement' could be held in check by a policy of 'resistance': the policy of repression is generally futile unless it meets with popular approval, and is apt to recoil upon those who have recourse to it. In France popular approval was withheld from the Government owing to its foreign policy, and 'resistance' only served to strengthen the opposition. Accordingly, we have now to examine those progressive tendencies, comprehended in the term 'revolutionary movement,' which were undermining the stability of the monarchical system.

The basis of Louis Philippe's throne was the middle classes (the bourgeoisie), who possessed the monopoly of power, and with whose aid he ruled France from 1830 to 1848. They had wrested the fruits of victory out of the hands of the populace which had borne the heat of the struggle, and had established the July monarchy in order to consolidate their position in the community as the governing class. They alone enjoyed the exercise of political rights, since the franchise was limited to those who paid 200 francs a year in taxes, and a seat in Parliament to those who paid 500 francs. Hence they were enabled to determine the composition of the Chambers and impose their will upon the whole country. Wrapped up in the pursuit of wealth, they engrossed public offices and devoted themselves to material interests. In these circumstances the Assembly
had no claim to be regarded as representative of the nation; and it exposed its weakness still further by barren party conflicts, which laid bare the futility of its discussions. It was, indeed, nothing but the empty shell of a parliamentary system, and could not fail to excite derision at a time when social and economic questions were rapidly coming to the front. The dawning consciousness that economic issues are the controlling factors in society, and that true democracy must rest on economic as well as on political foundations, marked in itself an epoch. It also hastened the collapse of a regime, whose policy abroad and at home was based on timid 'resistance' to all political innovations. The grievances of the working-classes attracted the attention of republicans, whose energies in the past had been absorbed in premature outbreaks and vain appeals to revolutionary traditions; accordingly, they began to concentrate upon social and parliamentary reform as the starting-point of the new order. The process of transformation in the republican party was accelerated by the tardy recognition that its former methods of crude violence only served to alienate the mass of the nation. The beginnings of Socialism date from this period, and if only a few were prepared to accept Proudhon's maxim, "property is theft," there were many who approved of Louis Blanc's principle, "the right to work." As early as 1834 the workmen of Lyons had taken up arms in defence of their trade unions, whose existence was menaced by a law directed against industrial associations. A few years later (1842), a contemporary remarked: "The time for purely political movements in France is past, the coming revolution cannot but be a social revolution." To all this seething mass of political and social unrest the Government, content to steer its course midway between reaction and revolution, and devoid of any constructive programme, presented an impenetrable front. Guizot held that concession would be interpreted as a sign of surrender, and even if he had been willing to meet the cry for democratic reform his dependence upon the capitalists tied his hands. Thus in the eyes of the French nation the July monarchy ceased to justify itself. It did not prevent
the isolation of France in the councils of Europe, nor spare her the shame of diplomatic humiliations. At home it stood aloof from the progressive elements in the country, identifying itself with a parliamentary majority whose political preponderance was illusory since it was not truly representative.

Its inherent weakness was revealed in the manner of its overthrow, which came with startling suddenness. Louis Philippe was not content to reign without ruling, to enjoy the semblance of power without its reality. From the outset of his reign, he had opposed a strenuous resistance to the efforts of the Conservative leaders to establish a virtual dictatorship over the monarchy as the price of their assistance in dethroning Charles X. While keeping up the appearance of parliamentary government, and the fiction of ministerial responsibility, he had no intention of being a *roi fainéant*, or resigning his authority to "these princes of the tribune," as a contemporary called them, "these great vassals of the representative regime, who believed that they had a prescriptive right to direct the affairs of the country." On more than one occasion the dissensions between the King and his ministers had provoked an open rupture, and in 1837 he had sacrificed Guizot for Molé, an opportunist in policy, and a more compliant instrument, whom he maintained in office for two years in face of parliamentary opposition. In particular he refused to relax his tenacious grasp over foreign policy, and his firmness alone kept the warlike instincts of the nation in check, resolved as he was "to crush twelve Chambers rather than to make war." Accordingly Thiers, who was enamoured of the Napoleonic traditions and mortified by his exclusion from power, attacked the personal influence exercised by the sovereign as a violation of constitutional practice. Frustrated in his designs by the King, and failing to make headway in the Chamber, he began to draw near to the republican party, and to support the demand for electoral reform. Throughout the country a series of banquets was held to stir up public opinion and bring pressure to bear upon the Government. In the speech from the throne, Guizot denounced the "blind and hostile" passions of the reformers, who
resolved upon a demonstration to protest against the
reproach levelled at their propaganda. At the last moment,
however, the Opposition leaders, dreading to precipitate
the crisis, stayed their hand and revoked the announcement.
Their action was taken too late. On February 22, 1848,
the day appointed for the demonstration, the democracy of
Paris poured into the streets; and the National Guard,
called upon to maintain order, openly betrayed its sympathy
with the demonstrators. Deprived at this critical juncture
of the force upon which it relied, the hollowness of the July
monarchy was made transparent to the republican leaders,
who promptly seized the occasion to turn a demonstration
against an unpopular minister into a revolution against the
monarchy. After a vain effort to conciliate the insurgents
by dismissing Guizot and summoning Thiers to power,
Louis Philippe abdicated the throne. A provisional Govern-
ment was set up under Lamartine, and for the second time
a Republic was established in France.

The Revolution of 1848 naturally invites comparison
with the earlier movements engineered against Louis XVI.
and Charles X. Speaking generally, we may say that the
first Revolution was directed against arbitrary monarchy,
the second against aristocratic privilege, and the third
against middle-class government: in other words, legal
equality was established in 1789, social equality in 1830,
and political equality in 1848. The ascendancy of the
bourgeoisie in the government of France was destroyed by
the institution of manhood suffrage; and political power
was now extended to the people. The July monarchy had
prided itself on being the just mean (juste milieu) between
reaction and revolution, the excesses of aristocracy and the
extravagances of democracy; but, poised as it was in an
unstable equilibrium, its fall was from the first only a
question of time. It became the object of attack on every
side, and all the forces in the country worked to its detri-
ment. The pillars of the monarchy, as we have seen, were
the middle classes, but though their authority rested on a
legal basis, namely, the franchise, they enjoyed no moral or
intellectual ascendancy over the rest of the community.
They possessed no historical claims to be the governing class—claims which might have reconciled France to their pretensions—and, as the representatives of wealth and material power, they excited the animosity of those in whose eyes the existing social and economic order was based upon injustice. Thus the support of the bourgeoisie was in the long run a source of weakness rather than of strength, and Louis Philippe committed a fatal mistake in not broadening the basis of his rule. The error was the more vital, since even the support rendered him was lukewarm and precarious. Although their interests were wrapped up in the stability of the monarchy, the middle classes were really sunk in apathy and lassitude; they had reconciled themselves with reluctance to the pacific policy of the Government, and they ceased to take active interest in the barren debates of their representatives in Parliament. As matters were, Louis Philippe could only hope to encounter successfully the difficulties of his situation by turning away the thoughts of the French people in other directions; but this he signally failed to do. It was an axiom of his policy to maintain the peace of Europe, and the fact that his aim was achieved without any sacrifice of the national dignity, did not appease the susceptibilities of his subjects. He was obnoxious to the country because he disappointed its ambitions; France needed once again to be purified by fire in order to learn the blessings of peace with honour.

The Revolution of 1848 constituted an epoch in the history of political democracy because the extension of the suffrage transferred power from the middle classes to the community at large. It was also an epoch in the history of economic democracy because it witnessed a remarkable, though tentative, experiment in Socialism. The populace of Paris had not overthrown the monarchy merely in order to establish a republic.

"For forms of government let fools contest;
Whate’er is best administered, is best.”

"There is no form of government,” said Louis Blanc, “which may not be used as a weapon against the interests of the
community. . . . The chief object to be aimed at is to make him that works enjoy the fruit of his work, to restore to the dignity of human nature those whom the excess of poverty degrades; to enlighten those whose intelligence, from want of education, is but a dim vacillating lamp in the midst of darkness; in one word, to enfranchise the people, by endeavouring to abolish this double slavery—ignorance and misery.”¹ The watchword of the Revolution was “the right to work,” and Louis Blanc’s Organisation du Travail (published 1839) was the gospel of 1848, just as the Contrat Social of Rousseau was the gospel of 1789. The irony of events, however, associated Louis Blanc’s name with an experiment of which he really disapproved. He did not advocate national workshops, but co-operative workshops which the State was to furnish with the preliminary capital, while leaving the control of the industry in the hands of the workmen themselves. This is not State-Socialism, but a form of Industrial Syndicalism, where production is organized on the basis of self-governing workshops which appoint their own officials, and are linked together with other industrial groups. One of the first acts of the Republic was to set up a “Labour Parliament” at the Luxemburg under Louis Blanc, and the decree which established it is worthy of note:

“Considering that the Revolution made by the people ought to be made for them;
“ That it is high time to put an end to the iniquitous and protracted sufferings of workmen;
“ That the labour question is one of supreme importance. . . .
“A permanent Commission shall be formed for the express purpose of inquiring into the social condition of the operatives. . . .”²

While the Commission was engaged in its deliberations—planning labour exchanges, national insurance, model lodging-houses, agricultural colonies, and a ten-hours’ working day—the Government embarked independently

² Ibid. p. lxxii
upon the experiment of national workshops. The experiment was a portent of extreme significance, but being hastily conceived and ill-managed it ended at the time in disastrous failure. The *ateliers nationaux* attracted no less than 120,000 workmen from all parts of France. The Government, unable to employ them in productive or even unproductive labour, provided them with a scanty dole. "The national workshops," wrote Louis Blanc, "were nothing more than a rabble of paupers whom it was enough to feed from the want of knowing how to employ them. . . . As the kind of labour in these workshops was utterly unproductive and absurd, besides being such as the greater part of them were utterly unaccustomed to, the action of the State was simply squandering the public funds; its money a premium upon idleness; its wages alms in disguise."¹ The situation rapidly became a menace to the public order, and the workshops were abolished. The disappointed hopes of the labouring classes provoked them into armed insurrection (June 1848), and a terrible struggle took place in the streets of Paris. After four days the sanguinary conflict ended in a victory for the authorities, and with it ended also the dream of a social democracy.

It is the fatal vice of revolutions that one can never foretell their course or predict their issues. In 1848, as in 1789, those who initiated the movement planned one thing; circumstance gave birth to another. On each occasion an attempt was made to establish the political sovereignty of the people; each time the result was to call into existence a Napoleonic empire. The result of the first general election held upon the basis of universal suffrage aroused astonishment in Europe, for the conservatism of democracy had not yet become a commonplace; in the main men of moderate opinions were returned to Parliament. Among the members was Louis Napoleon, nephew of the great Emperor, who was also elected President, December 1848, by over five million votes. Three years later the Republic was overthrown by a *coup d'État*, and the Empire was erected the following year by a plebiscite of nearly

NAPOLEON III.
Emperor of the French, 1852-1870
From the Painting at Fontaunouche 1862, Artist unknown.
eight million votes. Thus the Second Republic shared the fate of the First; its supporters were divided among themselves, and it had earned the hatred of the democrats by its ruthless repression of the social movement. A generation after the fall of the First Empire the French people—intimidated by a system of terrorism and the proscription of republican leaders, and carried away by the glamour of Napoleon's name—resigned its sovereignty into the hands of one man, and again reverted to an imperial regime. Another effort was to be made to institute a form of government which should combine stability at home with the pursuit of glory abroad. We have now to examine the programme of the Second Empire and to see how it worked out in practice. This programme, like the Empire itself, was the outgrowth of the Napoleonic legend.

The circumstances which brought Louis Napoleon to the throne of France afford a remarkable illustration of the influence exerted by personality upon History. The personality of Napoleon I. had dominated the imagination of Frenchmen during his lifetime, it continued to dominate their imagination after his death, and it enabled his nephew—with no advantages to recommend him to the nation beyond the possession of a great name—to exploit this accident of birth to the full. It is always difficult for the δισταξών, the generals of Alexander, to occupy the seat of Alexander himself; and the successors of Napoleon, making no attempt to imitate their great model, were unable to fill the void which his loss created in the hearts of the French people. The restored monarchy awakened no enthusiasm in the nation at large, and the benefits which it conferred upon France in repairing the destructive ravages of the revolutionary wars did not blunt the edge of her hostility. The bourgeois régime, despite its services to the cause of peace, equally failed to establish a firm foothold in the country, and its sombre and materialistic background only threw into sharper relief the glorious achievements of the past. This was the seed-time, the period of the Napoleonic cult, when the thoughts of Frenchmen turned to the solitary figure in St. Helena, grieving for the harsh destiny which
had brought him low. They interpreted his career not
with the balanced judgment of cold critical reason, but with
the warm generous sympathy which transfigures what it
cannot approve. They ignored or forgave the coups d'État
by which he climbed to power; they forgot also the contrast
between his professions of liberty and an arbitrary and
oppressive regime; they remembered only the national
hero and the Treaties of 1815.

The Napoleonic legend (Légende Napoléonienne) gave a
new reading to the history of Napoleon. Even while he yet
lived, it enabled him to pose as the apostle of Liberal
opinions, the heir of the Revolution, who symbolized in his
person the ideas of 1789. It exhibited him in the light of a
saviour of society, who had conceived for Europe the vision
of a golden age ripe with the promise of liberty and peace,
a vision darkened all too soon by an intractable fate which
postponed the accomplishment of his designs and launched
him upon a sea of blood. The eager acceptance of this
legend was not due to the credulity of the people, it was in
reality a striking testimony to the almost pathetic yearning
of the nation to honour the memory of its greatest ruler.
And of all who believed in the Napoleonic traditions none
did so more implicitly than Louis Napoleon. In his exile
he had meditated deeply on Les Idées Napoléoniennes, which
he expounded in his writings, and he looked upon himself
as appointed by destiny to assume the mantle of his name-
sake. "The name Napoleon," proclaimed the President of
the Republic in 1849, "stands within for order and the
welfare of the people; without, for the national dignity." The
message summed up in brief the programme of the
Second Empire.

"The reconciliation of order with liberty"—in other
words, the political education of the people—constituted
nominally the design and purpose of Napoleon III.'s domestic
policy. The first condition of a stable government is full
recognition of its authority; a nation must learn to obey
before it can learn to be free. "Order precedes liberty in
historical sequence," for license is not liberty but the nega-
tion of liberty. On this ground it was held necessary to
adjourn the blessings of freedom, as Napoleon I. had done,\(^1\) in order that the community might acquire respect for authority and be schooled to obedience. "France is a great democracy which needs discipline," said a contemporary, "and no element is so fitted to represent it as the Napoleonic." Under cover of this pretext Louis Napoleon began his career as Emperor by extinguishing all the political rights of the nation, professing his intention to curtail his power by gradual stages, and admit the people into partnership. Liberty, he promised, would crown the edifice.\(^3\) In the last years of his reign Napoleon III. undoubtedly did relax his autocracy to some extent, but his grudging concessions were prompted by the desire to conciliate Liberal opinion and not because he thought the time now ripe. The characteristics of the imperial regime can best be illustrated by giving some account of the constitution of the Empire during the period of personal sovereignty, and by indicating the nature of the modifications introduced in later years.

(1) The Emperor comprised in his person all the powers of the Executive, having command of the army and navy, deciding peace or war, and initiating and administering the laws. He stood at the head of a vast centralized administrative system, which covered every part of France and concentrated in his hands enormous executive authority. As in America to-day, there was no cabinet government. The ministers had no seat in the Legislature, and did not reflect its opinions, nor were they a homogeneous body sharing collective responsibility and affording each other mutual support. Independent of parliamentary control, they were individually responsible to the Emperor, and dependent upon him alone for their position; hence they were entirely under his direction. Even in the provinces all vestiges of self-government were completely effaced: power was vested in the prefects, who were the nominees of the Emperor and carried out his will; and all the municipal officers, including the mayor, were nominated and not elected. An arbitrary police-system controlled the press and restricted

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\(^3\) Ibid. p. xi.
the liberty of the individual; it was dangerous to criticize
the Government, and the judicial system itself was converted
into an instrument of despotism. (2) The Legislature was
composed of three bodies: the Legislative Body, the Council,
and the Senate. The Legislative Body was elected on the
basis of manhood suffrage, but every obstacle was placed
in the way of the free choice of the electors, and every
conceivable pressure was brought to bear in favour of minis-
terial candidates. Apart, however, from electoral anomalies
and perversions, the Chamber had not a shadow of power
or independence; it could neither initiate laws, nor even
amend bills introduced by the Government. The president
was chosen by the Emperor; the session lasted only three
months in the year; and the budget was voted en bloc. The
Council of State, intended in the words of the Constitution
as a "body of practical men who could dispense with
oratorical display," was allowed a larger share in legislation,
and it prepared measures for the Chamber; but its president
also was appointed by the Emperor. The Senate, whose
members were all nominees of the Emperor, consisted
mainly of those who had held high official rank; its function
was to frame legislative proposals, to interpret the Constitu-
tion, and safeguard it against infringement.1 Thus Napoleon
III. was the absolute ruler of France. Technically his power
was based upon the will of the people as expressed in a
plebiscite; actually it rested upon the army. In short,
the fundamental idea underlying the Napoleonic regime
was that of inverted democracy, Cæsarism founded upon a
popular basis.

After 1860 Napoleon, as we have said, was compelled by
degrees to limit his autocracy and establish the Liberal
Empire (1860-1870). To restore to the French people the
political rights of which he had deprived them had always
been the Emperor's professed intention; in later years he
awoke to the perception that there was an imperative need
to give substance to his promises. In imitation of the
precedent set by Napoleon I., he had won over to his side the
Catholics, rewarding their allegiance with the control of

1 A. Thomas, "Napoleon" in Camb. Mod. Hist. xi. cc. 10 and 17.
education, and using religious instruction as a vehicle to disseminate ideas inculcating docility and subordination to authority. But in 1859 he exasperated his Catholic supporters by joining Piedmont in a war against Austria. The progress of the Italian movement, as is elsewhere described,¹ threatened with extinction the temporal power of the Papacy, and not unnaturally it raised a storm of opposition among the French Clericals. At the same time he excited the animosity of the manufacturers. Napoleon was a free-trader, and in 1860 he signed a treaty of commerce with England which lowered the duties on imported commodities. He had a sincere desire to promote the welfare of the working classes, and entertained also the conviction that free trade would be the harbinger of peace and goodwill among nations, but his action drew down upon him the hostility of the commercial classes. The Emperor thus found himself in collision with two powerful sections of the community, whose vested interests he had compromised by his policy—the Clericals and the Protectionists; and it became incumbent upon him therefore to appeal for support in other directions. His counsellors also pressed upon him the advisability of sharing his power in order to lighten the load of responsibility which a ruler must shoulder who—like George III.—attempts to be 'his own unadvised minister.' The first step towards parliamentary government was taken in 1860, when the Senate and the Legislative Body were allowed once a year to debate, and criticize, the policy laid before them in the speech from the throne; and the concession was coupled with a decree that debates in Parliament should henceforth be fully reported. In 1861 Napoleon empowered the Assembly to vote on separate items of the budget, and in 1867 to interpellate the ministers; the following year he freed the press from many of its restrictions, and permitted the holding of public meetings. But all these measures, extorted as they were from the weakness of the Emperor by the growing hostility of the nation, failed to conciliate public opinion; indeed they were seized upon by the adversaries of the Government as instru-

¹ *Infra, Chapter V.*
ments for its overthrow. The autocracy of Napoleon broke down under the weight of the combined opposition offered by all the disaffected elements in the country, the Legitimists, the Orleanists, the Liberals, the Republicans, the Catholics, and the Protectionists, who were now all united to wrest from the Emperor fresh constitutional guarantees.

As an administrator, Napoleon III. revived the traditions of the Enlightened Despots, who governed Europe in the eighteenth century; he was ‘the first servant of the State,’ the successor of Joseph II. or of Frederick the Great, not of Louis XIV. “The Napoleonic idea,” he wrote, “is not one of war, but a social, industrial, commercial, humanitarian idea.” ¹ The social and economic policy of the Empire was intended to compensate France for the loss of her political rights, and the welfare of the nation was placed in the foreground of the imperial programme. “The triumph of Christianity abolished slavery, the triumph of the French Revolution abolished serfdom, the triumph of democracy will abolish pauperism.” Napoleon displayed a genuine regard for the poor and a real desire to improve the condition of the people; even before his accession to power his philanthropic sympathies had found expression in a book on the Extinction of Pauperism. Under his energetic direction France made great strides, and an immense impetus was given to every kind of industrial and commercial activity. Credit was fostered by two important institutions: the Crédit foncier, which made advances on property, and the Crédit mobilier, which financed large undertakings; while the Bank of France set up branches throughout the country. At the same time the railway system was greatly developed, and the postal and telegraphic services established on a proper basis. Thus side by side with the accumulation of capital—the arteries of industry—went improved facilities in communication—the arteries of commerce. As a result, manufactures rapidly progressed, inventions multiplied, and production doubled itself within twenty years. The Great Exhibition of 1855 witnessed to the world the striking transformation which was taking place in the industrial

¹ Des Idées Napoléoniennes, 151.
life of France. Still we must remember that the real criterion of national prosperity is not the amount of wealth in a country, but the manner of its distribution. The concentration of wealth in the hands of the few may occasion grave injury to the community as a whole; and therefore the only sound test of economic progress is the condition of the working classes, upon whose physical and material well-being the foundations of society must ultimately rest. Now it is true that in ten years (1850–1860) wages rose from 10 to 40 per cent., according to the various occupations, but ‘real’ wages apparently fell, for the increase in the cost of living was no less than 50 per cent. The Government, to its credit, was not indifferent to social questions, although its efforts at amelioration were palliatives rather than remedies. In Paris the butchers’ gild was deprived of its monopoly, and a compensation fund was formed to enable bakers always to sell cheap bread to the poor. Money was provided out of public funds for the improvement of workmen’s dwellings; benefit societies were fostered, though trade unions were discouraged; almshouses were erected; and in times of distress relief funds were officially organized. In addition the Government itself became a great employer of labour, inaugurating great public works in order to prevent unemployment and to improve the appearance of the large towns. Paris especially was transformed out of all recognition, and its boulevards and buildings created the magnificent city of to-day.

We have now to deal with the foreign policy of the Empire, for we would emphasize the fact that the history of France in the nineteenth century cannot be understood by dwelling exclusively upon her internal development. The condition of affairs abroad reacted upon the situation at home, and the stability of the Government depended upon forces which to a large extent were beyond its control. Though he proclaimed that L’Empire, c’est la paix, Napoleon recognized the importance of indulging the national pride by adopting a resolute and vigorous attitude in his relations with other countries; yet whether he had any coherent design mapped out in his mind may be doubted. “He was
vaguely aware," as Bismarck said, "that he needed a war," for he confessed his determination never to fall, as Louis Philippe had done, by clinging at all costs to an ultra-pacific policy. "He knew well," he told the English ambassador, "that the instincts of France were military and domineering, and that he was resolved to gratify them." But he was obliged to move with circumspection lest an act of unprovoked aggression should unite Europe in arms against him, while the nation itself would be terrified if brought suddenly to the brink of Armageddon. The traditions of the First Empire were still fresh in the memories of men, and it was necessary to reassure the world that Napoleon III. had no intention to plunge the Continent once more into a deluge of blood. His anomalous position thus carried with it the seeds of its own destruction. His inmost desire was peace, in order to reconcile Europe to his pretensions, and to realize his vast projects of a social Utopia; but to establish his dynasty he had also to satisfy the passionate longing of the French people for glory, and the pursuit of glory meant war. Nor was the Emperor adapted by temperament to cope with the difficulties of his situation. He was deficient in true statesmanship, since his means were always ill-proportioned to his ends. He had many amiable qualities, and was accessible to generous emotions; but his irresolution and timidity enmeshed him in a web of diplomatic intrigue, which gave him unjustly the appearance of a mean and scheming adventurer. In range of vision and breadth of conception he towered above most of his contemporaries, but in execution his methods were not commensurate with the greatness of his designs. He awakened aspirations without having the courage to satisfy them; and in the end he not only alienated every interest he had designed to serve, but in the moment of his downfall not a hand in Europe was raised on his behalf. At first, however, Napoleon III. achieved remarkable success. The turning-point in his career came, in fact, in 1859. It coincided with the beginning of the Liberal Empire, but the coincidence was not accidental. His autocracy was unassailable while France was absorbed in the spectacle of
great feats of arms, and he was able with ease to silence opposition. But as the tendencies of his foreign enterprises were gradually disclosed, the political instinct of the nation reasserted itself, discontent once more raised its head, and the possession of sovereignty began by degrees to slip from his grasp. An account of these enterprises will serve to indicate the nature and scope of his policy abroad.

It is the paradox of Napoleon's career that his first diplomatic venture was expressly designed to propitiate those very interests which his subsequent actions were destined in later years hopelessly and fatally to antagonize. On behalf of the Catholic party in France he laid claim to the possession of the Holy Places in Jerusalem, a claim contested by Russia as the representative of the Greek or Orthodox Church. Out of this obscure controversy, which dragged on from 1850 to 1854, although the merits of the dispute were never properly understood, developed the Crimean War, which cost the lives of over half a million men. Napoleon himself cared little about the religious aspect of the quarrel, but he could not afford to alienate his Catholic supporters. The Tsar of Russia, on his side, would make no concessions, and fresh issues were soon involved. The cloud which began no bigger than a man's hand rapidly overcast the whole sky, and the suspicions and misunderstandings of diplomats sowed the seed of a terrible harvest. England was drawn into the conflict because she believed the integrity of the Ottoman Empire to be at stake. Her apprehensions had been aroused by a proposal of Nicholas I. to partition Turkey, for she still considered it part of her traditional policy to check Russia's advance in the south. Accordingly, at the instigation of the English ambassador, the Porte rejected a demand made by the Tsar that the Orthodox subjects of Turkey should be placed under Russian protection. In the circumstances, Russia was ill-advised in putting forward this claim, but the matter ought not to have been incapable of adjustment. However, Nicholas, feeling his dignity compromised, retorted by occupying the Danubian Principalities (Moldavia and Wallachia). His action enabled the war-party in Great Britain to force the
hand of the Aberdeen ministry, and war ensued. It is now
generally recognized by historians that the questions at
issue could have been settled without resorting to war;
and the results of the conflict afforded no adequate com-
ensation for the blood and treasure expended on it. The
Treaty of Paris (1856), which brought the war to a conclusion,
neutralized the Black Sea, opened the navigation of the
Danube to all countries, emancipated the Danubian Prin-
cipalities from Turkish control, admitted Turkey to the
public law of Europe, and pledged the European Powers to
maintain her integrity; in return the Sultan promised to
his Christian subjects religious toleration and equal rights
with Mussulmans. The treaty was short-lived, its terms
being violated almost as soon as the ink on the parchment
was dry. Turkey did not carry out her undertaking and
her integrity has not remained intact, while the neutrality
of the Black Sea lasted only till 1870. Above all, the Crimean
War shattered the peace of Europe after it had been main-
tained for forty years; it ushered in a succession of wars
which have transformed the world into an armed camp, and
made destruction the goal of human effort and the summit
of national ambition. At the moment, however, the outcome
of the Russian campaign was acclaimed by the French
people with an outburst of enthusiasm. It was undoubtedly
a great personal triumph for the Emperor, who presided over
the Congress of Paris held to discuss terms of peace, and
posed in the eyes of the nation as the arbiter of European
destinies. He had emerged successfully from the ordeal of
arms, and had preserved from extinction, as it seemed, the
traditional ally of France. In wiping out the stains of 1815
and 1840 he had covered France with glory and had attained
the pinnacle of his greatness; from this time onwards his
fortunes gradually declined, until he was completely over-
whelmed by the catastrophe of 1870.

The Treaty of Paris gave to Napoleon a new lease of
power; stimulated by success, he at once began to devise
ways and means to turn his prestige to account. The
career of Napoleon I. had shown that the passion for glory
begets in a nation an inordinate craving which is only
quenched by defeat and suffering; the career of his nephew, in his turn engulfed in a flood of boundless ambitions, was to demonstrate the same lesson. The moment now seemed ripe to undertake the supreme task bequeathed to him by destiny as part and parcel of his heritage. The 'Napoleonic idea,' hitherto vague and ill-defined, began to acquire substance. It foreshadowed the most far-reaching designs: to remould the map of Europe, to break up the settlement of 1815, to extend the frontiers of France to the Rhine, and to emancipate the oppressed nationalities. Throughout the chancelleries of Europe the Emperor came to be dreaded as a dangerous firebrand, whose restless energy, impulsive temperament and incalculable moods were fraught with serious menace to the stability of the existing political system. The first-fruits of his nationalist programme were seen in the creation of the Roumanian State out of the Danubian Principalities,\(^1\) which had been rendered autonomous at the Congress of Paris. A more ambitious project soon unfolded itself in the schemes for the liberation of Italy. We shall speak of this in a later chapter,\(^2\) but we may remark at this point how Napoleon's Italian policy by its half-hearted measures succeeded in satisfying no one, and marked the beginning of the end of the Empire. To begin with, it fatally impaired his position at home by rekindling the embers of party feuds. The French Clericals were incensed at the injury to the Holy See; the French Legitimists protested against the expulsion of the Neapolitan Bourbons from southern Italy; and the French Radicals were estranged because the Emperor's abrupt withdrawal from the war left the Italians in the lurch. Outside France he lost the gratitude of Italy, and destroyed the friendship of England, by his extortion of Nice and Savoy. He alienated Austria by his alliance with Piedmont—an alliance which started the Italian movement on its course; and he alarmed Prussia by the revelation of his aggressive designs. In a short time Napoleon also deeply offended Russia by intervening in support of Poland during the insurrection of 1863.\(^3\) In France feeling ran high in favour of the Poles,

\(^1\) \textit{Infra}, Chapter VI. \hphantom{a} \(^2\) Chapter V. \hphantom{a} \(^3\) \textit{Infra}, Chapter VII.
and the Emperor could have rallied all parties to his side by taking up arms on their behalf. To encourage Polish nationality was not only in accordance with the Napoleonic idea, it also appealed to all the traditional instincts of the French people. But England and Austria remained passive, and Napoleon found it impossible to do more than lodge a diplomatic protest which irritated Russia without appeasing the nation. The glory of the Second Empire was waning fast; it set for ever after the Mexican catastrophe.

The Mexican incident, more than anything else in Napoleon’s reign, served to illustrate the unstable imagination of the Emperor, his passion for grandiose and fantastic schemes, and lack of forethought and iron resolution to carry his schemes to a successful conclusion. Foiled in his European enterprises, he entertained the design of building up a Catholic and Latin empire in the New World to serve as a counteracting force to Anglo-Saxon influences. He found his opportunity in Mexico, which was distracted by internal dissensions and unable to resist aggression. A pretext for intervention soon offered itself. In 1861 the Government, owing to its financial embarrassments, suspended payments to foreign creditors for two years. Great Britain, France and Spain, after protesting in vain against this breach of faith, sent troops to enforce the rights of their subjects, though they disclaimed any intention “of exercising in the internal affairs of Mexico any influence calculated to infringe the right of the Mexican nation to choose and constitute freely the forms of its government.” The country submitted, but Napoleon now disclosed his plan to overthrow the Mexican Republic and set up a Roman Catholic monarchy with Maximilian, the brother of the Austrian Emperor, as its sovereign (1864). For a time the French forces carried everything before them, but the following year the United States, released from civil war, remonstrated against the violation of the Monroe principle which forbids the intervention of European Powers in the New World. Napoleon was confronted with the alternative of withdrawing his troops, or carrying on the struggle to the bitter end against the Mexican nation and the United
States. He chose the former; in 1867 the French army embarked, and Maximilian, who refused to desert his supporters by abdicating the throne, was captured and shot. This disastrous conclusion to the Mexican expedition made a deep impression upon the French people. The Imperial Government had wasted men and money upon an undertaking foredoomed to failure from the outset; it had suffered humiliation at the hands of the United States, and it had dishonoured the name of France by encouraging a foreign prince to face a dangerous enterprise and then abandoning him to his fate.

The position of Napoleon was now precarious in the extreme. The efforts of the Liberal Opposition in the Chambers to establish a constitutional system of government were redoubled. Despite the plebiscite of 1870, in which the nation seemed to reassert its confidence in Napoleon, it became evident that a successful war alone could retrieve the fortunes of the Empire, and check the flood of democratic opinion which was threatening to engulf it. The course of events which led up to the Franco-Prussian War will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.\(^1\) The war itself proved fatal to the Empire, which had lost its hold upon the affections of the nation and was discredited by the repeated failure of its foreign enterprises. The hour had at last come to establish a form of government which should no longer be required to stake its existence upon the success of its diplomatic ventures. Three days after the capitulation of the French army at Sedan (September 1, 1870), the Assembly proclaimed the Third Republic.

\(^1\) *infra*, p. 78.
CHAPTER II

THE GROWTH OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE

(1815–1870)

The outstanding feature of European history in the nineteenth century is the growth of nationalities. Napoleon I. had found his greatest strength, as one of his ministers confessed, in the dilatoriness and blunders of other Governments. The cause of his overthrow was an outburst of intense national feeling which shattered for ever his dreams of a world-wide empire. The awakening of the nations, as the result of foreign conquest, set in motion a force destined to remould the map of Europe and call into existence a new political system. This was the principle of nationality, which has affected so profoundly the development of Europe and created problems of the most vital importance whose solution still lies in the future.

Nowhere was the strength of Napoleon greater than in Germany, nowhere was the reaction against his domination more far-reaching in its consequences. On the eve of the French Revolution, Germany was the most divided country in Europe. It comprised over two hundred States owning a nominal obedience to the Emperor, but practically independent in the management of their internal affairs and in their external relations with one another. Austria enjoyed the precedence, and the imperial dignity was vested in the House of the Habsburgs, but Prussia was the stronger military power, and therefore a formidable rival. The rest of the German principalities grouped themselves round Austria or Prussia, while clinging strenuously to their independence and jealously resisting any encroachment
upon their sovereign rights. The only bond between the various States, apart from their shadowy allegiance to the Emperor, was the Diet composed of representatives sent by German princes and towns. These representatives were not national deputies concerned with the welfare of the country as a whole, but envoys charged with a definite mission. The Diet was thus a congress of ambassadors rather than a parliament; it was devoid of authority, possessing neither revenues nor armed forces. It continued to survive not because it served any useful purpose, but as a harmless relic of the Mediæval Empire. This was the political condition of Germany at the end of the eighteenth century; yet at the dawn of the Middle Ages it had displayed greater political cohesion than either England or France. But in Western Europe a succession of competent rulers steadily pursued the single aim of establishing their power on a firm basis, utilizing all their resources to build up a strong central Government. In Germany, on the other hand, the royal house had inherited from Charlemagne a legacy which was fatal to its political fortunes, namely, the Holy Roman Empire. In the early Middle Ages men could not bring themselves to believe that the Roman Empire had ceased to exist, and when the great Frankish king was crowned Emperor in A.D. 800, he came to be regarded as the lineal successor of the Cæsars, a claim to which the extent of his dominions gave him some pretensions. After his death, his empire broke up and the imperial title subsequently lapsed, until it was renewed by Otto I., King of Germany. Henceforth it was the dream of every German ruler to be crowned in Rome as Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. In reality, as Voltaire remarked, the Holy Roman Empire was neither holy, Roman, nor an empire, and Germany paid dearly for her ambition to rule the world. The influence of the Empire was negligible in most parts of Europe—in England, France, Spain and Scandinavia—but it had a disastrous effect upon Germany herself. The attempt of her rulers to establish their authority in Italy involved them in a bitter conflict with the Papacy, which eventually destroyed the strongest dynasty that Germany had known—
the Hohenstaufen. It distracted their energies, impaired their resources, and left them powerless to cope with the disruptive forces of the feudal system. In the absence of the king, engaged in perpetual expeditions to Italy, the great fiefs established themselves in an impregnable position, usurping sovereign prerogatives and reducing the central Government to impotence. The Reformation and the Thirty Years’ War which followed from it completed the disintegration of Germany. It shattered the belief in the Holy Roman Empire. It divided the country into two hostile camps, Protestants and Catholics, and it enabled the princes to extend their power enormously by the absorption of ecclesiastical revenues and property. It left Germany weak and exhausted, with no coherent principles to furnish the basis for a stable political system, but with a multitude of small States oscillating uneasily between the Courts of Vienna and Berlin.

It is one of the ironies of history that Napoleon was the creator of modern Germany. Directly by his constructive statesmanship, and indirectly by the results which opposition to his rule aroused, he contributed to the formation of a united Germany and laid the foundations of the German Empire. In the first place he reorganized the German state-system by an extensive redistribution of territorial power. He reduced the number of independent States from over two hundred to thirty-nine. He swept away a crowd of petty principalities, ruled over by imperial knights and covering but a few square miles in area, and abolished the free cities with the exception of Hamburg, Frankfort, Bremen and Lübeck. This cleared the ground of all the small sovereignties which had hitherto encumbered it; to this extent, therefore, it simplified the political map of Germany and brought the prospect of federal unity within the range of possibility. On the other hand, it augmented the strength of those States which had escaped destruction and intensified their rivalry and love of independence. Equally significant was the abolition of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, which was replaced by a Confederation of States dependent upon France. The Holy Roman Empire
had long been a mere obsolete survival, yet its dissolution involved an irreparable breach with the past; it meant, in fact, that the new German kingdom was to be built up on a tabula rasa, a clean slate. Of its own act the Habsburg House yielded up its historic claims to be the ruler of Germany; henceforth it was possible to conceive a Germany in which Austria had no place. But the most important result of Napoleon’s work was one least anticipated by him: the growth of national feeling. The War of Liberation against Napoleon differed fundamentally from all other wars waged by Germany. It was not provoked by a Government intent upon world-aggrandizement, it was the rising of a people in arms to free itself from foreign domination. Goethe had prided himself on his cosmopolitanism; the new national spirit was exemplified in Arndt’s famous war song, “What is the German Fatherland?” If the generous enthusiasm which then inspired the best elements in the German people to throw off the Napoleonic yoke had been afforded scope, the history of Germany in the nineteenth century would have run a different course. It will be necessary to show how the warm hopes of German patriots were chilled by disillusionment, and how eventually the unification of Germany was accomplished not by the people, but by Governments, with consequences which have profoundly affected the subsequent development of Europe.

For a generation after the fall of Napoleon, Germany remained in a stagnant condition. The sacrifices made by the people in the cause of freedom were forgotten or ignored, and no attempt was made by their rulers to satisfy their legitimate desire for national unity. Four reasons in the main serve to explain the fact that, for over a quarter of a century, all efforts towards the political regeneration of Germany bore barren fruit. The period which immediately follows a great war is not usually propitious for the carrying out of important reforms; the energies of a country will naturally be absorbed in the task of repairing the ravages of war and building up its material prosperity. Accordingly, Germany had first of all to recover from the exhaustion of her struggle with Napoleon and to accommodate herself to
the new territorial conditions, before she could seriously turn her thoughts to the reconstruction of the political fabric. Another reason for the set-back to the cause of reform was the lack of agreement among German reformers. Instead of concentrating their efforts upon a common programme, they propounded a great variety of remedies. Some wanted the exclusion of Austria and the union of Germany under Prussia; others, "mostly feudalist reactionists," wished to restore the German Empire under Habsburg sovereignty; a few even advocated a German republic, one and indivisible. "Thus German unity," wrote Karl Marx, "was in itself a question big with disunion, discord and, in the case of certain eventualities, even civil war." Their views on other matters were no less diverse. Problems of internal administration came at once to the front, and the champions of the old order made war to the knife upon those who upheld the social and political traditions of the Revolution. It was difficult to determine whether the War of Liberation was to be regarded as a triumph for those who professed Liberal principles, or for those who held reactionary sentiments. Bonapartism was detested by the former on account of its autocratic methods of government, and by the latter because of its revolutionary origin. In this ferment of ideas and seething mass of conflicting opinions were all the elements of barren party strife.

A characteristic feature of German history is the influence which scholars and men of letters have exerted upon the development of Germany. They gave a powerful impulse to the uprising against Napoleon; and, after the Vienna Congress had disappointed the national aspirations, the Universities—especially Jena—again served the purpose of dissipating mental apathy and focussing public opinion upon the political needs of the moment. "The generation already educated cannot serve them," wrote Metternich; "they therefore turn their attention to those who are to be educated, a plan which commends itself even to the most impatient, for the student generation includes at the most

1 K. Marx, Revolution and Counter-Revolution (ed. 1904), 30.
a space of four years." He complained that German Universities were inspiring the youths confided to them with contempt for, and opposition to, the legally established order; designing nothing less than to educate the people for revolution. Metternich, to whom the "union of all Germans in one Germany" was "an infamous object," watched with growing apprehension the spread of revolutionary doctrines among the youth of Germany. "A whole class of future State officials, professors, and incipient literary men, is here ripened for revolution." 1 A national society of students, known as the Burschenschaft, was treated as a revolutionary and dangerous organization; and matters came to a climax with the Wartburg Festival and the murder of Kotzebue—two events which were magnified into a crisis involving "the probable disruption of the united German Confederation." The Wartburg Festival (1817) was a patriotic demonstration organized by the students of Jena University to celebrate the battle of Leipzig and the tercentenary of the Reformation, but ending with a bonfire in which various symbols of reaction were committed to the flames. The incident was scarcely more than an ebullition of youthful spirits, and its significance was exaggerated out of all proportion to its real importance. It aroused the greatest alarm among the authorities, which was intensified by the assassination of Kotzebue in 1819. Kotzebue, who had become notorious from his attacks on the Universities as the alleged centres of political agitation, was particularly obnoxious to German Liberals because they attributed to his influence the 'apostasy' of the Emperor Alexander, the "protector from whom they had the greatest expectations." 2

As the result, the Governments of Germany plunged headlong into all the excesses which spring from unreasoning panic. Metternich successfully worked upon their fears. "The Governments are now so terrified," he wrote, "that they are willing to act." Everywhere reaction set in. In vain the Duke of Saxe-Weimar—who was the patron of

1 Metternich, Memoirs (ed. 1881), iii. 206, 300, 317.
2 Ibid. iii. 254.
Goethe and Schiller, and was regarded by Austrian ministers as one of the chief authors and protectors of all the mischief in Germany—protested to the Diet that "freedom of thought and teaching must remain at the Universities; for there, in the open conflict of opinions shall truth be found by the students; there shall the scholar be preserved from devotion to authorities, and there shall he be raised (not educated) to independence." His plea was derided as childish stuff, "the quintessence of all revolutionary teaching," and his protest was ignored. The Carlsbad Decrees, passed by the Federal Diet in 1819, inaugurated an era of repression and riveted the yoke of despotism upon Germany for thirty years. All Governments were required to appoint commissioners whose function was to supervise the Universities and to exercise a stringent censorship over all publications. A central commission was also instituted at Mainz for the investigation of secret societies, and to accumulate evidence for the judicial tribunals. Metternich had thus achieved a distinct triumph for his policy. Events had played into his hands and he had shown great skill in turning them to account. He won over to his point of view Alexander I., the Tsar of Russia, who, posing as a Liberal, had hitherto discouraged the growth of a reactionary spirit in Germany. At the same time the King of Prussia was 'frightened' into the belief that his territories were enveloped in the meshes of a dangerous and widespread conspiracy. Frederick William III. had long been dallying with the idea of a Constitution for his dominions, which he had promised to his subjects in the momentary exaltation evoked by the fall of Napoleon. Metternich's influence now prevailed with him to renounce his intention of redeeming this promise. The Austrian statesman knew that German Liberals hoped to find in Prussia a lever to set in motion the forces of revolution, and he dreaded the 'incalculable influence' which the reorganization of the Prussian State would have upon Germany and Austria. It meant surrendering themselves at 'one stroke' to the Revolution. Accordingly he urged that Prussia "requires before every-

1 Metternich, Memoirs (ed. 1881), iii. 271, 272.
thing a free and sound military strength, and this does not and cannot consist with a purely representative system." He recommended that the King should go no further than the formation of provincial diets "in a very carefully considered, circumscribed form." His argument was reinforced by the notorious fact that constitutional experiments in Southern Germany had not been attended with marked success. In Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg the parliamentary system had been established largely with a view to enlisting popular support against the military monarchies; but the only result had been friction and disorder.

In his strenuous efforts to stamp out the revolutionary movement in Germany, Metternich did not owe his success entirely to his own skilful tactics. He also profited by the folly of his opponents, who ruined their cause by the extravagance of their proposals and their lack of political experience. After all, however, the various causes we have recounted were subsidiary. Ultimately the failure of Germany to realize the hopes of unity entertained during the War of Liberation sprang from the fact that national consciousness had not yet penetrated deeply enough among the great mass of the people. The demand for a united Germany was not general; it was still confined in the main to the intellectual classes, "the learned caste," whose enthusiasm was apt to outrun their discretion.

We have dealt with the reasons why all efforts towards a national Government proved abortive in Germany after 1815; yet the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire made necessary some form of political federation to take its place. On this account the Vienna Congress established the Germanic Confederation, which nominally survived no less than half a century. Its object, as stated in the Act of Confederation, was to guarantee the external and internal security of Germany and the independence and inviolability of her component States. This guarantee, however, did not extend to the non-German possessions of the chief States—

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1 Metternich, Memoirs (ed. 1881), iii. 198, 301.  
2 Infra, p. 54.  
3 E. Hertelot, The Map of Europe by Treaty (1873), i. 244 seq.
Austria and Prussia—but it bound all the German States to render mutual support whenever required, and to make no attack on each other. The organ of the Federal body was the Diet, which was vested with the control of all federal concerns, though the members remained "separate in administrative respects." This Diet comprised two different forms of assembly. The ordinary or 'narrower' assembly contained seventeen delegates, one each for the eleven larger States, and the rest distributed among the remaining twenty-eight States. All important business, however, was reserved for the general assembly, in which every State had at least one vote, the chief States four, and a few others two or three; in all, the number of delegates here amounted to sixty-nine. A unanimous vote was apparently required for any changes affecting "fundamental laws, organic institutions, individual rights, or affairs of religion," a condition which virtually excluded every possibility of innovation or amendment. As an additional safeguard the presidency of the Diet was entrusted to the Austrian delegate; for Austria, under the controlling guidance of Metternich, was the bulwark of reaction in Germany.

Its defects. Whatever may have been the merits of this Constitution on paper, it worked out disastrously in practice. It never had a chance of success from the start; it satisfied no one in Germany save Metternich alone, who was able to manipulate it to suit his own interests. To begin with, it reproduced the dualism so fatal to Germany in the eighteenth century; it sought to establish an equilibrium of forces between the two military monarchies, although there was obviously no room for both Austria and Prussia in the Germanic system. Austrian influence predominated, and the skilful intrigues of Metternich drew the small German States to his side. His ascendancy enabled him to defeat the hopes of those who saw in the Diet the instrument for the end they had in view, the attainment of German unity. The futility of the Diet for purposes of practical reform became unmistakable when the Austrian president of the Diet pronounced the fundamental laws of the Constitution to be, like the Bible, incapable of change. In other ways
the Diet soon exposed its weakness to the German people. It suffered from two defects: (1) Its members were the representatives of the German princes, and were bound by the strict letter of their mandates. Now the German princes clung tenaciously to their rights of sovereignty and jealously resisted any encroachment on the part of the Federal body. They were not prepared to surrender to the Diet a single prerogative; to employ federal terminology, they viewed the Germanic Confederation in the light of a league of states (Staatenbund), not as a federal state (Bundesstaat). In these circumstances the members of the Diet had absolutely no freedom of action, and were dependent at every turn for their instructions upon the Governments which they represented. Thus the institution of a Diet was no real step in the direction of German unity; on the contrary, it served to emphasise the territorial disunion of Germany. Particularism—the independence of the princes—had been for centuries the bane of German development; it had now captured the central Government itself. (2) The second defect was that the Diet was destitute of the necessary machinery to enforce its injunctions. It showed its weakness at the very outset of its career, when the inhabitants of Hesse appealed against the arbitrary decision of their Elector, that every act done in his territory during the French occupation was invalid. The Diet condemned the Elector, who turned refractory and declined to accept its jurisdiction. Metternich intervened on his behalf and rebuked the Austrian president for upholding the Diet’s right to intervene in controversies between subjects and their sovereigns. The Diet lacked the power to reduce the Elector to submission, and its impotence not only seriously compromised its dignity but also made it abundantly clear to every Government that obedience to its decrees was optional. This was scarcely a promising beginning for the new central Government upon which Liberal sentiment had built its hopes for the future salvation of Germany, and its subsequent history was in the same vein of sheer ineptitude. It made no further attempts to protect the victims of tyranny or to solve constitutional problems of any kind, while its
dilatoriness in general matters became a byword. Its functions, in short, were strictly circumscribed in accordance with the principle laid down by Metternich that abroad the Diet should enable Germany to present a united front towards foreign countries, while at home it safeguarded the members of the Federation from Liberal assaults. Its most memorable act was to pass the Carlsbad Decrees, to which we have already alluded, and to lay down the principle that the existence of ‘responsible Governments’ was contrary to the German Constitution. After 1828 it ceased almost entirely to hold meetings; so far from promoting the unity of Germany it had served only to retard it.

It is the inherent vice of all systems of government not broad-based upon the people’s will, that they are liable to be uprooted at the first gust of popular passion. Metternich was essentially an opportunist, a master in the art of diplomatic intrigue, but he built his calculations upon shifting sands. He held that “political repose rests on fraternization between monarchs, and on the principle of maintaining that which is”; and in practice this meant a league of sovereigns against their people. Although not by nature a pure reactionary, and condemning the “dreadful abuse of power”¹ of which many German princes were guilty, the keynote of his policy was necessarily reaction, since he set himself to combat those tendencies of the future which he judged destructive of the existing order. But a political system based on repression is foredoomed from the start. Karl Marx, who has left on record an acute analysis of the varied elements in German society, wrote in 1851: “The times of that superstition which attributed revolutions to the ill-will of a few agitators have long passed away. Every one knows nowadays that, wherever there is a revolutionary convulsion, there must be some social want in the background, which is prevented by outworn institutions from satisfying itself. . . . Every attempt at forcible repression will only bring it forth stronger and stronger, until it bursts its fetters.”² In 1848 the German people

¹ Metternich, Memoirs (ed. 1881), iii. 199, 202.
² Marx, op. cit. 2.
made their first serious attempt to achieve at one stroke unity and constitutionalism. The overthrow of the Orleans dynasty furnished the signal, though the forces of revolution had long been maturing. The rapidity with which they now spread through every quarter of Germany showed that all classes of the community were honeycombed with discontent. The movement of 1848 wore a dual aspect. On the one hand, there was in every State a demand for free institutions; on the other, there was a demand for unity and a central representative system. It will be convenient to keep these two aspects distinct, provided it is remembered that ultimately they were part and parcel of one and the same movement.

(1) The generation which fought for Germany in the War of Liberation suffered a double disillusionment. The party of German unity led by Stein saw its hopes wrecked by the incapacity of the sovereign princes to make sacrifices in the common cause of nationality. The party of German Liberals had even more serious ground for complaint. The Thirteenth Article in the Federal Act bound every prince of the Federation to grant his subjects an Assembly of Estates, that is, representative government. This promise of constitutional liberty was a formal pledge to the whole German people. The Duke of Weimar set the example by immediately granting a Constitution to his territories. But the Diet itself, the guardian of the Federal Constitution, refused to take any steps to enforce the Article, and left its execution a matter for the discretion of the individual princes. Metternich ruled that every State had the right to regulate its internal affairs according to its own views. In his adherence to this principle he was not always consistent, for we have already seen how he forced all the German princes to accept the Carlsbad Decrees. Hence the liberty of German Governments to act as they pleased meant in practice that they must act as Austria pleased. In one direction alone no check was placed upon them: they could be as reactionary as they liked, and the greater number did not hesitate to avail themselves of the licence. Three South German

1 Memoirs, iii. 312.
States—Bavaria, Württemberg, and Baden—did, however, follow the lead given by the enlightened Duke of Weimar. Bavaria was ambitious to wrest from Prussia her predominance in Germany by establishing an alliance of progressive States under her auspices. She also had designs upon Baden; and it seemed, therefore, desirable to disarm public opinion by making a show of Liberal sympathies. Confronted with this danger from Bavaria, the ruler of Baden granted a Constitution in order to strengthen the popularity of his House and win the favour of the Emperor Alexander. In Württemberg the traditions of a constitutional regime still survived, and a Constitution on modern lines ought to have met with success. The experiment failed owing to the obstructive tactics of the aristocratic and clerical factions, which would rest content with nothing less than the restoration of their mediæval privileges; accordingly, the scheme proved abortive. As to the other minor States, it is sufficient to remark that Liberal principles made no real headway. After all, the fate of the constitutional movement in Germany was necessarily bound up with the attitude of Prussia, whose extent of territory and military resources made her inevitably the chief German Power. As Karl Marx afterwards wrote: "Without a fundamental change in the policy and constitution" of either Austria or Prussia, "no secondary efforts and victories would be of any avail." The Prussian King, a man of weak though obstinate character, long oscillated between reaction and progress. For a time it appeared as though his minister, Hardenberg, who with Stein had raised up Prussia from her degradation, would carry the day in favour of a Liberal programme. But Austria drew her the other way, and after 1818 Alexander, no longer a 'Jacobin,' also ranged himself by the side of Austria. The union of Austria and Russia proved irresistible; and, as we have already shown, Metternich's influence triumphed. It must be acknowledged, also, that the constitutional problem in Prussia was extremely complicated; however simple the issue might seem to doctrinaire Liberals, practical statesmen had to recognize the difficulties with which their path was strewn. Prussia was not a consolidated State, but a
mosaic of scattered provinces. There was local patriotism, but little national feeling, and a bureaucratic Government was the sole bond between territories so diverse as the Rhine lands, East and West Prussia, and the Polish provinces. The energies of her statesmen were therefore naturally absorbed in the task of assimilating the extensive acquisitions made in 1815, which at once doubled the population and created the need for scientific frontiers. Apart from the pressing problems of internal administration, there was a great confusion of political parties, combined with all the baneful effects of a rigid social system. Prussia, now as always, was "the classic land of Junkertum, and militarism"; and the pretensions of the 'squirearchy' and the dominance of military traditions were fatal to orderly constitutional development. Ultimately the tardy progress of Liberalism was due to the Prussian temperament. The basis of all Liberal principles is individualism. The demand for free institutions—that is, for liberty of thought and action—is essentially a demand for the rights of the individual. But in Prussia the individual was completely subordinated to the State, for the historical reason that the growth of Prussia was the achievement of the Prussian State. Now the sturdy plant of Liberalism could hardly thrive in soil where the individual was willing to sacrifice initiative and self-expression for the efficiency of a paternal despotism. These various considerations may serve as the explanation why the first real attempt made by Prussian Liberals in 1848 to obtain political power was so easily quenched.

The effects of the French Revolution of 1830 upon Germany had been slight, although a few States, where the situation was particularly intolerable, were forced to make concessions. The main result, indeed, was to reinvigorate the spirit of repression, which had shown a tendency to subside; and fresh reactionary decrees were promulgated by the Diet. But in 1840 Frederick William IV. came to the throne of Prussia, and a new era seemed at hand. He was known to be out of sympathy with the "predominantly bureaucratic and military monarchy" of his predecessor, and not disinclined to tolerate some form of the representa-
tive system. The *bourgeoisie*, who represented the commercial and manufacturing interests, cherished the hope that they would at length be admitted to a share in Government. Although behind the middle classes in England and France in point of numbers and wealth, they felt their energies cramped by bureaucratic despotism, and desired wider scope for their political activities. Their expectations were doomed to be disappointed, for the King, upon whom they relied, was more concerned to revive feudal institutions and class privileges, in short, the "predominant social position of the nobility." In 1848, however, the time at last appeared ripe for Liberal forces to assert themselves. Upon the news of the Parisian insurrection, the population of Berlin rose in revolt and erected barricades. As a consequence of the 'March Days,' as they were called, Frederick William IV. was compelled to parade the streets wearing the colours of the German Empire, to suppress the censorship, and to summon the Combined Diet, composed of representatives from the provincial assemblies. The capitals of minor German States witnessed similar scenes. "The German people," observed a contemporary, "were at last fairly launched into the revolutionary career." Everywhere rose the cry for responsible governments and popular ministries, for a free Press, trial by jury, and religious toleration. For the moment the German sovereigns bowed before the storm. Yet the triumph of the constitutional party, whose fate depended upon Prussia, was short-lived. The Prussian *bourgeoisie* grew alarmed at the extent of their own success. The outbreak of the February Revolution in Paris had furnished a stimulus, it was now to afford a warning. It revealed itself as a protest of the working classes against the political supremacy of the middle classes; a protest, in short, against the very object which the revolution in Prussia was designed to effect. The emergence of the working classes was the last thing, however, the Prussian *bourgeoisie* wanted; above all things they dreaded lest the populace in Berlin should gain the upper hand. The march of events had produced a singular situation, parallel to that which existed in France in 1830, when the French *bourgeoisie*
were compelled to invoke the aid of Louis Philippe. The Prussian bourgeoisie in their turn found the support of the monarchy indispensable as a protection against the political aspirations of the working classes. They formed a tacit alliance with the vanquished party in checking the revolutionary passions which their own example had done so much to incite. Their opposition to the Government was therefore necessarily timid and vacillating. The forces of reaction gathered strength; they had made the valuable discovery that there was really nothing to fear from the middle classes. They patiently bided their time, but when the moment for action arrived they took prompt and decisive steps. They dissolved the Assembly elected to frame a Constitution, and imposed upon the country as the gift of the King, not as the inherent right of the nation, a Constitution manufactured in accordance with the views of the Court circles. In this way the constitutional movement which had opened so auspiciously for Prussia flickered out ignominiously owing to the weakness and irresolution of its authors.

(2) We have now to trace the history of the corresponding movement towards a United Germany. The stronghold of the national party was in the south-west, and the desire to unite all the disjecta membra of the German body was naturally most insistent, as contemporaries remarked, "in the smaller States where the costliness of a court, an administration, an army, in short, the dead weight of taxation, increased in a direct ratio with the smallness and impotency of the State." ¹ It is important to observe that the French Revolution of 1848 was not the origin of the German national movement, although it supplied the driving force, while the fact that Austria was paralysed by internal dissensions also materially affected the situation. As early as 1847, a meeting of Liberal representatives voiced the demand for a national parliament which should focus at a single point the energies of the whole people. The Revolution in Paris gave a powerful impulse to the national party to take definite action. On March 5 a number of Liberal

¹ Marx, op. cit. 30.
leaders came together at Heidelberg and entrusted a committee of seven with the task of summoning a preliminary convention, or vorparlament. This met, without sanction of the Governments, at Frankfort on March 31, and ordered an election to be held on the basis of one delegate for every fifty thousand voters. The Diet, constrained by the overwhelming force of public opinion, gave its adhesion to the scheme. The German princes dared offer no resistance; even Frederick William addressed a proclamation to "my people and the German nation," in which he announced that "Prussia's interests shall henceforth be those of Germany." Events speedily indicated the extent to which Prussia was prepared to let herself be absorbed by Germany.

The passionate desire of the German people to attain unity had at length crystallized in a material form. The Diet had never satisfied the people; from the outset nothing but a league of princes, it had become a worn-out institution which had long ceased to fulfil any useful object. But the German nation was now afforded a unique opportunity to make or mar its destinies. Austria, the vigilant foe of revolutions, was herself in the throes of a revolution; Frederick William and the minor German princes were equally concerned to walk warily and abstain from open antagonism. With their enemies thus momentarily disarmed, and a German parliament actually in session, victory seemed to lie within the grasp of the nationalists. If the Frankfort Assembly had achieved its purpose of giving life and substance to the national movement, the history of Germany would have worn a different aspect. There would have been no Sadowa, perhaps no Sedan; and the German Empire—built up not on the unstable foundations of militarism but on the basis of enlightened democratic opinion—would have been a guarantee of peace. But the record of the National Assembly is one of unqualified failure. It was not composed of the right men, or it lacked leaders with the vision to recognize, and the courage and skill to pursue, the right course. Karl Marx pours unlimited scorn upon "this Assembly of old women." He describes it as "an Assembly composed in its majority of Liberal attorneys and doctrinaire
professors, an Assembly which, while it pretended to embody the very essence of German intellect and science, was in reality nothing but a stage where old and worn-out political characters exhibited their involuntary ludicrousness and their impotence of thought, as well as action, before the eyes of all Germany." Marx was a prejudiced observer; but it seems impossible to deny that the delegates conducted their concerns in the spirit of a society of savants, intent only upon the exposition of their favourite political theories. In England the Puritan Revolution transferred the control of affairs from the monarchy into the hands of men who had received as Justices of the Peace a training in local Government, which fitted them for the part they were called upon by destiny to undertake. Germany in 1848, like France in 1789, paid a heavy penalty for the fact the 'mysteries of state' had remained a sealed book to those outside the charmed circles of the Government.

The Assembly met on May 13. Its first task was to set up a provisional Government. This consisted of an irresponsible Vicar (Regent) of the Empire, acting through a responsible ministry. The Archduke John was nominated to the position of Regent, and his authority was recognized by the German princes. The work of reforming the federal Constitution of Germany was now taken in hand. In imitation of the precedent set by the American and French Revolutions, the 'fundamental rights' of the German nation were debated with eloquence, but the invaluable time consumed in theoretical discussions would have been more profitably spent in establishing the power of the Assembly upon an armed basis. The delegates were destitute of political knowledge, yet even the most inexperienced among them ought to have grasped the fact that in the momentary paralysis of Austria and Prussia lay their only opportunity for making the regeneration of Germany a fait accompli, which those two States would be bound to respect. Force was the only argument which the military monarchies understood, but from the start the Frankfort Assembly exhibited its impotence to the whole German

1 Marx, op. cit. 53.
world in connexion with the Schleswig-Holstein crisis. The duchies of Holstein and Schleswig revolted against Denmark, and attempted to unite themselves with Germany. Prussia intervened on their behalf, but the European Powers declined to allow any dismemberment of Denmark; and they forced Frederick William to conclude the Convention of Malmoe (August 1848) and withdraw his troops. Thereupon the duchies appealed to the National Assembly, which protested against what it considered to be a betrayal of the German cause and rejected the Convention. The ministry, unable to exert pressure upon Frederick William, resigned, and the Assembly in the end was compelled to ratify the truce. Immediately an insurrection broke out in the streets of Frankfort, and two deputies were murdered by an infuriated mob. The rising was crushed by Austrian and Prussian troops, but henceforth the dignity and prestige of the German parliament were fatally impaired. Its vacillation had destroyed the only real basis of its authority, the support of the people; while it had now forfeited its independence by employing Prussia to suppress a popular riot. The sequel showed that the rulers of Germany were not slow to take advantage of its weakness. None the less, despite this unpromising beginning, the Assembly continued its labours on the Constitution of Germany. Two main problems confronted it: (1) the position of Austria, and (2) the form of the new federal Government.

(1) Austria's relation to Germany raised a vexed question bristling with insuperable difficulties. One solution was to include all the Habsburg dominions within the new German Empire. This was hardly practicable, especially at a moment when the Austrian monarchy appeared in the last stages of dissolution. An alternative proposal to exclude Austria altogether was one for which German public opinion appeared scarcely ripe, and was bound in any case to excite the aversion of Frederick William. Dahlmann, the Prussian representative, attempted a half-way course and brought forward a third proposal, which was incorporated as an Article of the Frankfort Constitution. This declared that "no part of the German Empire may form part of a State
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containing non-German territories." Where a sovereign ruled over territories of composite nationality, the relation between his German and non-German dominions was to be one of personal union; that is, they were to form separate States—like England and Scotland under the Stuarts—united only by the common tie of allegiance to the throne. This Article spelt the disintegration of the Austrian State; it admitted the German portion, but shut out the remainder. The Austrian minister Schwarzenberg, although willing to include the Habsburg monarchy as a whole, would not consent to its virtual partition, involving as it did a most profound change in the internal structure of the Empire. The National Assembly met his refusal by the formal exclusion of Austria from the German Federation.

(2) The first problem had been solved by the elimination of Austria from a United Germany; the attempted solution of the second problem was to offer the imperial crown to the King of Prussia. The reasons why the offer was made to Prussia and why it was rejected merit careful attention. No State had experienced greater reverses at the hands of Napoleon than Prussia, which lost half her population and was burdened with an army of occupation and an immense debt. Her resurrection was the work of non-Prussians—Stein, Arndt, Fichte, Hardenberg, Scharnhorst—attracted to her service from all parts of Germany as the one State which seemed to possess the qualities of leadership for a national uprising. Her great King, Frederick II., now became a national hero—despite the fact that he had cared only for French, not for German culture, and worked purely for the aggrandizement of his own kingdom—owing to his memorable victories over the invaders of German soil. Regenerated by the reforms of Stein and his colleagues, and inspired by the patriotic teachings of Fichte and Arndt, Prussia rushed to arms in 1813, and in the War of Liberation she played a leading part. As a result of the struggle she acquired possession of the Rhine provinces, and this proved significant in two ways. Henceforth she covered more purely German territory than any other State, thus usurping the position hitherto occupied by Austria. Again, upon
Prussia now devolved the task of defending the Rhine frontier against France, and as the guardian of Germany she was bound ultimately to assume the headship of Germany. Austria, on the other hand, did not hesitate to cast aside her German obligations. She alienated public opinion by an alliance with Napoleon, to whom she gave the hand of an Austrian archduchess in marriage. She made no concealment of the fact that her interests lay not towards the Rhine, but along the Danube. Her face was turned eastward; even in the eighteenth century she had sought to rid herself of Belgium, and she willingly sacrificed it in 1815 at the Congress of Vienna. Metternich confessed that purely Austrian affairs were nearer to him than Austro-German.¹ His policy was to keep Germany weak and disunited, and German patriots could expect no encouragement from one whose sole principle of Government was to crush every progressive movement. For these various reasons the national sentiment gradually fell away from the Habsburg monarchy, and clustered round the fabric of the Prussian dynasty. Yet it took Prussia half a century to summon up resolution to contest with Austria the hegemony of Germany. For many years she was content with the rank of second State, and allowed Austria to enjoy precedence in German affairs. "I could write you a long letter," wrote Gentz in 1818, "about the honour which Prussians pay to everything Austrian. . . . Metternich has fairly enchanted them." Moreover, the old loyalty to the Habsburgs, who for five centuries had been the custodians of the imperial traditions, died hard. Metternich has left on record a description of the visit paid by the Emperor Francis to Cologne Cathedral in 1818. "The people, who had forced the doors to see the Emperor, all fell on their knees instantly," while the King of Prussia stood among his subjects, looking "very uncomfortable."² It was this instinctive loyalty to the Austrian House, and what Bismarck called "a garnish of mediævalism"—"his romantic mediæval reminiscences of the Empire"³—which largely prevailed with

¹ Memoirs, iii. 304.  
² Memoirs, iii. 143.  
³ Bismarck, Reflections and Reminiscences (1898), i. 44, 47.
Frederick William to repudiate the honour proffered him by the National Assembly. He felt conscientious scruples in supplanting the legitimate claimant, and he was not prepared to run the risk of war with Austria and perhaps even with Russia. Other motives equally influenced him in rejecting the imperial crown. Conscious of his deficiency in statesmanship, he shrank from the difficulties in which its acceptance would involve him. "Frederick the Great," he confessed, "would have been the man for the occasion—as for himself, he was not a great ruler." The fact that the Constitution gave the Emperor only a suspensory veto, not an absolute one, also carried weight with him. Above all, he was resolved not to take a 'crown of shame' from the hands of a popular assembly; he would only accept the dignity if pressed upon him by the princes of Germany. In his eyes the Frankfort Parliament was a 'revolutionary' body, which lacked "a legitimate mandate owing to the want of acquiescence on the part of the ruling houses."¹ Not only did the King refuse the crown, he also withheld his consent to the Frankfort Constitution, and so sealed the fate of the National Assembly. Austria and the four minor kingdoms—Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, and Württemberg—followed suit, and the German Parliament collapsed when Austria and Prussia now withdrew their representatives. Twenty-eight States, indeed, approved of the Constitution, but politically they were too insignificant to counteract the influence of their more important neighbours. Thus the effort of the German people to work out their own salvation ended in ignominious failure.

Prussia had been responsible for the failure of the Frankfort Assembly to achieve the union of Germany. Austria in her turn now thwarted a scheme initiated by Prussia. This was constructed on a different basis; in place of the Constitution drawn up by the 'revolutionary' Assembly at Frankfort, it proposed a confederation of Governments united under the hegemony of Prussia. The experiment was avowedly tentative; no compulsion was to be applied to any State, and the federation was to constitute a voluntary

¹ Bismarck, Reflections and Reminiscences (1898), i. 62.
union of sovereigns. A conference was summoned to Berlin, where only Hanover and Saxony appeared to favour the idea, and they formed an alliance with Prussia, known as "The League of the Three Kings." Austria, Bavaria, and Württemberg held aloof, but the promise of a constitution won over the national leaders (the 'Gotha' party), and the petty States therefore threw in their lot with Prussia. Hanover and Saxony proved, however, to be broken reeds. From the outset the conduct of their Governments was insincere; they entered the League with the deliberate intention of withdrawing from it upon the first occasion which presented itself, and all along they dissembled their secret hostility to Prussia's designs. The mask was torn away as soon as a proposal was broached for the summons of a fresh National Assembly. Immediately they raised the plea that the Federal Act of 1815 required the consent of all members of the Germanic body to make valid any changes in the Constitution. This objection was a mere pretext to cover their secession from the movement, for they were well aware that Austria would never agree to another National Assembly. Under these circumstances Prussia had no option but to pass over their protests, although Frederick William was already beginning to display his customary vacillation, and Conservatives like Bismarck were violently opposed to the whole project. She had, in fact, gone too far to draw back, and so, thanks to the influence exercised by Austria over Hanover and Saxony, the League of the Three Kings came to an end. In spite of their defection, the elections were held, and the Erfurt Parliament met in March 1850.

Austria now took steps to organize more effectively her resistance to Prussia's federal ambitions. The suppression of the Hungarian revolt set her free to devote attention to German affairs and to restore the political situation as it existed in 1815. It was abundantly clear that the progress of the national movement involved the exclusion of the Austrian Empire from Germany, inasmuch as Austria would never acquiesce in the separate treatment of her German territories. It was also in accordance with her traditional
policy to oppose the introduction of the constitutional changes foreshadowed in the demand for a National Assembly. Hence, from the first, she protested against Frederick William assuming the rôle of German overlord, while she also repudiated all schemes for the reconstruction of Germany on really national lines. In the pursuance of these obstructive tactics, Schwarzenberg now associated himself with the "League of the Four Kings," namely, Bavaria, Württemberg, Hanover, and Saxony. His design was to restore the old Germanic Confederation, which had become actually extinct, though legally it still survived, but to replace the Federal Council by a Directory of seven States (Austria, Prussia, the four minor kingdoms, and the two Hesses). A number of States fell in with this proposal, and so furnished a nucleus for the revived Confederation. But Frederick William refused to enter the Confederation, and Germany was thus openly divided between Prussia with her Union of petty States on the one hand, and Austria with the nascent Confederation on the other. Circumstances speedily provoked a crisis which developed into a trial of strength between the two contending forces. The Elector of Hesse-Cassel was at bitter feud with his subjects, whom he had deeply alienated by withdrawing from the Prussian League, as well as by his attack upon their parliamentary rights. He appealed to the Federal Diet, which Austria had restored, and where her influence was paramount. The Diet declared in his favour, and Austria, Bavaria and Württemberg placed an army of 200,000 men in the field to overcome all opposition to the Elector's reinstatement. The King of Prussia now found himself upon the horns of a critical dilemma. The people of Hesse had a natural right to invoke his assistance as the head of the Union which they had joined, and he would forfeit his position as leader of the national movement if he allowed the constitutional liberties of Hesse to be trampled upon by the armed forces of reaction. On the other hand, he shrank from a conflict with Austria, which demanded that Prussia should abstain from interference with the execution of the Federal decree. The real issue at stake concerned something more than the
pacification of Hesse. It involved the fundamental question whether the policy of the Union, which comprised only German States and professed constitutional principles, should carry the day; or whether the policy of the Germanic Confederation, which included the entire Austrian Empire and was avowedly reactionary, should prevail. The Prussian ministry cut the Gordian knot by surrendering to Austria’s demands. Her army was not organized for effective resistance; and, as Bismarck afterwards wrote, “from the military point of view our hands were tied.” At the Convention of Olmütz (November 1850), Prussia abandoned Hesse to her fate, and agreed to the dissolution of the Union. This was followed by the Dresden Conferences, which revived the old Germanic Confederation and the Federal Diet. Thus, as the result of three years of revolution and counter-revolution, Austria emerged victorious, while Prussia experienced deep humiliation. In a speech defending the conduct of the Prussian ministry in refusing to declare war, Bismarck uttered these remarkable words: “It is easy for a statesman, whether he be in the Cabinet or the Chamber, to blow a blast with the wind of popularity on the trumpet of war, warming himself the while at his own fireside; or to thunder orations from this tribune and then to leave it to the musketeer who is bleeding to death in the snow whether his system win fame and victory or no. There is nothing easier than that; but woe to the statesman who in these days does not look around him for a reason for war which will hold water when the war is over.”

The Convention of Olmütz left behind it ineffaceable memories. In the struggle for predominance in Germany, Prussia had been worsted by Austria owing to grave defects in her military system. Her rulers learnt the lesson, and henceforth their energies were absorbed in the effort to forge a weapon which should make Prussia the most formidable Power in Europe. All the instincts and traditions of her governing class were military; for, while the Austrian monarchy was built up by marriages, the Prussian monarchy was created by the sword. Accordingly the reorganiza-

1 Bismarck, Reflections, i. 79.
OTTO EDUARD LEGFOLD. PRINCE VON BISMARCK (1815-1898)
tion of the army became the leading idea of Prussia’s internal policy, and every obstacle, constitutional or financial, was swept aside in the pursuit of this supreme and fundamental object. It was not, however, until William I. succeeded his brother, first as Regent (1857), then as King (1861), that the work of reconstruction was seriously taken in hand. His plan was to raise thirty-nine new regiments by enforcing more strictly the obligation to compulsory service. In this way the size of the standing army was to be extended from two hundred thousand to nearly half a million, while the militia (*Landwehr*) was to be reduced from four hundred thousand to one hundred and sixty-three thousand. This scheme was opposed by Prussian Liberals, who wished to achieve the unity of Germany not at the point of the sword, but by the spread of national ideas and the force of public opinion. As they commanded a majority in the Chamber, and were in a position to refuse the necessary supplies, they appeared to dominate the situation. The King appealed to the country, but the people returned the Liberals to power with an increased majority. A constitutional crisis followed. William was resolved to abdicate rather than disband the new regiments; the representatives of the people were no less resolved to assert the right of Parliament to control the Executive. As a final resource the King summoned Bismarck to the head of the ministry (1862). All unwittingly his act proved the beginning of a new epoch for Prussia and for Germany.

When a list of Cabinet ministers was drawn up in 1848 during the course of the critical struggle between the monarchy and the Prussian Legislature, Frederick William IV. wrote in the margin by the side of Bismarck’s name: "Only to be employed when the bayonet governs unrestricted."¹ The career of the new minister had already exhibited the qualities to which his present position was now to give full scope. He was always distinguished for his strong ‘monarchical sentiments.’ "My historical sympathies," he wrote in his *Reflections and Reminiscences*, describing his earliest impressions, "remained on the side of authority.

¹ Bismarck, *Reflections*, i. 55.
To my childish ideas of justice Harmodius and Aristogiton, as well as Brutus, were criminals, and Tell a rebel and murderer. Every German prince who resisted the Emperor before the Thirty Years' War roused my ire; but from the Great Elector onwards I was partisan enough to take an anti-imperial view." In the legislative Assembly summoned by Frederick William in 1847, he was the mouthpiece of the reactionary party, and during the March Days he urged the King to stamp out the insurrection at the point of the sword. He shared the prevailing sentiment in favour of German unity, but in the methods to be followed he held very different views from the mass of his contemporaries. He strongly repudiated the opinion entertained both by Frederick William IV. and by the Frankfort Assembly that "the hegemony in Germany would fall to Prussia without war, and in a manner compatible with legitimistic ideas." This expectation was founded, so Bismarck declared, upon a double error: "an under-estimate of the vital energy of the German dynasties and their States, and an over-estimate of the forces which can be summed up in the term 'barricade,' comprehending therein all the impulses which prepare the way to a barricade, agitation, and threats with street-fighting." ¹ What this meant was that the advocates of a National Parliament failed to recognize that its decrees were mere paper resolutions, and that in any conflict with German princes the final word would lie with those who could summon 'brute force' to their assistance. The temporary success achieved by the revolutionary elements in 1848 was attributed not to the intrinsic strength of the popular movement, but to the fact that German sovereigns were momentarily taken by surprise, while their ministers were at heart in sympathy with the insurgents. Hence, as soon as the princes appointed ministers "who were prepared to support the prerogative without regard to parliamentary decisions," the whole danger immediately vanished, and the monarchy everywhere triumphed over the revolution. This was the light in which Bismarck interpreted the great events of 1848, and the conclusions drawn from them served to fortify his

¹ Reflections, i. 60.
THE GROWTH OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE

convictions and to steel his resolution. One idea henceforth coloured his entire outlook; it was expressed in the famous words 'blood and iron,' implying that argument is no substitute for force. He speaks scornfully in his Reminiscences about the 'moral conquests' of Prussia; the German Empire must be built up not by the permeation of ideas, but by the achievements of the sword.

The history of Bismarck during the quarter of a century in which he controlled the destinies of Germany, and made her the strongest military Power in Europe, is the record of statesmanship directed with sagacity, insight, and ruthless energy towards the attainment of a single object. His purpose was to end the dualism which had been the bane of the German political system by driving Austria out of the Confederation, and he steadily worked to accomplish this by war instead of by peaceable means. The conflict with France did not constitute the essence of his original design; it was intended rather as the coping stone to complete the edifice so laboriously constructed. We can best describe the scope and methods of his policy by examining his relations (1) with the Prussian Chambers, (2) with Austria, (3) with France; concluding our survey with an account of the Zollverein and a comparison of Bismarck and Cavour.

(1) According to his own account, Bismarck had no liking for the 'uncontrolled absolutism' portrayed in the monarchy of Louis XIV. He favoured public criticism of the Government by an independent representative assembly and by the press. His experience of court circles had convinced him that no sovereign can be trusted to display the qualities required of an absolute ruler—"impartiality, honesty, devotion to duty, energy, and inward humility," as well as omniscience and insusceptibility to flattery. But theoretical considerations were not allowed to influence his practical conduct. He had no scruples in adopting any means which conduced to the end he had in view; and if free institutions and a free press were obstacles in his path, he would not hesitate to trample on the former and stifle the latter. This became immediately apparent in his treat-
ment of the Prussian Chambers. He offered the Opposition to include its leaders in his Cabinet, provided they accepted his military schemes. The proposal was refused, and the Assembly not only rejected the army reforms, but also witheld supplies. Bismarck now displayed his iron resolution and strength of will; in defiance of the Legislature, he proceeded to take in hand the reorganization of the army and to dispense with the budget. To govern in the face of a parliamentary majority, and to carry out far-reaching projects in the teeth of the people's representatives, was virtually to tear up the Constitution. Bismarck, however, had gauged correctly the situation. He knew that he could rely upon the army to crush armed resistance, and as a devoted partisan of the monarchy he was quite ready to employ force in its interests. Moreover, the Liberal Opposition was apparently confined to the middle classes, and the country as a whole seems to have acquiesced in the violation of its constitutional privileges. Above all, Bismarck depended upon the success of his foreign policy to overcome or to silence the hostility of his opponents. He well knew that much is forgiven to those who succeed, and that the sin which the world finds most difficult to pardon is failure. Events justified Bismarck's calculations up to the very hilt. His dazzling achievements in the field of diplomacy and war carried the nation along with him and raised him to the pinnacle of greatness. He gave to the military monarchy of Prussia a new lease of power, which only its collapse in the war of 1914–18 brought to an end. In short, Bismarck succeeded in Prussia where Strafford had failed in England, and Villèle had failed in France, because in depriving the nation of liberty he substituted glory to fill the void. "We are a vain nation," wrote Bismarck; "we feel hurt directly we cannot swagger, and much, even in regard to our pockets, is forgiven and permitted a government which gives us importance abroad." ¹ After the battle of Sadowa in 1866 had laid Austria at the feet of Prussia, the Assembly accorded Bismarck an indemnity for having governed the country without a budget for five

¹ *Reflections*, l. 177.
years. In the exultation of victory, the nation forgave the unconstitutional conduct of the minister, who was henceforth assured of a majority in the Prussian Chamber in everything relating to his foreign policy.

(2) The conflict with the Prussian Chambers was not an end in itself, but a means to an end. Bismarck was not a reactionary pure and simple, and he was willing to co-operate with the representatives of the people provided they accepted his programme abroad. Here he differed from the ministers of Charles X., who looked upon foreign enterprises only in the light of a prop to their system of government at home. With Bismarck, however, the dream of foreign aggrandizement overpowered all secondary considerations, and to the expulsion of Austria from the Confederation he now bent all his energies. At the moment of his accession to power, Prussian prospects in Germany had taken an unfavourable turn. There appeared every likelihood of an alliance between Napoleon III. and Russia; and since the former would never consent to the union of Germany under the headship of Prussia, this alliance would have ruined all Bismarck's plans. The danger was averted owing to an opportune event, from which the minister was skilful enough to reap the fullest advantage. At the beginning of 1863 the Polish insurrection broke out, and in France and England popular feeling ran high in favour of the Poles. Bismarck promptly offered his assistance to the Russian Government; and, by massing troops on the frontier, relieved it of all anxiety as to the attitude of the European Powers. The French Emperor, on the other hand, was compelled by public opinion to protest on behalf of the Poles; and so, without benefiting Poland, he completely shattered the Franco-Russian entente. In its place was now substituted an agreement between Russia and Prussia, and henceforth Bismarck was assured of a free hand in dealing with Austria. His diplomacy had been bold to the point of rashness, for if France, Austria, and England had declared war upon Russia, as it seemed not unlikely, Prussia would have had to meet the first onslaught. But though his convention

1 *Infra*, Chapter VII.
with Russia deepened the hostility of Prussian Liberals, it had certainly contributed to the purpose to which Bismarck subordinated all other considerations: the overthrow of Austrian predominance in Germany.

The actual occasion for war between the two leading Powers of the Germanic Confederation sprang from the thorny problem of the Schleswig-Holstein duchies. These duchies, although subject to the Crown of Denmark, had maintained an independent existence for four centuries, and strenuously resisted the efforts of the Danish national party, known as the Eider-Danes, to make them an integral part of the kingdom. The situation was complicated by the fact that, while the male line of the Danish royal house appeared likely to die out, the Salic law, prohibiting succession in the female line, still prevailed in the duchies. This meant that the personal union between Denmark and the duchies would soon terminate unless the autonomy of the latter were first extinguished. A crisis was reached in 1848, when Holstein organized an insurrection against Denmark, and appealed, as a member of the Germanic Confederation, for the assistance of the German people, who espoused its cause with eagerness. Holstein and Schleswig were thus caught up in the great wave of national enthusiasm which was now sweeping over Germany; and henceforth their fate was inextricably interwoven with the destinies of the German nation. But the problem was not purely a German one; it had also a European aspect, for any attempt to dismember Denmark, and make Germany a naval power in the Baltic, was bound to raise strong opposition. Hence Prussia's intervention on behalf of the duchies was speedily cut short (Convention of Malmö), and a settlement, known as the London Protocol, was patched up in 1852, which recognized the integrity of the Danish monarchy, but granted a measure of autonomy to the duchies. This compromise proved unworkable, and the relations between Denmark and the Germanic Confederation grew more and more strained. Eventually, in 1863, matters came to a head. The Eider-Danes availed themselves of the fact that the

1 Supra, p. 60.
European Powers were preoccupied with the Polish insurrection to impose on Schleswig-Holstein a Constitution which practically annihilated the independence of Schleswig, thus completely setting aside the London Protocol. This gave Bismarck an opportunity which he well knew how to turn to the benefit of Prussia. "From the beginning," he afterwards wrote, "I kept annexation steadily before my eyes"; but, at the moment, he was careful not to show his hand or reveal his ulterior aims. The events of 1848 had shown that Prussia needed an ally in the event of European interference. He therefore induced Austria, whose fears of Napoleon's Italian policy made her anxious to cultivate the friendship of Prussia, to accept the proposal for a joint intervention in the duchies. A legitimate pretext for action was found in Denmark's violation of the Protocol, which left England, France, and Russia without legal ground for protest. War ensued, in which Denmark was beaten and deprived of the duchies (1864). At first they were administered jointly by the two Powers, an arrangement modified subsequently by the Convention of Gastein (1865), and Bismarck availed himself of the interval to secure Napoleon's neutrality and Italy's co-operation. He realized that Austria would never consent to Prussia annexing the duchies, and therefore worked steadily to bring on war. Single-handed he forced a conflict on Austria, for the Prussian people themselves desired peace, while public opinion elsewhere in Germany supported the claims of the Duke of Augustenbourg as having the best hereditary right to the duchies. Austria had no option but to accept the challenge. The decisive victory of Sadowa (Königgrätz), July 1866, proved the superiority of Prussian arms over Austrian, and it was followed by the defeat of the minor German States which had thrown in their lot with Austria. Momentous changes in the German political system were now carried through by Bismarck, which brought to Prussia an enormous accession of power and laid the basis of the modern German Empire.

Bismarck resisted William's proposal to annex Austrian

\[1\] \textit{Infra}, Chapter V.
territory, although Venetia was ceded to Italy. He was
resolved to drive Austria out of Germany in order to leave
a clear field for the aggrandizement of Prussia, but he did
not wish to create any permanent barriers between the
two countries which would prevent a future alliance against
France and Russia. His moderation in this respect stands
in striking contrast with the policy which, in 1871, wrested
Alsace-Lorraine from France, and left behind it bitter
memories which the passage of several decades has served
only to intensify. As a result of the Peace of Prague
(August 1866), Prussia added to her territories the duchies
of Schleswig-Holstein, the kingdom of Hanover, the Elector-
ate of Hesse (Hesse-Cassel), part of Hesse-Darmstadt, and
the city of Frankfort. In this way she increased her popula-
tion by four millions, while the Germanic Confederation,
established in 1815, was dissolved, and Austria was hence-
forth excluded from participation in German affairs. At
the same time Prussia became the head of a North German
Confederation, embracing all the States north of the Main.
The machinery of the new Confederation, which Bismarck
now called into existence, comprised a parliamentary
assembly (Reichstag), elected by manhood suffrage, and a
federal council (Bundesrath), composed of deputies from the
different States. In the Bundesrath Prussia controlled only
seventeen votes out of forty-three; and the fact that she
was nominally in the minority served to veil her actual
superiority and to reconcile the smaller States to their
inferior position. Bismarck could afford to make illusory
concessions, since the real power in all matters of consequence
was vested in the Prussian king, who commanded the armies
and determined the foreign policy of all the members of the
Confederation. In internal affairs each Government re-
tained a large measure of independence, and did not merge
its separate individuality in the collective unity of the
Federal body. On the other hand, many problems were
left vague and undefined, for Bismarck wished to proceed

1 *Infra*, Chapter V.
2 After the entrance of the South German States into the Confederation,
the number of members in the Bundesrath was increased to fifty-eight:
with caution. Yet, since the greater always draws the less, the Federal Government was bound to extend its sphere of legislative control and absorb fresh departments of social and political administration, to the detriment of the several States. The States south of the Main, namely Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden, and Hesse-Darmstadt, retained their independence, but they were afraid of being annexed by Napoleon, whose claim for compensation on the Rhine Bismarck had disclosed to them. Hence they were unable to stand alone, and formed an offensive and defensive alliance with Prussia, which thus obtained control over their military forces.

(3) The war between Austria and Prussia was the first stage in the growth of the German Empire; the second stage was the war between Prussia and France. Here, again, it is necessary to distinguish between the underlying cause of the conflict and the occasion. The dispute over the Spanish succession was not the ultimate cause of the Franco-Prussian War, any more than the Schleswig-Holstein dispute was the ultimate cause of the Austro-Prussian War.

It is one of the misfortunes of history that the idea of a Middle Kingdom, covering the debatable land between France and Germany, has never materialized. The empire of Charles the Great broke up after his death into three divisions: the western portion corresponding roughly to modern France, the eastern portion answering to modern Germany, and the middle portion—a straggling tract of territory, known as Lotharingia—extending across Europe and embracing Aachen, the capital of the Teutonic peoples, and Rome, the capital of the Latin peoples. Lotharingia failed, however, to survive as a 'buffer' State, and was soon absorbed by its neighbours. In the fifteenth century another attempt was made by Charles the Bold of Burgundy to build up a Middle Kingdom; and, if his efforts had achieved success, they would have diverted the whole current of European development. But his untimely death shattered his plans, and France and Germany were left to confront each other face to face. The momentous changes, which were transforming Prussia at this period into a great military
Power and the head of a United Germany, could not leave France indifferent, and the clash of conflicting interests provoked the war of 1870.

The relations between France and Prussia had been unfriendly ever since Napoleon I. inflicted on the latter the crushing defeat of Jena (1806). Bismarck, however, was not influenced by traditional feuds, and what he called "stagnating antipathies"; and he had no scruple in utilizing with subtle craft any foreign Power, whose assistance at the moment might contribute directly or indirectly to the end which he so sedulously pursued. As early as 1857, he had advocated improved relations between Prussia and France; and from the moment of his accession to office five years later he had skilfully manipulated his intercourse with Napoleon, who was outwitted in diplomacy as successfully as he was afterwards outmatched in war. The French Emperor entirely misinterpreted the real drift of the political situation in Germany. His sympathies with the Italian movement led him to look upon Austria as the enemy of France, and he even courted an alliance with Prussia against the Habsburg monarchy. Overrating the military efficiency of the Austrian State, he was willing that Prussia should extend her influence in North Germany as a counterpoise to the power of her rival in the South. Of Bismarck's ulterior designs he was completely ignorant, and he only awoke to the perception of the Prussian menace when it was too late. He had formed vague notions of 'rectifying' the French frontier towards the Rhine, and he also wished to carve out for himself in Germany a position like that of Napoleon I., who had formed the lesser German States into a Confederation of the Rhine under French control. The aim of his policy was, therefore, to keep Germany weak and disunited, and to prevent either Austria or Prussia from obtaining the preponderance. Accordingly, upon the outbreak of the Austro-Prussian War he observed strict neutrality, but the victory of Sadowa speedily upset all his calculations. He had confidently expected that the struggle would be protracted, and that both sides would become exhausted, after which he would intervene as umpire and
dictate terms. Yet even Sadowa did not completely dispel his illusions. He raised no protest against the expansion of the Prussian kingdom, for in some aggrandizement of Prussia in North Germany he saw not only no danger to France, but even a means against the unification and national development of Germany. He believed that the non-Prussian portions of Germany would then feel a greater need for French support.

On his part the Prussian statesman welcomed Napoleon's misconceptions, because he wished to postpone the outbreak of war until he had completed his military preparations, and was anxious not to embark upon the struggle with France precipitately. But while delaying the issue, his programme from the first was clearly mapped out in his mind. He was convinced that "a United Germany was only a question of time, that the North German Confederation was only the first step in its solution." He was equally persuaded that "a Franco-German war must take place before the construction of a United Germany could be realized."¹ "That a war with France would succeed that with Austria," he afterwards declared, "lay in the logic of history." He needed a war to complete the fabric of the German Empire for two main reasons. In the first place, he knew that France would strenuously resist all efforts to unite Germany under Prussian leadership; it was, indeed, owing to Napoleon's intervention after Sadowa that Bismarck had been compelled to proceed with caution and to moderate his demands upon Austria. In the second place, the reluctance of South German princes to enter the Confederation could only be overcome if the whole people of Germany were carried away by a fresh national impulse. "The German national feeling south of the Main, aroused by our military successes in 1866, and shown by the readiness of the southern States to enter the alliances, would grow cold again."² The gulf which dynastic influences and different habits of life had created in the course of history between the north and south of Germany could not be more effectually bridged over, so Bismarck supposed, "than by

a joint national war against the neighbour who had been aggressive for many years." Events played into his hands, for in France also powerful influences were at work impelling the nation towards war. All parties were violently incensed at the aggrandizement of Prussia, and the supporters of Napoleon considered a successful war necessary to retrieve his tarnished fortunes and secure his dynasty. The growing tension of public opinion in France and Germany could only have been relieved by a cordial raproachment between their rulers. But there was no possibility of this, and a single spark sufficed to set the two countries aflame. When a Government is resolved on war, it is never at a loss for a pretext; and a dispute over the succession to the Spanish throne, which was almost on the point of a satisfactory settlement, was the immediate occasion of the Franco-Prussian War. The battle of Sedan, fought on September 1, 1870, was followed by the capitulation of Metz (October 27), when one hundred and seventy thousand men laid down their arms, and later by the fall of Paris (January 28, 1871) after a siege of four months. As a result of the war Germany not only acquired Alsace and eastern Lorraine, including Metz and Strassburg, but she also accomplished the purpose for which Bismarck had embarked upon the struggle with France, namely, the incorporation of the States south of the Main in the North German Confederation. On January 18, 1871, the King of Prussia was crowned at Versailles German Emperor, and the ceremony symbolized in the eyes of the world the newly-born unity of the German people.

Bismarck built up the political fabric of the German Empire, but the foundations of a United Germany had already been laid by the Zollverein (Customs Union). Economic unity paved the way for political unity, and community of material interests stimulated the growth of national feeling and fostered national consciousness. The starting-point of the Zollverein lay in the financial reforms initiated by Maassen in 1818, in accordance with the principles of Adam Smith. In order to unite the scattered

¹ On the effects of the Franco-Prussian War, see infra, Chapter VIII.
provinces of Prussia, he created a new tariff system which abolished all internal customs and established free trade throughout Prussian territory. In the case of foreign imports a moderate tariff was levied on manufactured goods, but no tariff whatever was imposed on raw materials. On the other hand, transport duties on commodities conveyed through Prussia were made very high in order to compel other States to enter the Customs Union. This policy was fatal to the independence of the secondary States, which were confronted with economic ruin if they endeavoured to hold aloof from the Prussian system; for not only did the scattered territories of Prussia completely envelop a number of German principalities, but through them passed the chief commercial routes of Germany. Prussia, however, refused to take heed of the outcry raised against her, while Austria—failing to grasp the immense issues involved—remained passive. Rival commercial unions were formed, but the liberal terms offered by Prussia under the far-sighted direction of Motz, the minister of finance after 1825, gradually broke down all opposition, and one State after another attached itself to her Union. In 1834 the important States of Bavaria, Württemberg, and Saxony entered the Zollverein, and the system eventually extended over the whole of Germany. The exclusion of Austria, owing to her protectionist policy, deprived her of any voice in the commercial policy of Germany, and left Prussia without a rival to challenge her predominance. In this way the quiet, but incessant, pressure of economic forces broke down the political barriers which divided Germany, and helped to eliminate the various territorial and dynastic influences which worked towards separation.

In concluding this survey of the German national movement in the nineteenth century, it will be of interest to compare Bismarck, the maker of modern Germany, with Cavour, the maker of modern Italy. The comparison serves to reveal striking points of resemblance and no less striking points of dissimilarity. Both had the same end in view; the one sought the unity of Germany, and the other the

1 On Cavour, see infra, Chapter V.
unity of Italy. Both were confronted by the same foe: Austria was the obstacle to the expansion of Prussia no less than to the expansion of Piedmont. In each case consummate statecraft overcame apparently insuperable difficulties, and achieved surprising success. Here, however, the resemblance ends. The differences in the main were twofold. In the first place, Cavour was a Liberal and Bismarck was a reactionary. The former was the leader of the constitutional party in Piedmont, the cardinal tenet of his political faith being the belief in free institutions. Although he necessarily employed force to expel Austria from the Peninsula the unification of Italy was essentially a popular movement, and it was based upon a series of plebiscites. The people worked hand in hand with the monarchy for the attainment of their national aspirations. Bismarck, on the other hand, was a reactionary. He appears to have believed that force, rather than ideas, constitutes the basis of government, and he built up a strong military monarchy in Prussia upon the ruins of the parliamentary system. Thus the German Empire which he established rested upon the sword, and its foundations were a series of compacts between the different Governments: in short, it was a Federal State. In the second place, Cavour was content to merge Piedmont in Italy, while Bismarck could never be brought to sink Prussian individuality in a German national State. We may express the difference by saying that Italy absorbed Piedmont, whereas Prussia absorbed Germany. This was another element of weakness in the German political system, for Prussia’s predominance aroused resentment among the other members of the union. When Cavour died, his work was substantially complete; Bismarck left behind him problems which necessarily gave rise to uncertainty as to the destiny of the structure which he created. The course of events since Bismarck seems to warrant the conclusion that the spirit in which he worked, and the methods which he employed, gave a wholly false direction to German political development.
CHAPTER III

THE REFORM MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA

(1815-1914)

At the opening of the nineteenth century Russia was still a semi-Asiatic Power. The successive waves of Tartar hordes had left behind them a residuum of barbarism, which for centuries arrested the normal development of the Russian people. Peter the Great, who reigned from 1682 to 1725, was the first to take in hand the herculean task of raising Russia to the level of Western civilization; unfortunately he found no successor to carry on his work. Catharine the Great (1762-1796) enhanced the European status of her kingdom and made it a factor of the greatest weight in foreign politics, but she did not attempt to grapple with the really vital problems of internal reconstruction. In the nineteenth century itself one great achievement, the emancipation of the serfs, stands to the credit of Alexander II. In other respects, the interest of Russian history during this period lies in the gradual awakening of all the best elements in Russian society to the overwhelming need for the social and political regeneration of their country. The slow permeation of constitutional ideas made the past century a seed-time, of which the true harvest has yet to be reaped. Hence the keynote to Russian history is to be found in the incessant struggle between the forces of progress and reaction, and while the latter repeatedly gained the upper hand, the subterranean workings of Liberalism nevertheless undermined the whole fabric of the czarist regime. Russia, emerging slowly and painfully from her mediæval bondage, stood at the outbreak of the war of 1914-18 upon the
threshold of a new life; and it was believed that the conflict was bound to react favourably upon the internal situation.\(^1\) The course of events developed on lines that were not foreseen, as will be shown in a subsequent chapter\(^2\); but a survey of the condition of Russia in the years 1815–1914 remains an indispensable preliminary to the understanding of her problems.

Of these problems the most pressing in 1815 was the bondage of the Russian peasant. At the time of the Emancipation (1861), Russia contained nearly forty-nine and a half million serfs, of whom twenty-three millions belonged to the Crown and an equal number to private landlords, the rest being attached either to the Church and other institutions, or employed in domestic service.\(^3\) The position of the peasants on the royal demesne was infinitely more tolerable than that of serfs held in private ownership. They were grouped together in village communities (mir) where they enjoyed a certain measure of local self-government, regulating their concerns through the village elder and an elected council. They suffered from various disabilities, restrictions being imposed on their movements, and on their right to acquire property and dispose of their belongings; but their main grievance was the heavy burden laid upon them in the shape of illegal taxes, the extortion of bribes, and the exaction of forced labour. The terrible condition of the serfs under private landlords, on the other hand, may be inferred from the statement of a Russian patriot, in 1826, that “the negroes on the American plantations were happier than the Russian private serfs.” Their owners, being as a rule insolvent, were wont to sell their serfs like cattle, even separating members of one family, and exacting from those who remained extra dues and labour. The Russian law of serfage stated that “the proprietor may impose on his serfs every kind of labour, may take from them money dues, and demand from them personal service.” He could also inflict corporal punishment, hand them over as conscripts to the

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1 “The triumph of the common cause of European democracy will at the same time be the triumph of our own”: G. Alexinsky, *Russia and the Great War* (1915), 357. 2See *Europe 1914–39*. 3A. Rambaud, *Histoire de la Russie* (ed. 1900), 677.
military authorities, or transport them to Siberia. An appalling picture is drawn by a recent historian: "The peasants of the smaller proprietors were subject to direct oppression at the hands of their masters; but those of the great nobles, who lived in St. Petersburg, suffered not less severely at the hands of their stewards and tenants. They perished by hundreds in the factories established, at this period, to augment the incomes of these great landed proprietors. They were also subjected to inhuman punishments, imprisoned in underground cellars, kept in chains, or flogged to death with the knout, by order of the master or his steward. A whole series of such crimes were brought to light... on the properties of the highest dignitaries of State—men who enjoyed in St. Petersburg the reputation of statesmen and even of philanthropists."  

Catharine the Great, a princess of German origin, and the correspondent of Voltaire and the Encyclopædists, deprived the serfs of all legal rights, and ordered that those who ventured to seek redress against their masters should be punished with the knout and transported for life to the mines (1767). It is worth while to contrast the humane precept regarding the English serf laid down by Bracton six hundred years before the Russian Edict of Emancipation. "Serfs," wrote the great English jurist, "have a personal right of action in court against all persons for injuries done to themselves." 

The internal administration of Russia at this period defies description: "Everything was corrupt, everything unjust, everything dishonest." How could it be otherwise? Every office in the State was open either to influence or to the highest bidder, without any regard to the competence of the candidate. Bribery, a vice usually inherent in all Eastern administrations, existed everywhere; it was rendered worse by the fact that practically all the officials throughout the Empire were paid inadequate salaries. The military governors of the provinces accumulated immense fortunes by fleecing the people, and their example was

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3 Wallace, *op. cit.* 473.
4 B. Lipson, *Economic History* (1913), l. 42.
zealously followed by their subordinates, each according to his degree. We have to turn to the Oration where Cicero depicts the condition of Sicily under the rule of Roman pro-
consuls, to find an adequate parallel to the state of affairs in Russia where the venality of the officials was a byword. The people found it useless to complain, since a change of governors effected no change in their situation. It was impossible to get justice in any civil court from the highest to the lowest, without bribery; and the malversation of public funds was a normal practice.

The French Revolution broke out in France, not because the economic abuses were greater there than elsewhere in Europe, but owing to the growth of an enlightened middle class whose discontent with the existing regime had been fostered by the writings of the ‘Philosophers.’ In Russia, on the other hand, there was no middle class, saturated with Liberal ideas, to lead the revolt against the Government; and the peasants themselves were too cowed to furnish leaders from their midst. But in the years immediately following the Napoleonic wars their cause found champions in unexpected quarters. The nobility had their own grounds for dissatisfaction with the Government. The situation was parallel, in some respects, to that which prevailed in Prussia about the same period, for in both countries there was deep-rooted hostility between the nobles and the centralized bureaucracy. The former resented the preponderance of the official class in whose hands now lay the complete direction of State affairs, and in the case of the Russian nobles this ill-feeling was intensified by the fact that men of German birth were filling public posts. Hence, while professing outward loyalty to the monarchy, they were not disinclined to welcome attacks upon the existing order. Moreover the officers of the army, who were recruited from the ranks of the nobility, returned to Russia—after a protracted campaign in Western Europe—with a broader and more sympathetic outlook as the result of impressions gained during their three years’ residence in France. Just as the American Revolution laid the foundations of the French Revolution, so the contrast between the
degradation of Russia with her servile population and lack of free institutions on the one hand, and the condition of France on the other, planted the seeds of revolution in many Russian hearts. "The ideas of constitutional monarchy and ideas of revolution," wrote a distinguished Russian officer, Colonel Paul Pestel, in his Autobiography, "then began to spring up in me; as yet the latter were still weak and obscure, but gradually they became stronger and more distinct. . . . From ideas of constitutional monarchy I passed to republican ideas." ¹ As the instrument of their ideas, and the vehicle of their propaganda, they formed secret societies, adopting a method of organization particularly prevalent at this time in Southern Europe, where the Carbonari in Italy, and the Hetairia in Greece, were almost the only channels of political activity. Tentative experiments resulted, in 1818, in a society known as the Union of Public Good, which after three years broke up into two separate bodies: the Society of the North and the Society of the South. The former drew its members from the army stationed at Petrograd, and its programme was that of constitutional monarchy. The latter was recruited from the army in the south, and favoured a republic. A third society, afterwards amalgamated with the Society of the South, was that of the United Slavs, which advocated a federation of all the Slavonic peoples. But the members of all these societies were, as a writer at the time observed, "a generation without fathers and sons," and they shared the fate of all pioneers who live in advance of their age. Drawing their inspiration from the freer atmosphere of Western life, and cherishing a generous passion for freedom, they were never more than a mere handful of patriots, isolated among contemporaries not yet ripe for their ideas. But while their failure was thus rendered inevitable, they left behind them memories of self-sacrifice, which will always give them a place in Russian history.

The interregnum which followed the death of Alexander I. (1825) afforded the secret societies an opportunity to assert themselves. Alexander left three brothers, of whom Con-

¹ Cited in Lavisse et Rambaud, Histoire Générale, t. x. 147.
stantine, the eldest and therefore next in succession, had been induced by the Emperor to renounce his claim in favour of a younger brother, Nicholas. His sacrifice involved the succession in some uncertainty, for it was doubtful whether his renunciation was really valid. The period of suspense lasted three weeks, after which Nicholas ascended the throne in Constantine's place; but meanwhile all the elements of disaffection had been gathering strength, and the secret societies seized the occasion for a revolutionary outbreak. On December 26 an insurrection broke out in Petrograd, where the Moscow regiment, at the instigation of its officers, refused to take the oath to the new Emperor. The rising speedily proved a complete fiasco; it was purely a military revolt, confined practically to a single regiment, and neither the official classes nor the people of the capital had any part in it. Moreover it was badly organized, and its leaders showed themselves unequal to the emergency. A mutiny provoked by the Southern Society was suppressed with even greater ease, and everywhere the embers of revolt were rigorously stamped out. A commission of investigation sat to inquire into the ramifications of the conspiracy, and men of the highest distinction "in letters, arts and political philosophy," and "the élite," as it was said, "of all that was civilized and truly noble in Russia," were condemned to exile in Siberia. Some even perished by an ignominious death; among them, Paul Pestel. "My error has been," he said on the scaffold, "that I tried to gather the harvest before I sowed the seed." "I knew beforehand," declared another patriot, "that our enterprise had no chance of success. I knew also that I must make a sacrifice of my life. . . . The harvest-hour will come later." The Decembrist movement, as it was called, thus came to an untimely end. The political inexperience of its authors threw away in one rash unorganized outburst the work of many years of preparation, and involved in fatal disaster the cause for which they had so long laboured. The programme they contemplated—equality before the law, the emancipation of serfs, a constitutional regime—deserved indeed a better fate. Yet their sacrifices were not made
altogether in vain. The blood of martyrs waters the seeds of liberty, and the Decembrists had shown that the sufferings of the Russian people did not pass unheeded, but were capable of raising up patriots willing to pour out their blood for the regeneration of their country.

The accession of Nicholas I., the incarnation of absolutism, inaugurated a new epoch. The catastrophe with which his reign opened moulded the character of his rule, and for thirty years he governed Russia with remorseless severity. Autocracy had triumphed over constitutional principles, and it spared no effort to entrench itself in an unassailable position. At a time when the countries of Western Europe were convulsed by the titanic conflict of Liberalism and Reaction, Russia presented to the world an appearance of absolute immobility. Abroad, Nicholas was the energetic champion of Autocracy and the relentless enemy of all progressive movements. In 1830 he was only prevented by the Polish insurrection from intervening in France on behalf of the exiled Bourbon King; in 1848 he came to the assistance of the Emperor of Austria, and was responsible for the collapse of the Hungarian revolution. At home he pursued a policy of resolute repression, adopting an attitude of rigid conservatism and controlling with iron rigour all popular manifestations. His fanatical system of government effectually blocked up every avenue to freedom of thought and action. The secret police, abolished by his more humane predecessor, was immediately revived (1826), and their infamous record as the Third Section of the Tsar's Private Chancellory fills one of the darkest pages in Russian history. The head of the Section, the Chief of Police, possessed unlimited powers of "arresting, imprisoning, deporting, and making away with anyone whom he pleased, without any restriction whatever." This terrible institution, it has been said, "rivalled, if it did not exceed, the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition." Like his prototype, Philip II of Spain, Nicholas sought to protect his subjects as much as possible from contact with European influences and Western ideas, which might unsettle their political convictions and introduce the leaven of revolutionary thought among an unsophisti-
cated people. Accordingly, restrictions were imposed on foreign travel; the youth of Russia were forbidden to study abroad; and foreign publications were not admitted into the Empire without first undergoing rigorous scrutiny from the censor. Even the attendance of students at Russian Universities was discouraged, and the teaching of philosophy was expunged from the University curriculum and confided to ecclesiastics; like mediæval scholasticism, it became once more a branch of theological study. To fetter the human mind, and to check the spread of unfavourable criticism of the Government, the censorship of the press was armed with extensive powers. "The utterance of an unguarded word, the possession of a forbidden book, might at any time lead to exile in a distant government, or in Siberia itself, practically without either trial or appeal." Thus reaction was the keynote of the Imperial administration; and throughout his reign Nicholas, never faltering in his ruthless repression of all the forces of progress and enlightenment, set his face resolutely against the irresistible stream of humanity.

A comparison of Nicholas I. with Philip II. of Spain not only reveals striking resemblances, but enables us to grasp the fundamental defect of their methods of government. Nicholas, like Philip, was an anachronism in the generation in which he lived. He was the 'Don Quixote of Autocracy,' fanatically opposed to the spirit of his age, and fighting with unyielding tenacity for a worn-out ideal. Throughout Europe he was the indomitable foe of Democracy, just as the Spanish monarchy in the sixteenth century was the sworn enemy of the Reformation. Each employed similar instruments, the one the Inquisition, the other the Third Section; and they made their realms 'intellectual quarantines' in order to isolate them from the disintegrating influence of European thought. But the real strength of the monarchical structure in Russia, as in Spain, lay in the apathetic indifference and unquestioning loyalty of their subjects; and this was also the source of its weakness, for the structure was bound to crumble to pieces once the nation awakened to political consciousness. This awaken-
ing was delayed in Russia until 1855, when the Crimean
War had the same effects upon her people which the destruction of the Spanish Armada had upon Spain; shattering their faith in the existing regime and in their own invincibility. For nearly half a century Russia had cherished the memory of Napoleon's disastrous retreat from Moscow, and the Autocracy found in its military prestige abroad its best justification for the oppression it carried on at home. The campaign in the Crimea dispelled at one blow all the illusions which the Russian people had entertained since 1812. The abuses of the administration were laid bare before their eyes, and Russia now paid the penalty for the fatal incompetence of her bureaucracy. An English traveller in Russia, writing a few years after the conclusion of the Crimean War, has described its effects upon the educated classes in these words:

"In spite of the efforts of the Government to suppress all unpleasant intelligence, it soon became known that the military organization was little, if at all, better than the civil administration—that the individual bravery of soldiers and officers was neutralized by the incapacity of the generals, the venality of the officials, and the shameless peculation of the commissariat department. The Emperor, it was said, had drilled out of the officers all energy, individuality, and moral force. Almost the only men who showed judgment, decision, and energy, were the officers of the Black Sea fleet, which had been less subjected to the prevailing system. As the struggle went on, it became evident how weak the country really was—how deficient in the resources necessary to sustain a prolonged conflict. 'Another year of war,' writes an eye-witness in 1855, 'and the whole of Southern Russia will be ruined.' . . . Militia regiments were everywhere raised throughout the country, and many proprietors spent large sums in equipping volunteer corps; but very soon this enthusiasm cooled when it was found that the patriotic efforts enriched the jobbers without inflicting any serious injury on the enemy. Under the sting of the great national humiliation, the upper classes awoke from their optimistic resignation. They had borne patiently the oppression of a semi-military administration, and for
this! The system of Nicholas had been put to a crucial test, and found wanting. The policy which had sacrificed all to increase the military power of the Empire was seen to be a fatal error, and the worthlessness of the drill-sergeant regime was proved by bitter experience. Those administrative fetters which had for more than a quarter of a century cramped every spontaneous effort had failed to fulfil even the narrow purpose for which they had been forged. They had, indeed, secured a certain external tranquillity," but, "this tranquillity was not that of healthy normal action, but of death—and underneath the surface lay secret and rapidly-spreading corruption." In spite of the gallantry of the Russian soldier, "the result was now not victory, but defeat. How could this be explained except by the radical defects of that system which had been long practised with such inflexible perseverance? The Government had imagined that it could do everything by its own wisdom and energy, and in reality it had done nothing, or worse than nothing." ¹

After thirty years of stagnation and passive endurance the discontent of the educated classes began once again to rear its head. The censorship of the press acted as a restraint upon printed publications, but it could not prevent manuscript literature circulating from hand to hand. One specimen, which was widely circulated, has been printed by Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, and its keen satire on the administration of Nicholas reflects in vivid terms the profound change which was taking place in Russian public opinion.

"'God has placed me over Russia,' said the Tsar to us, 'and you must bow down before me, for my throne is His altar. Trouble not yourselves with public affairs, for I think for you and watch over you every hour. My watchful eye detects internal evils and the machinations of foreign enemies; and I have no need of counsel, for God inspires me with wisdom. Be proud, therefore, of being my slaves, O Russians, and regard my will as your law.'

"We listened to these words with deep reverence, and

¹ Wallace, Russia, 444-5.
THE REFORM MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA

gave a tacit consent; and what was the result? Under mountains of official papers real interests were forgotten. The letter of the law was observed, but negligence and crime were allowed to go unpunished. While grovelling in the dust before ministers . . . the officials stole unblushingly; and theft became so common that he who stole the most was the most respected. The merits of officers were decided at reviews; and he who obtained the rank of General was supposed capable of becoming at once an able governor, an excellent engineer, or a most wise senator. Those who were appointed governors were for the most part genuine satraps, the scourges of the provinces entrusted to their care. The other offices were filled up with as little attention to the merits of the candidates. A stable-boy became Press Censor! An Imperial fool became Admiral! . . .

"And what did we Russians do all this time?

"We Russians slept! With groans the peasant paid his yearly dues; with groans the proprietor mortgaged the second half of his estate; groaning, we all paid our heavy tribute to the officials. Occasionally, with a grave shaking of the head, we remarked in a whisper that it was a shame and a disgrace—that there was no justice in the courts—that millions were squandered on Imperial tours, kiosks, and pavilions—that everything was wrong; and then, with an easy conscience, we . . . squabbled with each other for advancement in the very service which we so severely condemned. . . . If any one, amidst the general lethargy, suddenly called upon us to rise and fight for the truth and for Russia, how ridiculous did he appear! . . . Under the anathema of public opinion, in some distant Siberian mine he recognized what a heinous sin it was to disturb the heavy sleep of apathetic slaves. . . .

"But amidst all this we had at least one consolation, one thing to be proud of—the might of Russia. . . . And lo! after all our boasting we were taken by surprise, and caught unawares. . . .

"Awake, O Russia! Devoured by foreign enemies, crushed by slavery, shamefully oppressed by stupid authorities and spies, awaken from your long sleep of ignorance and
apathy! . . . Stand forward calmly before the throne of the despot, and demand from him an account of the national disaster." ¹

The reform period of Russian history set in with the accession of Alexander II., who came to the throne during the Crimean War (1855). The new Emperor was not, like his predecessor, 'a crowned drill-sergeant,' and the character of his administration was from the outset more humane and enlightened. Thus, at the moment when the blood of the Russian people was coursing more freely through their veins, their destinies were placed in the hands of one who was no reactionary, but recognized fully the fundamental need for constructive statesmanship. Alexander's preliminary measures seemed intended to pave the way for the complete reversion of his father's policy. The survivors of the Decembrist movement were allowed to return home after thirty years of exile, and other political offenders were also pardoned. At the same time the disabilities laid by Nicholas on the Universities, and the restrictions imposed upon foreign travel, were removed. These concessions were received by the Russian people with boundless enthusiasm. After the wintry rigour of the old regime, the mildness of the new reign gave promise of the dawn of spring. The wildest hopes were entertained, and men recked little of the rocks with which the path of progress is ever strewn. The censorship was relaxed, and the press flooded with Utopian schemes which an enlightened autocrat, imbued with the reforming spirit of eighteenth-century philosophy, was to carry into operation by the mere stroke of the pen. "We have to thank the war," it was said, "for opening our eyes to the dark sides of our political and social organization, and it is now our duty to profit by the lesson." A leading newspaper expressed the conviction that Russia would "accomplish peacefully and without effort not only those great reforms which cost Europe centuries of struggle and bloodshed, but also many which the nations of the West are still unable to accomplish, in consequence of feudal traditions and caste prejudices." It is worth while to

¹ Wallace, op. cit. 446-8.
ALEXANDER II.

Emperor of Russia (1855-1881)
observe that, at this period, the prevailing sentiment throughout Russia was apparently in no way anti-monarchical. On the contrary, the eyes of the nation were turned to the Tsar as the fountain-head from whom were to flow spontaneously all the benefits so eagerly anticipated. The Nihilist movement was as yet unborn; and there was a widespread and genuine belief that all classes of the community would co-operate loyally in social reforms, and vie with one another in a generous rivalry of self-sacrifice. Nor were these hopes entirely disappointed, for the new era was ushered in by an event second in importance only to the French Revolution.

Alexander's most memorable achievement was the emancipation of the Russian peasant. All reformers were agreed that the abolition of serfdom was the indispensable starting-point of national regeneration. The existence of a large servile population, comprising nearly one half the nation, created an atmosphere which debased all sense of human dignity and stifled every generous instinct. It was, indeed, a fundamental cause of the inertia and stagnation of Russian life, alike in its moral, intellectual, and material aspects. Serfdom was also a menace to the security of the established order, and the danger of a slave war was always present to the mind of the Government, as in the ancient world it had been to the rulers of Rome. The peasants had never ceased to claim their freedom from the time when Peter III. (1762) released the nobility from the obligation to serve in the army. They held that their own emancipation ought to have followed as the corollary of Peter's action, since the only historical justification for their bondage lay in the services which the State in former days had exacted from their masters. The reign of Nicholas had witnessed a succession of revolts, which served to bring home to every section of society that the emancipation of the serfs was a measure no less demanded in the interests of self-preservation than in the name of humanity. Upon the conclusion of peace in 1856, Alexander immediately disclosed his intention to take the problem of serfdom in hand. "We live in such an age," he publicly warned the nobility, "that in time it
cannot but take place. In this, I think you too agree with me. Consequently, it is better for it to come from above than from below." The task of reconciling divergent interests and propitiating opposition made progress slow, but the Emperor was resolved to accomplish his purpose, and in 1861 the Edict of Emancipation abolished serfdom and liberated over forty millions of the Russian people at one stroke. The importance of this Edict in the history of Russia makes it necessary to give some account of its main principles, and to estimate the nature of its influence upon rural society. First of all, however, we must bear in mind that, while the disappearance of servitude in England was due to the gradual operation of economic forces, in Russia it was the result of conscious legislation. On this account it is more difficult to determine its effects, for legal activity generally achieves much less than we commonly suppose, and tends very often to leave the economic situation only slightly modified. There was unquestionably an immense gain to Russia from the moral standpoint, though even here it must be remembered that the Russian peasant, caring primarily about his material position, did not concern himself greatly about questions of status. But when we attempt to gauge the economic significance of the Emancipation the complexity of the problem forbids facile generalizations.

The Edict was based on three principles. In the first place it endowed the Russian serf with civil rights, conferring upon him the status of a free peasant, and releasing him from servile bondage to his master. In the second place it divided the ownership of the soil between the nobles and the peasants, in order to prevent the expropriation of the peasantry and the growth of a landless proletariat. Admiration of Western civilization did not blind Russian thinkers to its defects, and they recognized the danger of transplanting its institutions to Russia without guarding against their abuses. The condition of the serf who was liberated from legal bondage and allowed to sink into economic bondage as a homeless labourer would be not better, but far worse than before. While nominally free,
he would be grounded down by the millstones of poverty, and become an easy prey to capitalist exploitation. It is very often assumed that the terms 'economic progress' and 'social welfare' express ideas which are necessarily complementary. But economic progress is sometimes achieved at the expense of social welfare, for the interests of a class are frequently at variance with those of society. The eighteenth century, for example, witnessed a great development in English agriculture, but it also saw the ruin of the English yeomanry. To make the Russian peasant like the English agricultural labourer would have secured to landed proprietors an abundant supply of cheap labour, and might have stimulated production, but its social effects would have been disastrous in the extreme. Hence the outstanding feature of the Emancipation was not primarily the removal of legal disqualifications, important though these were, but the transformation of the serf into a free peasant proprietor, owning as a shareholder in the village community the land that he occupied. This meant an invasion of 'the sacred rights of property,' and it is to the credit of the Russian nobles that they did not resist a measure which at one stroke deprived them both of compulsory labour and of a large portion of their estates. The quantity of land to be ceded by the proprietors was not fixed by law, but determined in each case by magistrates specially appointed to act as arbitrators between the serfs and the landowners. These magistrates, called Arbiters of the Peace, were themselves local proprietors, and to their impartiality and patience the success of the difficult task with which they were charged was largely due. Incidentally they showed that Russia contained men well fitted by their honourable conduct and loyal sense of duty to take part in the government of their country. In the redistribution of the soil, the prevailing idea was that the village community should retain as much land as it actually occupied at the time of the Emancipation. As compensation the landowner was to receive certain yearly payments, for which all the members of the rural commune shared the liability. The third principle embodied in the Edict of Emancipation
was that the Government should enable the village communities to redeem their annual dues by advancing to the proprietors a sum equivalent to their capitalized value, obtaining in return from the communes interest at six per cent. for a period covering forty-nine years. It must be observed that the ownership of the property ceded by the landowner was vested not in individual peasants—except in the West of Russia—but in the village community as a whole. In short, the control of the commune was substituted for the authority of the lord. Whatever the drawbacks of this system, it enabled the Government to impose the responsibility for the collection of redemption dues on the entire peasant body, and it also served as a precaution against the expropriation of individual peasants by wealthy landowners.

The sweeping character of these changes in the legal condition of the Russian peasantry may easily lead us to misinterpret their immediate social and economic importance. On the surface it appeared as though the structure of rural society had been completely revolutionized; the old landmarks had been obliterated; the old relationships had been destroyed. In reality the position of the peasants was not radically improved; and it continued to remain very unsatisfactory. The terms of their emancipation, so far from awakening their enthusiasm, provoked profound discontent. They found themselves burdened with new taxes—often in excess of the normal rent of their land—which were not only a heavy drain upon their exiguous resources, but were also considered a grave injustice. They had always looked upon the land they occupied as their own, and historically their view seems well founded. Of course they had to work on their lord’s estate; and no doubt lawyers represented their labour in the light of a rent, which proved that the serf was always a tenant, and never an owner. But this obligation, as we have seen, was actually a relic of the time when the State had exacted services from nobles and peasants alike. Hence the peasants expected their emancipation from compulsory labour to take place without the substitution of other burdens, the
nobles having no claim to compensation beyond the release, already granted to them from compulsory military service. Whether we admit the justice of this contention or not, it is at any rate incontestable that the pressure of land dues, often more irksome than the old labour dues, was a primary cause in retarding their economic development. The abolition of serfdom, in spite of its important legal consequences, failed to achieve adequate amelioration in the lot of the Russian peasant. As he himself expressed it, his new situation was "both better and worse": he was relieved of certain disabilities, but in one form or another he was also burdened with fresh anxieties and obligations. The effects of the Emancipation upon the land-owning classes varied in different parts of the country, but one result everywhere was to compel them to put their houses in order, adopt more economical practices, and give more serious attention to the administration of their estates. "Formerly we kept no accounts and drank champagne," said one of the nobles; "now we keep accounts and content ourselves with beer."

The reign of Alexander II. was also distinguished for reforms in the law courts and in local administration. A commission appointed to examine the judicial system found that it contained no less than twenty-five radical defects, and it was therefore replaced by new institutions modelled on Western ideas. The principles of English and French jurisprudence were introduced (1864), namely, the separation of judicial and administrative powers, independence of the magistrates, oral procedure, and trial by jury. Justices of the Peace, chosen by popular election, were instituted to deal with minor cases, and an appeal could be made from the decisions of individual magistrates to the Monthly Sessions, corresponding to our own Quarter Sessions, and comprising all the Justices of the district. More important matters were reserved for the Regular Tribunals, composed of trained judges appointed by the Crown; here also appeals could be carried from the Ordinary Courts to the Courts of Appeal. At the same time Alexander instituted a system

1 Wallace, op. cit. 520.
of local self-government in the central provinces of the Empire, based upon the principle of decentralization and provincial autonomy. There already existed in Russia various local bodies: (1) the assemblies of the nobility with the right to lay grievances before the Government; and (2) the assemblies of the peasants, the mir or village community, and the volost or canton. The new councils now brought together representatives of all three classes of the community, the nobles, the peasants, and the burghers. The District Council was appointed by popular election, and the Provincial Council, or Zemstvo, was elected by the District Councils. Their functions were to elect the Justices of the Peace, repair roads and bridges, supervise primary education and sanitation, and take measures against famine; but their activities were restricted owing to the power of the Governor of the province to veto their decisions, and by the lack of adequate financial resources. In all these directions—the abolition of serfdom, the reform of the judicature, and the introduction of a limited measure of local self-government—the early years of Alexander's reign marked an epoch in the assimilation of Russian life to the conditions of Western Europe.

It was the irony of fate that, in spite of his great achievements, Alexander was destined to witness in his own lifetime the birth of revolutionary Nihilism. There is a remarkable contrast between the enthusiasm displayed at the beginning of his reign, and the gloom which clouded its end. After ten years of agrarian, judicial, and administrative reforms, the Government plunged once more into reaction, and many of the excesses which had disfigured the administration of Nicholas I. began to reappear. This alternation of expectation and disappointment unsettled the moral of the educated classes, destroying their faith in Autocracy, and driving them headlong into the arms of violent extremists. The causes of this revolution in public sentiment will serve to explain the origin of the Nihilist movement. The conviction steadily grew that reform must come from below, that the Government would only act under the stimulus of outside pressure and unceasing agitation.
In the first place, Alexander’s reforms appeared more imposing on paper than when put to the test of actual practice. The peasantry discovered that emancipation meant new burdens for old, and the improvement in their legal status effected little change in their economic situation, and no change at all in their moral principles. Russian thinkers had confidently predicted that the abolition of servitude would forthwith create a freer atmosphere and a vigorous and enterprising peasantry, forgetting that centuries of oppression cannot be wiped out by a single and belated act of justice. The judicial and administrative reforms admittedly laid the foundations of a better system of government, but here again the benefits so eagerly anticipated were deferred; for the success of an institution depends primarily upon the men who work it, and Russia lacked trained jurists and competent administrators. On psychological grounds also, it is possible to explain why public opinion veered completely round from a state bordering on exaltation to a state of the most profound depression. For a generation the normal development of the Russian people had been arrested by the iron will of Nicholas I.; the moment his hand was withdrawn from the helm of the State, the nation by an irresistible effort burst asunder the bonds which had cramped its energies and fettered its activities. In the first flush of unbounded optimism the wildest hopes of a new heaven and a new earth were entertained, and the regeneration of the whole Russian Empire seemed at hand. But when the reforms of Alexander II. failed to accomplish the striking results so eagerly looked for, there followed a complete revulsion of feeling. The pendulum swung from one extreme to the other, and despair—no less irrational than the extravagant enthusiasm which preceded it—became the prevailing sentiment of Russian society. The ultimate reason, however, for the growth of a reactionary spirit in the later years of Alexander’s reign is to be found in the character of the Emperor himself. He had no instinctive faith in the virtues of Liberal institutions, and his reforms were conceived not in the spirit of an idealist, but from the conviction that where change was inevitable
it ought to proceed from above rather than from below. His consciousness of great responsibilities made him cautious and distrustful of his own judgment. He had not the large creative mind and breadth of statesmanship necessary for the solution of the problems which he was called upon to handle. He was forced to rely upon his councillors, and here his vacillation and want of resolution laid him open to conflicting influences. He was surrounded by advisers trained in the school of Nicholas, and impregnated with his reactionary doctrines. Though compelled for a time to refrain from open manifestation of their opinions, these men gradually acquired a predominant hold over the Emperor's mind. After 1864 the reforming zeal of Alexander rapidly cooled, partly on account of the Polish insurrection, and partly from the fear that further concessions would weaken the Autocracy. He had attempted to satisfy the nation with half-measures, the serfs with an emancipation only semi-complete, the nobles with the grant of provincial liberties. Yet it was abundantly clear that no real progress could be achieved while the Imperial administration was divorced from all popular control. The burden of Empire was too great for one man's shoulders, and responsible government alone could remedy the maladies with which Russian society was afflicted. The nobles had expected their own political emancipation to follow the legal emancipation of their serfs, as logically it should have done. They were entitled to a share in political power as the reward for the sacrifices they had been required to make. In 1865 the Moscow nobles petitioned the Emperor to establish representative institutions, in order, they said, that truth may "reach your throne without hindrance." But this demand for a Constitution was always strenuously resisted by the Emperor to the end of his days. Thus all classes of the community were disillusioned, and from their dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs sprang the Nihilist movement.

Nihilism.

The term 'Nihilist,' as applied to Russian revolutionists, was first introduced by Turgenev in his novel, *Fathers and Sons.* Its principal character, Bazarov, was intended to

1 Translated by C. Garnett.
portray a new type then coming into prominence among the younger generation of the 'sixties. He is represented as one "who does not bow down before any authority, who does not take any principle on faith, whatever reverence that principle may be enshrined in"; who refuses "to talk nonsense about art, parliamentarism, trial by jury... while, all the time, it is a question of getting bread to eat"; and who is convinced that there is no "single institution in our present mode of life, in family or in social life, which does not call for complete and unqualified destruction." Bazarov is often supposed to embody "the spirit of absolute negation and of barren criticism"; and, when he is told that it is necessary to build up as well as to pull down, he replies: "That's not our business now.... The ground wants clearing first." Turgenev's analysis, whatever its limitations, served to concentrate attention upon one fundamental feature of Nihilism as a philosophical system. This was its complete divorce from all regard for sentiment or tradition, the fetish of which clogged the wheels of progress and enslaved the mind of the human race. It is therefore the antithesis of Burke's philosophy, involving as it did an uncompromising breach with the past, and the reconstruction of society on a tabula rasa. The Nihilist cast away from him all that his contemporaries accepted on faith and treated as sacred, making scientific reasoning his starting-point, and discarding the worn-out truths of the 'Fathers.' Thus Nihilism revealed itself primarily as a force of destruction, but the programme sketched in Chernuishevsky's novel, What is to be Done?, showed that the movement had also a positive side.

In its first phase Nihilism was thus mainly a philosophy of negation, whose purpose was to break down the barriers erected by superstition and the worship of authority. In this respect it was a development of eighteenth-century philosophy, but with the important difference that it was based on science. The author of Underground Russia, known under the name of Stepiak, and himself a Nihilist, described it as "a struggle for the emancipation of intelligence from every kind of dependence.... The fundamental
principle of Nihilism, properly so called, was absolute individualism. It was the negation, in the name of individual liberty, of all the obligations imposed upon the individual by society, by family life and by religion... a reaction against the moral despotism that weighs upon the private and inner life of the individual.” The love of the beautiful, Art itself, was renounced, since it was not inspired by pure reason. “A shoemaker is superior to Raphael,” it was said, “because the former makes useful things, while the latter makes things that are of no use at all.”

In one direction, at any rate, Nihilism bore practical fruit by achieving the emancipation of women and establishing their right of free access both to higher education and the professions.

After a few years (1860–1870), Nihilism ceased to be a philosophical and literary movement, and developed into a revolutionary and militant movement. It entered upon this new phase about 1871. An attempt to assassinate the Emperor Alexander in 1866 threw him into the arms of the reactionaries, and the Government in an outburst of hysteria indulged in all the excesses of a ‘White Terror.’ Its severity sowed the seeds of revolution, yet the inspiration which gave the impulse to a revolutionary movement came from abroad. The passion for individual freedom was merged, as the result of foreign influences, into the greater passion for social and political freedom. The example of the Parisian Commune, which had endeavoured to establish a social democracy, crystallized in definite form the vague aspirations of Russian educated thought. It inflamed the minds of those who pitted the wretched condition of the Russian peasant, burdened with taxes often in excess of the income of his land, and “exhausted,” as they said, “by hunger, broken down by toil, the eternal slave of the privileged classes, working without pause, without hope of redemption.” Another influence moulding Russian political thought was the ‘Internationale,’ a Socialist society, whose headquarters at Zurich attracted great numbers of men.

1 Stepniak, *Underground Russia* (Eng. trans. 1883), 4, 8.
2 *Infra*, Chapter VIII.
and women from all parts of Russia. Ordered by the Imperial Government in 1873 to leave Zurich, they returned home to spread among their countrymen the new gospel of the emancipation of the proletariat. Out of the ferment of political ideas, two main currents of opinion emerged: Socialism and Anarchism. The Socialists were represented by Lavroff, whose programme was peaceful propaganda among the peasants—in short, the education of the masses. Like the disciples of Mazzini,¹ the Socialists were to go ‘among the people’ and share their life, but the ideas they were to impart to them were to be those of social and economic freedom, not of nationality. The Anarchists, on the other hand, followed the lead of Bakunin, ‘the genius of destruction,’ whose policy was to rouse the peasantry to an immediate revolution. At first the more moderate counsels of the Socialist party prevailed, and the young men and women of Russia prepared to devote their lives to the people from whom they were sprung. This movement for the peaceful dissemination of Socialist ideas covered chiefly the years 1872–75, but from the outset it was carried on with the greatest difficulty. In Petrograd Prince Kropotkin lectured secretly among the workmen of the suburbs, while others settled in villages or worked in factories. It was impossible, however, to keep the propaganda secret from the police, and the agitators were arrested in great numbers and brought to trial. Even when they were acquitted, they were interned in a northern province, and from 1863 to 1874—on one pretext or another—nearly 150,000 persons were deported to Siberia.

This collapse of the propagandist movement wrought great depression in the ranks of the revolutionists. A whole generation of eager enthusiasts had been ‘mown down,’ and the scanty successes achieved seemed paltry by the side of the immense sacrifices they had entailed. In these circumstances Nihilism entered upon its third and best-known stage, that of political terrorism. “The propagandist movement,” it was said, “was a sublime test of the power of Words. By a natural reaction the opposite course

¹ *Infra*, p. 167.
was now to be tried, that of Acts. . . . The cry of ‘Let us act’ became as general as that of ‘among the people’ had been a few years before.”¹ Force was to be met by force, and peaceful agitation, which seemed powerless to effect an improvement, was succeeded by armed resistance. The next three years (1876–1878) witnessed a number of ‘demonstrations,’ or street insurrections. But repeated failure drove home the lesson that revolutions like those in Paris were impossible in Russia, where nine-tenths of the population were dispersed over the country-side. The control of the army enabled the Government to suppress with ease all popular outbreaks, and after 1878 their futility was recognized even by the revolutionary party itself. Meanwhile, the relentless severity of the administration was deepening in the hearts of the revolutionists their feelings of bitter hatred and personal resentment. Political cases were tried in special courts, and the harshest sentences were inflicted for insignificant offences. Students were excluded from the Universities, and thereby debarred from the higher public appointments. The District Councils (Zemstvos) and the law courts were placed under more stringent control. The works of Mill, Spencer, and Lecky were not allowed to enter Russia, and cases affecting the press were tried without a jury. All the abuses of the old regime reappeared, and bribery and corruption were once more rife. In a word, the Government—now completely out of touch with public opinion—found itself in open conflict with the Russian Intelligence. The ruling caste became more and more reactionary, the educated classes more and more revolutionary, and there were no moderating influences in the country to hold the balance between the extremists on both sides. As the result of repression, the Nihilist ceased to be a propagandist, and became ‘the type of individual force.’ Abandoning pacific methods, Nihilism developed into a vast secret conspiracy which no longer leaned upon popular support, but employed the deadly weapon of assassination. Nihilists justified the use of a weapon so repugnant to Western ideas, on the ground that “an

¹ Stepniak, op. cit. 33.
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insurrection in the European manner was absolutely impossible," and that everything was permitted against a system of government based on "organized injustice," and "entrenched behind a forest of bayonets." ¹ Deeds of violence were at first spasmodic and directed chiefly against spies. The impulse to an organized system of Terrorism came from the act of a woman, Vera Zassulic, who fired a revolver shot at General Trepoff (February 1878), in order to avenge a political prisoner flogged in defiance of the law. She was acquitted by the jury; and, when the police attempted to rearrest her, she was rescued by the crowd and escaped over the frontier. This event created a profound sensation throughout Europe and brought on a crisis which lasted three years, culminating finally in the assassination of the Emperor. Alexander appealed to public opinion, but the Zemstvos replied that "the struggle with destructive ideas would be possible only if the public possessed its own weapons—freedom of speech and of the press, of opinion and of instruction." This was the only real remedy, but neither Alexander II. nor his immediate successor was willing to share his power with the nation.

The control of the revolutionary movement was now in the hands of a society known as 'Land and Liberty,' which had branches in different parts of Russia. But the old differences which had divided Russian revolutionists still survived; one section—the 'Black Partition'—consisted of social democrats whose methods were pacific; while the other section—the 'Will of the People'—relied upon force. A few months after the acquittal of Zassulic, the head of the secret police (the Third Section) was 'put to death' in broad daylight in the streets of Petrograd, his assailant escaping arrest. Four attempts were made upon the life of Alexander II. After the first attempt Russia was divided into six military governments, each under the control of a governor-general armed with absolute powers of life or death. Yet the only result of the proclamation of martial law was to stimulate the revolutionists to renewed activity. Though the Nihilists were but few in number,

¹ Stepniak, op. cit. 41, 271.
their energy, fearlessness, and devotion to their cause, made them extremely formidable. The real secret of their success, however, lay in the complete isolation of the Russian Government, which had alienated society by withholding from it the most elementary political rights—liberty of speech and liberty of the press, national representation, and, above all, freedom from arbitrary arrest and deportation. Public opinion, while it could not endorse acts of violence, sympathized with the objects of the revolutionary programme, and funds for Nihilist purposes were secretly supported by all classes. After the third attempt, an explosion in the Winter Palace, new tactics were adopted. Coercion having failed to stamp out Nihilism, Alexander attempted to disarm it by a policy of conciliation. Loris-Melikoff was invested with the powers of a dictator, and his first measures skilfully created the illusion that serious reforms were about to be taken in hand. This pacified the public mind, and even the revolutionists momentarily suspended their campaign. The illusion did not last long. It was soon discovered that Loris-Melikoff had no intention of effecting really radical changes in the system of government. Nevertheless, he managed to obtain the Emperor’s assent to the institution of a General Commission, a semi-representative body, containing a number of delegates elected by the Zemstvos and the chief towns. Whether this very moderate concession would have met with approval is doubtful, for the functions of the new Commission were to be purely consultative. But the scheme never received a trial, for on the very day Alexander yielded his consent he was killed by a bomb (1881). The Revolutionary party at once published a manifesto offering to refrain from further acts of violence on condition of (1) a national assembly elected on the basis of manhood suffrage, and (2) freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and the right of public meeting: “the only means,” it declared, “by which Russia can enter upon the path of peaceful and regular development.”

The reign of Alexander’s successor, as the French his-

\footnote{The manifesto is printed in the Appendix to Stepniak, pp. 287-94.}
torian, Rambaud, pointed out at the time, opened under gloomy auspices, for it began with the first public execution of a woman for over half a century. From the outset Alexander III. pursued a policy of avowed reaction. He revived the arbitrary traditions of Nicholas I., whom in many respects he closely resembled. The keynote of his policy was sounded in an imperial manifesto issued upon his accession to the throne. "The Voice of God," it announced, "orders us to stand firm at the helm of government... with faith in the strength and truth of the autocratic power, which we are called to strengthen and preserve, for the good of the people, from every kind of encroachment." Melikoff's project of a General Commission was still-born; and the Government proceeded on every side to conduct a relentless campaign against Russian educated thought. Behind the throne now ranged the sinister figure of the Procurator of the Holy Synod, Pobédonostev, the evil genius of Russia. Pobédonostev exercised great influence over the minds of Alexander III. and Nicholas II., whose education had been entrusted to his hands. In the confession of political faith which he has left on record, he condemned all Western institutions root and branch, and even attempted to give a philosophical basis to reaction. He pronounced Constitutional Government to be "the great political lie which dominates our age," and defined Parliament as merely "an institution serving for the satisfaction of the personal ambition, vanity, and self-interest of its members." It was, indeed, "one of the greatest illustrations of human delusion," while Democracy was "the most complicated and the most burdensome system of government recorded in the history of humanity." ¹ No one who has had experience of the working of Western institutions will be tempted to pronounce them ideal; but, however much they may fall short of perfection, they at any rate ensure the sanctity of law and the ordered liberty that springs from law. It is by its fruits that an institution should be judged, and the fruits of Pobédonostev's system were not likely to recommend themselves to Russian public opinion. The

¹ Pobédonostev, Reflections (Eng. trans. 1898), 34, 35, 43, 45.
press was subjected to the most rigorous treatment, many newspapers being suppressed outright or indirectly compelled to suspend publication.\textsuperscript{1} The Universities, which were equally obnoxious to the authorities, were not only denied the right to administer independently their own internal affairs, but restrictions were also placed on the admission of students and their right of association. This control over education extended to all the primary and secondary schools, and many schoolmasters were expelled from their positions. Most disastrous of all was the treatment meted out to the law courts and the \textit{Zemstvos}, for this struck at the very root of Alexander II.'s most vital reforms.

We endeavoured to show above how the Emancipation of the Serfs—the greatest landmark in the history of Russia during the nineteenth century—was more beneficial on its legal side than on its economic. \textbf{We saw, for example, how the peasants were burdened with such heavy taxation that “for the majority of the Russian peasantry the primary object in life is to earn enough to pay the taxes.”} \textsuperscript{2} But with all its drawbacks the Edict of Emancipation achieved one invaluable result—it liberated the peasant from the rule of the squirearchy; it shattered the feudal authority of the local land-owners. An attempt was now made to reverse the whole course of historical development from slavery to freedom; to re-establish a kind of ‘bastard feudalism’; to degrade the peasant once more to a condition of legal servitude. This was done by placing the rural population under a system of police discipline, administered by the landed proprietors over the labourers on their estates and the peasant owners in their neighbourhood. The first step in this direction was taken in 1886, when a breach of contract by a hired labourer was made a criminal offence. Three years later a fundamental change was made in the law courts, the class of elected magistrates (Justices of the Peace) being replaced by nominated officials known as

\textsuperscript{1} \textbf{E.g.} by not being allowed to publish advertisements or to be sold in the streets.

\textsuperscript{2} P. Vinogradoff in \textit{Lectures on the History of the Nineteenth Century} (1902), 259.
Land Captains. The new institution was marked by the grossest defects. The Justices of the Peace had been elected by the Zemstvo, and they had shown themselves competent for their work. The Land Captains were chosen by the Governor of the province from among the local squires, and so served as the instruments of the central power. In addition they were vested both with judicial and administrative functions, in defiance of the wholesome principle that the administrator should not be the judge of his own actions. As judges, indeed, the new officials, who usually had no legal training and were ignorant even of legal processes, proved hopelessly inferior to the Justices of the Peace; and the 'reign of law,' inaugurated by Alexander's reforms, came to an abrupt end. As administrative officials the Land Captains possessed the most arbitrary powers. They practically wielded a dictatorship, and as 'nurses to the peasantry' they exercised the widest control over everything which concerned the peasants—the disposal of property, the election of communal officers, sanitary measures, relief of the poor. Their almost unlimited authority was backed by the right to imprison without trial. "We have no more judges," said a peasant, "we have commanding officers." "There is no indignity," observed a Russian magistrate, "which in the beginning of the twentieth century may not be inflicted on a Russian peasant." No class of officials was more hated than the Land Captains, because of the manner in which they abused their authority. "In what spirit justice and police are wielded by the Land Captains," wrote Professor Vinogradoff, "may be gathered from a few facts. During the terrible famine of 1892 the Land Captains of some districts of the province of Nijniy opposed systematically the policy of relief and restricted the delivery of bread although the population was literally starving, because they wanted to keep the people at low wages." ¹

In another direction also we can trace an immense set-back to the reform movement in Russia from 1881 to 1904. Few institutions of Russian society during the

¹ Vinogradoff, op. cit. 265.
second half of the nineteenth century merit more careful attention than the Zemstvos, or elected local government boards, which not only carried on a great work of social reconstruction, but gave to Russians an invaluable training in the art of self-government. Even the Revolutionary party, which sought more expeditious methods of achieving its ends, bore ungrudging testimony to their work. "Nobody can deny," wrote Stepniak, "that they have shown a praiseworthy activity," and have "laboured with all zeal and devotion for the good of the people, and not for the benefit of the class to which the majority of them belonged. . . . The measures they adopted proved them to be possessed of sound sense and practical views. This they showed by taking so much to heart, and at once, the question which is above all others and on which everything else depends—popular instruction, whereby alone the masses can be rendered capable of judging and acting for themselves." ¹ There were practically no primary schools in Russia until the Zemstvos took the matter in hand, and they also effected great improvements in the medical and sanitary arrangements. In this work the Zemstvo of the province of Moscow enjoyed an honourable pre-eminence, and its creditable record illustrates the nature of the activities upon which the Zemstvos in general were engaged. It "brought the school within two miles of every inhabitant of the province of Moscow, and the hospital within five. Particularly admirable were the equipping of small medical outposts and the beginnings of adequate provision for the insane. Clover was supplied to the peasants, and there was a notable improvement in the cattle. Veterinary doctors were established, and imported cattle were inspected. Factories were compelled to drain their premises. The Zemstvo engaged to find water for villages. One thousand miles of road were constructed. Great pains were taken to create village libraries. In all these departments, each of which was committed to one man, the Zemstvo worked without pay, and was always ready to raise the rating rather than defer improvements. . . . The Moscow Zemstvo changed

¹ S. Stepniak, Russia under the Tsars (1885), ii. 169.
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the face of the province." 1 But the admirable work accomplished by the Zemstvos, so far from disarming the suspicions of the Government, served only to intensify the hostility of the central bureaucracy. Admission to the Zemstvos was carefully regulated with a view to excluding the more progressive elements in the local communities, and in 1900 the Zemstvos were forbidden to raise their annual budget by more than three per cent.—an arbitrary limit expressly designed to curtail the scope of their beneficial activities. Moreover, as a Russian Liberal has pointed out, "the intentions of the reactionary party are even more worth notice than its particular achievements. The real enemy is always the same—law, a law independent of caprice and protection, proudly holding up its head in the face of the powers that be, appealing to the sense of dignity in man, and proclaiming the equality of citizens. . . . A Government which has created the Land Captains, and deprived millions of its Jewish subjects of the most common rights of citizens, even of the right of educating their children, such a Government is not a fitting patron of law and justice. What it enforces is obedience to order, not to law, and its contempt of law is exemplified in every way." 2

Throughout the reign of Alexander III. (1881–1894) this reactionary system of government held its ground successfully. Completely isolated from his subjects, refusing personal contact even with his ministers, the Tsar shut himself up in his retreat, "surrounded by sentries, shadowed by secret police," enduring for thirteen years "the terrible strain of prolonged warfare against unseen and desperate foes." 3 Nor did the accession of Nicholas II. effect any change in the political situation. He created intense disappointment among the educated classes by characterizing as "senseless dreams" the ardent desire of the nation to be admitted to a share in legislation. "Devoting all my efforts to the prosperity of the nation," he announced, "I will preserve the principles of Autocracy as firmly and

1 B. Pares, chapter on "Russia" in Camb. Mod. Hist. xii. 327.
2 Vinogradoff, op. cit. 266.
unswervingly as my late father.” None the less after the lapse of a decade occurred the first great breach in the Autocratic Power, namely, the institution of an Imperial Parliament. We have now to trace the course of events which produced so epoch-making a change in the Government of Russia.

The Reform Movement in Russia, as we have seen, passed during the nineteenth century through several phases. Under the name of Nihilism, it began in the 'sixties as a philosophical protest against superstition and the reverence for authority; it then assumed a more practical bearing and sought to awaken the Russian peasant to the degradation of his economic position; finally it developed into a system of organized Terrorism. The assassination of Alexander II. marked the climax of the Nihilist movement; up to this point it had possessed the sympathy of the educated classes, which approved its aims, even if they could not sanction its methods. But the death of the 'Liberator' seems to have caused a certain revulsion of feeling, and the Terrorist movement imperceptibly lost its hold over most sections of the Russian community. The leading Terrorists were remorselessly tracked down and made to pay the death penalty; and all efforts to revive the Terrorist organization met with failure. It became evident to all that the Russian problem could not be solved by acts of Terrorism, that a small band of men and women, however heroic and determined, were powerless to overthrow a Government commanding practically unlimited resources. In 1892 Stepniak confessed that the revolutionists alone could not destroy the Autocracy; so uneven a struggle, he said, was merely an "exercise in the art of self-sacrifice." The Russian peasant, sunk in apathetic ignorance, and characterized by an almost superstitious reverence for the TsarDom, was profoundly distrustful of his would-be liberators and listened to their solicitations with stolid indifference, if not with open hostility. The revolutionists learnt what Napoleon had discovered three-quarters of a century earlier, that the Russian peasantry was not ripe for political propaganda. In short, the reform movement failed in the nineteenth
century because it had only leaders and no followers; it had failed altogether to strike root among the masses. Hence, if Russia had continued in the agricultural stage, the Autocracy would have remained unassailable; but just as the Industrial Revolution in England shifted the centre of political gravity in 1832 from the landed to the mercantile classes, so a parallel movement in Russia profoundly modified the existing political situation. The unprecedented growth of industry during the closing years of the nineteenth century showed that Russia had been drawn within the ever-expanding sphere of the capitalist system. This rapid development was brought about by three different factors working in combination. The emancipation of the serfs made available an abundant supply of cheap labour; the creation of railways opened up means of communication, and increased the facilities of transport; and the influx of capital from abroad furnished the necessary basis for large industrial undertakings. The result was stupendous; an immense stimulus was given to the cotton and mineral industries, and the factory system grew swiftly. On the eve of the Revolution, in 1917, Russia contained over three million factory workers, without taking into account the minor industries; and among the industrial nations of the world she was said to rank fifth. The period of transition is associated with the ministry of M. Witte (1892–1903), who encouraged the economic penetration of Russia by foreign capitalists as the only way of developing her natural resources.

The advent of industrialism in Russia is an event which ranks in importance second only to the Emancipation of the Serfs. We are concerned here with its political significance alone, and the bare recapitulation of statistics would fail to bring home to us the potentialities latent in the great economic change which passed over Russia. One invariable result of the capitalist system is the emergence of an industrial proletariat, and the artisan is always more intelligent and less conservative in his instincts than the rural labourer. In the ancient world the transition from monarchy to republicanism was due to the growth of cities, for town life
fosters self-reliance, initiative, and love of change. In the
country State of the modern world, with its looser political
cohesion, the factory system has done away with the isolation
of the worker; it has brought great masses of men together
under one roof, and so made possible concerted action
among them. At the same time it has given them a con-
sciousness of economic power, for while the individual is
at the mercy of his employer, a well-organized union can
often dictate its own terms. Now everything conspired to
awaken in the Russian workman that discontent with his
economic position, which is the usual source of political
enlightenment. He suffered from long hours, low wages,
brutal foremen, and a system of fines shamefully exorbitant.
The Moscow employers blocked the path of factory reform
on the ground of what they called "the freedom of the
people's labour," which meant in practice the freedom of
the strong to exploit the weak. The general economic
condition of the country, at a time of apparent prosperity,
may be gauged from the fact that the Russian peasant paid,
as compared with the German, two and a half times as much
for cotton and sugar, four and a half times as much for iron,
six times as much for coal. The other side of the picture
must equally be taken into consideration. The expansion of
industry not only created an industrial proletariat but it
also called into existence a class of wealthy manufacturers;
and the one was no less incompatible with the maintenance
of an arbitrary and autocratic regime than the other. In
a word, Russia had passed for the time being into the stage
of capitalism; she had fallen into line with Western in-
dustrialism, and her methods of government, however
suitable for a peasant empire, thus became a hopeless
anachronism.

The Social
Democrats.

The new economic situation was reflected in the trans-
formation of political parties. The chief revolutionary
party was known by the name of Social Democrats, and its
programme marked in many ways a distinct advance upon
that of its predecessors. In the first place, it recognized that
the centre of political gravity was shifting permanently

1 Before the Revolution of 1917: Pares, op. cit. xil. 325.
from the landed to the mercantile interests, in other words, that the field for revolutionary propaganda was to be found in factories and workshops, and not in villages. The older schools of thought, revolutionists and conservatives alike, had clung to the hope that it would be possible for Russia to escape from capitalism and the fruit it bears—a dominating bourgeoisie. Imbued with the socialistic principles of Karl Marx, the new school no longer set its face against the current, but openly proclaimed that "the worse things are now, the more complete will be the crash." However much sentimentalists might affect regret at the passing away of the old order, the view was now widely held that Russia was not immune from the ordinary laws of evolution. In the second place it was thought that dreams of social reconstruction were fantastical until the ground had been cleared by a political revolution. The earlier revolutionaries believed that social and political changes should take place at one and the same moment, that the mere institution of parliamentary Government would not in itself improve the condition of the people. On the contrary, it would substitute for a worn-out inefficient bureaucracy an energetic and grasping bourgeoisie, which would grind the faces of the poor. This assumption, while containing an important element of truth, appeared to overlook two considerations. It ignored the fact that the propaganda of socialist ideas, and indeed agitation on behalf of any progressive movement, were much more difficult in a despotic country. Whatever their drawbacks, parliamentary institutions afford a guarantee of individual liberty to an extent only possible under a constitutional Government. Moreover the proletariat was bound sooner or later to become politically self-conscious, and to wrest political power out of the hands of the bourgeoisie. Once Labour was established in a strong political position, it could then employ the resources of the State to bring about the social revolution. The State would take over the instruments of production—land, factories, and mines—and so not only ensure proper social conditions for the worker, but also enable him to obtain a more equitable share of the produce of his labour. The Social Democrats
abandoned as hopeless the dream of an abrupt transition from Autocracy to Socialism, and were content to adopt more patient tactics; a constitutional regime would serve as a convenient half-way house. From these various considerations the conclusion was drawn that the revolutionists should concentrate their efforts upon the proletariat, relying upon peaceful propaganda and the methods of industrial warfare, rather than upon Terrorism. A new weapon was brought into play, and strikes, which were a familiar feature in England as far back as the fourteenth century, now became the instrument by which the Russian workman sought to redress his grievances. These grievances were mainly economic, but the Social Democrats, who generally assumed the lead in any industrial dispute, usually contrived to introduce a political element. In order to combat this danger, the Government had recourse to an extraordinary device. Through secret agents the police actively encouraged the formation of Trade-Unions among the working-classes, supplying them with funds, and even organizing strikes for the purpose of distracting their attention from purely political questions. At Moscow this remarkable experiment was conducted by Zubátóff, the Chief of Detectives, but the employers complained to the Government that the police were fomenting discord in their factories, while the workmen discovered that the secret agents were utilizing the opportunity to detect and remove the 'ill-intentioned.' The ultimate result was to strengthen the Social Democrats, and to deepen the political significance of the new Labour movement.

The turning-point in the history of Russia came with the Japanese War (1904). The war was unpopular with the nation, and the incapacity with which it was carried on completed the disillusion of the Russian people, and opened their eyes to the gross defects of the bureaucratic regime. The Government was utterly discredited, and its weakness in the face of overwhelming public criticism speedily became transparent. Plehve, the Minister of the Interior, was assassinated in July 1904. His administration had been most reactionary: the year before his death, no less than
4867 persons are said to have been imprisoned or exiled without any regular trial.\textsuperscript{1} Plehve was succeeded by Prince Mirsky, a more enlightened and humane statesman, who invited the reformers to submit their grievances. They hastened to avail themselves of so unique an opportunity. The 'Eleven Points,' drawn up by the representatives of the Zemstvos meeting in conference at Petrograd (November 1904), received the enthusiastic support of the professional classes. They demanded:

"(1) Inviolability of person and domicile, so that no one should be troubled by the police without a warrant from an independent magistrate, and no one punished without a regular trial.

"(2) Freedom of conscience, of speech, and of the press, together with the right of holding public meetings and forming associations.

"(3) Greater freedom and increased activity of the local Government, rural and municipal.

"(4) An Assembly of freely elected representatives, who should participate in legislation and control the administration in all its branches.

"(5) The immediate convocation of a Constituent Assembly to prepare a Constitution on those lines."\textsuperscript{2}

In addition they sought the abolition of the so-called 'temporary' ordinances, which in reality were more permanent than the laws which they affected to interpret, an amnesty for political prisoners, and freedom of public instruction. These demands were backed up by a series of banquets and demonstrations. Public excitement was growing, and the atmosphere seemed charged with electricity. A spark only was needed to produce a conflagration; this was supplied on January 22, 1905—a day marked in the Russian calendar as Red Sunday.

Hitherto the Reform Movement had been confined mainly to the educated classes, but now it was joined by the industrial proletariat. Father Gapón, a young priest, had organized in Petrograd a trade-union of factory workers, corresponding to that initiated by Zubátov at

\textsuperscript{1} Wallace, Russia, 691. \textsuperscript{2} Ibid. 692.
Moscow, and enjoying in the same way police protection. On January 15, a strike was declared on account of the dismissal of two workmen, and the strikers demanded an eight hours' day, better wages, improved sanitary arrangements, and arbitration boards. The Social Democrats now intervened, and the movement, which originated in a purely industrial dispute, rapidly acquired a political complexion. Gapón, recognizing that his control over the workmen was rapidly weakening, and carried away, it is said, by the prevailing excitement, fell in with the programme of the revolutionaries and attempted to recover his waning influence by appealing in person to the Emperor. On Sunday, January 22, a great procession of strikers, with their wives and children, was organized for the purpose of presenting a petition at the Winter Palace: this petition voiced the political as well as the industrial grievances of the Russian people. The demonstration was peaceful, but the troops fired upon the dense crowds which filled the suburbs. Gapón himself escaped unhurt, and his subsequent career is shrouded in some mystery. But though the demonstration had failed to achieve its immediate purpose, public feeling in Russia was stirred to its depths. It was, moreover, a tangible sign of the political awakening of the working-classes, whose entrance into the Reform Movement gave it a broad democratic basis and enlarged its prospects of success. The next few weeks witnessed an epidemic of strikes in various parts of Russia, and innumerable assassinations, culminating in the murder of the hated Grand Duke Sergius, the Emperor's uncle. Disorder was rampant throughout the Empire, and to calm the public agitation the Emperor yielded to the demand for a National Assembly. On March 3, 1905, he announced his intention "to convene the worthiest persons possessing the confidence of the people, and elected by them to participate in the drafting and discussing of legislative proposals." At the same time memorials were invited as to the "improvement of the State organization and the amelioration of the national

1 After his return to Russia, he was killed in 1906 by the revolutionaries who believed that he had become a Government spy.
THE REFORM MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA

welfare." As a result of this invitation the professional classes spontaneously organized unions comprising, among others, doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, clerks, and railway employees; these soon combined to form a huge Union of Unions. In all cases the programme was almost exactly identical; everywhere the cry was raised for genuine parliamentary institutions, and the elementary rights of citizenship. The current of progressive opinion was strengthened at this juncture by the news of the battle of Tsushima (May 27), when the Baltic fleet, which had been sent to the Far East to wrest from Japan the command of the Pacific, was destroyed by the great Japanese admiral, Togo. A deputation of the Zemstvos urged the Emperor not to delay the summons of national representatives: "At this terrible hour of the nation's trial, great is your responsibility before God and Russia."

After a lapse of two months there appeared on August 19 the 'Bulyghin Constitution,' as it was termed. It was received with widespread dissatisfaction. Instead of a parliamentary assembly with full legislative powers, it set up an Imperial Duma, which was to be merely consultative; it established a very narrow franchise which excluded factory operatives, country doctors, country schoolmasters, and other rural residents without property; and it also left the fundamental principles of Government unchanged, preserving intact the Autocratic Power and refusing to admit the principle of ministerial responsibility. The result was a general political strike. Under the inspiration of Khrustalév, a lawyer of great capacity, the workmen had formed a central organization, known as the Council of Labour Delegates, which rapidly assumed the authority and significance of a 'working men's Government.' It even extended its control over the unions of the professional classes, and at the end of October it proclaimed a general strike. Newspapers suspended publication; the supply of electric light was cut off; employers were bidden to close down their factories under penalty of wrecking; magistrates and doctors, among other professions, participated in the strike; while the railway men on their part were already
out owing to the report that the representatives of their union had been arrested. The whole social system of the Empire came to a standstill, and no alternative remained to the Government but to give way. Completely cowed by this remarkable manifestation of the strength of the progressive movement, the Government issued the Manifesto of October 30.

The October Manifesto marked an epoch in the history of the Reform Movement. In unmistakable terms it promised the elementary rights of citizenship—inviolability of person, freedom of conscience, liberty of speech, and the right of association and public meetings. The Duma was endowed with legislative functions, and no law was to be valid without its approval. There was also promised an extension of the franchise—a promise carried into effect by the decree of December 24, which enfranchised the professional and working-classes. But these concessions cut at the very root of the power hitherto wielded by the police and local officials. They therefore made a determined effort to gain back the ground they had lost by the massacre of their opponents. A union of Reactionaries was formed under the name of "Genuine Russians"; and, though they had no following in the community at large, they proved dangerous from their close co-operation with the police, who organized a series of outbreaks with the aid of the "casual criminal class." This reactionary outburst "was vented chiefly on the peaceable Jewish population inhabiting the towns of the south-west and southern provinces. These poor people were pillaged and maltreated for several days to such an extent that in Western Europe their sufferings awakened a general feeling of commiseration, and the Russian word pogrom (devastation), by which the disorders were commonly designated, became for Englishmen a familiar term. . . . It is difficult to imagine how the Conservative or the Reactionary cause would be advanced by stirring up the hatred of the Russian lower classes against their Jewish fellow-citizens." ¹ The most probable explana-

¹ Wallace, op. cit. 716-717. See also I. Zangwill, The Melting Pot (ed. 1914), Appendix.
tion of these atrocities appears to be that "an anti-revolutionary demonstration was required for party purposes." The complicity of the authorities was notorious, the police having it in their power to check the pogroms without difficulty whenever they thought fit.

The first Russian Parliament, known as "the Duma of the national indignation," met on May 10, 1906. It contained over four hundred members, of whom only seven were Reactionaries. The most important group was that of the Constitutional Democrats, or "Cadets," as they soon came to be called; they represented the Liberal Party and numbered 153. Their chief rivals were the Octobrists, or Conservatives, who supported the Constitution as defined by the October Manifesto. They were recruited mainly from the landowning classes, but in the first Duma they gained very few seats owing to the brutal severity with which the Government had recently repressed agrarian disorders. The Labour group comprised 107 members; the Autonomists, who represented the minor nationalities like the Poles and wanted self-government, accounted for 63 members; there was also a large number of Independents who appear to have had no definite programme. The existence of the first Duma only covered a period of seventy-two days, and it was occupied by a struggle with the Government over the question of ministerial responsibility. The balance of power in the Duma was held by the Cadets, who were generally able to command a majority owing to the support which they received from the other groups in the Chamber. They demanded parliamentary institutions on the English model, that is, a Cabinet responsible to the Duma, and not to the Emperor; they also claimed full authority over legislation and finance. Before the Duma met, its power had been greatly restricted by the Manifesto of March 5, and other enactments; for example, it could not alter the so-called 'Fundamental Laws'; the army, navy, and foreign policy remained the sole province of the Emperor; and even the budget was safeguarded from parliamentary interference. In a word, the guarantees of civil liberties and genuine constitutional rule, foreshadowed in the October
Manifesto, were rendered null and void. The struggle between the Duma and the Government lasted over two months, and eventually the Court seemed on the point of consenting to a Cadet Ministry. But this was strongly opposed by Stolypin, and his appointment as Premier was followed by the dissolution of the Duma on July 21. Nearly half the members withdrew to Viborg in Finland, where they issued a Manifesto calling on the nation to refuse taxes, and not to furnish recruits for the army. Yet while the country disapproved of the Government's action, it had no means of offering organized resistance, and the protests of the Duma leaders were made without effect. The increased rigour of the new administration was shown in the unprecedented extension of capital punishment, which was now inflicted for ordinary robberies, and even for insults to officials. More than six hundred persons suffered the death penalty under this regulation, while in a single year as many as 35,000 persons were actually banished, without trial, for alleged complicity in agrarian disturbances.

In the elections for the new Duma every conceivable pressure was brought to bear in favour of the Reactionaries and the Octobrists. "For the Cadets, political propaganda was made impossible. The Cadet party was refused legal recognition; officials were dismissed for belonging to it. . . . Powers were freely used to disfranchise various classes of voters. . . . Unsatisfactory candidates were struck off the rolls or exiled; Jews were told that if they voted they would be expelled. Lists of candidates were officially circulated for the Reactionaries and the Octobrists. Other parties were punished for naming their candidates. In towns voting papers were withheld by the police from a quarter or even a third of the voters; polling places were reduced in number; the days for polling were not announced or even deliberately announced wrongly; peasant farmers were called away to their communes, under threat of fines, on the days fixed for the polling of small landowners. A circular from the Synod instructed the priests to 'take an active part and guide their flocks,' threatening the refractory 'with the wrath of God'; priests were to become candi-
dates, wherever possible. In some towns the Reactionaries took away voting papers or even arrested their opponents." 1 In spite of these tactics, the Opposition carried the great majority of seats. Most constituencies deliberately chose candidates who were known to be in disfavour with the Government. In the case of twenty-five provinces, nearly one-third of the elected representatives had been imprisoned, or exiled, or dismissed from the public service. Of the Duma as a whole more than a quarter had suffered 'administrative punishment.' The Social Democrats, who had stood aloof from the first general election, now obtained between fifty and sixty seats.

The second Duma assembled on March 5, 1907. Its existence was stormy and short-lived. The crisis was reached when the Government suddenly demanded the exclusion of the Social Democrats on grounds of disloyalty to the throne. The Duma appointed a committee to investigate the charge, but the ministry had already resolved upon its course of action, and the Duma was dissolved on June 16. A new electoral law was now promulgated, although legally no modifications were valid without the Duma's consent. A large number of seats were taken away from those parts of the Empire which had returned Opposition members; various sections of the community were disfranchised; and the whole electoral system was so manipulated as to place the issue of the elections in the power of the landowners. The result was reflected in the third Duma, which met on November 14, 1907; the Octobrists obtained 153 seats, while the Cadets were reduced to 54. The most important action of this Duma was to liberate the peasant from the control of the Commune by substituting individual ownership of peasant lands for communal ownership. In 1912, after completing the appointed period of five years, the third Duma was dissolved. In the general election which followed, the Centre, composed of Nationalists and Octobrists, suffered a severe defeat; and, owing to the activity of the clergy, who took a prominent part in the elections, the victory was won by the Right. This gave the

1 Pares, op. cit. xii. 370-371.
fourth Duma a reactionary character, since the Right contained no less than 155 members, while the Octobrists had only 132 and the Cadets only 52. A change now manifested itself in the attitude of the Octobrists. Hitherto they had supported the Government, but from this time they threw themselves into opposition owing to the failure of the Government to carry out the October Manifesto of 1905. This Manifesto, as we have already seen, promised personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, liberty of speech, right of public meeting and association, as well as freedom of parliamentary elections and the cessation of government by ‘exceptional’ laws. The formation of a Progressive Bloc in 1916 was intended to strengthen the hands of those who were endeavouring to transplant to Russian soil the conceptions of democratic liberty which are the bed-rock of Western life.

We have sought to trace the history of the Reform Movement in Russia over a period of one hundred years. Its progress was watched with sympathy by all who believed that free parliamentary institutions would afford scope for the progressive elements in the Russian nation to assert themselves; and that the removal of the shameful disabilities which refused to the Jewish people ‘the common rights of civilized man,’ and the restoration of their independence to Poland and Finland, would be for Russia not a source of weakness but a source of strength. A distinguished Russian scholar voiced the Liberal standpoint of the more enlightened of his countrymen when he wrote: “The sooner it gets to be recognized that the dignity and welfare of Russia crave freedom as well as authority, and that the only basis to unite both is law, the easier it will be to solve the problems set before a nation which has a great stake in the destinies of the world.”

The blindness of the czarist regime to the imperious necessity of taking time by the forelock caused the Reform Movement to develop into a Revolution (1917) which destroyed not only the monarchy but the structure of Russian society itself.

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1 See L. Wolf, The Legal Sufferings of the Jews in Russia (with an Introduction by A. V. Dicey, 1912).
2 Vinogradoff, op. cit. 276.
CHAPTER IV

RACIAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS IN
AUSTRIA-HUNGARY
(1815–1867)

The history of Austria-Hungary in the nineteenth century is more complicated and involved than that of any other country in Europe. There is no single thread running through its development, as in the case of Italy or Germany; it is deficient alike in unity and coherence. This is due primarily to the fact that Austria was not a nation but a 'monarchical machine,' with as many racial problems as it contained nationalities. In one respect its history is admittedly unique. Other empires have been built up by the sword or by colonization; the Austrian Empire in the main was the product of marriages. Its foundations were laid in the thirteenth century when Rudolf I., Count of Habsburg, was elected Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. He added to his countship Austria, Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola, while his successors acquired Hungary and Bohemia. Throughout its chequered career the House of Habsburg pursued with unwearied tenacity and astuteness a policy of self-aggrandizement, exploiting its possession of the imperial dignity for the expansion of its own hereditary dominions. Under its rule German national development was retarded for centuries, for the Habsburgs discouraged the solitary efforts made to consolidate the political unity of Germany. They endeavoured as much as possible to withdraw their German territory from the orbit of the Germanic system, thus adopting the very principle of separatism which had transformed Germany into a mere
congeries of feudal States. The opening of the nineteenth century found the Habsburg monarchy confronted with a dual problem. On the one hand, it strove to retain its ascendancy in German affairs—an ascendancy uncontested for five hundred years, but now challenged by the growing prestige of the military power of Prussia. On the other hand, it had to knit together as best it could an ill-assorted Empire, which threatened to crumble into ruin at any moment. "My realm," confessed Francis II. on one occasion, "is like a worm-eaten house; if one part is removed, one cannot tell how much will fall." We have already traced the struggle between Austria and Prussia for the hegemony of Germany.\(^1\) We have now to deal with the internal development of the Austrian nationalities.

Metternich, the Austrian Chancellor, like the poet Hesiod more than two thousand years before, bewailed the fact that he had come into the world either too soon or too late. "Earlier, I should have enjoyed the age; later, I should have helped to reconstruct it; to-day I have to give my life to propping up the mouldering edifice."\(^2\) Prevention was therefore, as he acknowledged, the keynote of the internal administration. "Govern and change nothing," was the beginning and the end of the Imperial programme. "We follow," said Metternich to an English statesman, "a system of prevention in order that we may not be compelled to follow one of repression. . . . We are firmly convinced that any concession a Government may be induced to make strikes at the basis of its existence. . . . Concessions properly so-called can only have to do with rights of sovereignty . . . they can only be made by a sovereign at the expense of the capital of his own existence."\(^3\) The exigencies of the domestic situation thus forced Metternich to make Austria the great conservative barrier to all the progressive movements in Europe, to devote the whole resources of the monarchy to a life-long struggle with 'Jacobinism,'—the spirit of revolutionary unrest. He was shrewd enough to

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\(^1\) See Chapter II.

\(^2\) Memoirs, iii. 395.

\(^3\) Cited, A. F. Pollard, "The Germanic Federation" in Camb. Mod. Hist.\(^\text{E}335\) seq.
PRINCE METTERNICH (1773-1859)

From the Painting by Sir T. Lawrence
PRINCE METTERNICH (1773-1859)

From the Painting by Sir T. Lawrence
elementary schools existed, the higher branches of knowledge languished. "He who serves me," said Francis, "must teach what I command"; and the police exercised a rigorous control over University teaching. No opportunity was afforded for any expression of opinion on public affairs. Metternich laid down the principle that "no Government can pursue a firm and undeviating course when it is daily exposed to the influence of such dissolvent conditions as the freedom of the press."

The fundamental weakness of Metternich's famous 'system' was that it only retarded, it could not avert, the day of reckoning. It secured a fictitious appearance of unity, not by the heroic remedy of removing the sources of dissatisfaction, but by imposing compulsory silence upon the discontented elements. The forces of revolution, though veiled from sight, continued in active operation underground, and their eruption in 1848 was marked by a volcanic intensity which was all the more formidable because they had been so long repressed. These forces were extremely complex, and it is necessary to distinguish carefully between the different factors which combined to bring about the Revolution of 1848.

(1) In the first place the efforts of the Government to check the spread of Liberal ideas were only partially successful. "All around the frontier," wrote Karl Marx, "wherever the Austrian States touched upon a civilized country, a cordon of literary censors was established in connexion with the cordon of custom-house officials, preventing any foreign book 1 or newspaper from passing into Austria before its contents had been twice or three times thoroughly sifted, and found pure of even the slightest contamination of the malignant spirit of the age." It was impossible, however, to exclude all progressive literature, and its influence upon the educated classes was all the greater since it was forbidden fare. The Universities focussed the intellectual unrest, and gave a powerful impulse to the various elements of disaffection. While on the surface Austria appeared to embody

1 Even the works of Hallam were excluded as being too liberal: Seligman, Contemporary Europe (Eng. ed. 1901), ii. 403.
PRINCE METTERNICH (1773-1859)

From the Painting by Sir T. Lawrence
nor scarcely the most important, factor in the situation. It is doubtless true that there can be no Revolution without a Renaissance, that an intellectual stimulus is needed to awaken men from the apathy and stupor of servile acquiescence. Yet it is equally true that there can be no Revolution without economic distress, for the great mass of men are conservative in their instincts and are rarely moved to revolt except by some kind of economic pressure. The driving force of the Austrian movement in 1848 was primarily agrarian discontent. The peasants aspired to release themselves from the yoke of feudal servitude, and their immense importance in the Revolution is shown by the fact that once their grievances were redressed the insurrection itself rapidly collapsed. The Government, absorbed in routine and wedded to a policy of inaction, failed to take any steps to remove their economic disabilities. It lost an admirable opportunity to improve the condition of the rural classes in 1846, when the Polish nobles in Galicia rose in rebellion against Austria. The revolt was suppressed with the aid of the peasants, who eagerly welcomed an occasion to wreak their fierce vengeance upon their hated masters. The peasants expected their services to be requited by the abolition of their feudal dues, and their disappointment was severe when the State adhered to its traditional policy of laissez-faire. The discontent of the rural population furnished the enemies of the Government with a formidable instrument which they were able to exploit to good advantage. This combination of political and economic factors was destined, while it lasted, to prove irresistible.

The overthrow of the Orleans dynasty in France gave the signal for the outbreak of an insurrection at Vienna. The University led the way with a petition which was presented to the Emperor by two professors on March 12. The next day a popular deputation voiced the demands of the people for a constitutional regime. The crowded streets were thronged with citizens, and a spark alone was needed to kindle the flames of revolution. Nor was this long delayed; the populace, as very commonly happens, came to blows with the troops, and amidst the intense excitement
RACIAL PROBLEMS IN AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

aroused by the loss of life anarchy reigned supreme in the capital. Abandoned by the Imperial Court, whose interests he had served so faithfully, Metternich was compelled to surrender his office and seek refuge in exile. His faults as a statesman had been great, and the association of his name with a reactionary political system which delayed the constitutional development of Europe for a generation makes it even now difficult to form a balanced opinion of his merits. Yet one achievement will stand for ever to his credit. Throughout his long tenure of power he strove to preserve the peace of Europe, and he secured for a world drenched with the blood of the Napoleonic wars the repose it sorely needed. The fall of the old Chancellor was the first victory achieved by the Revolution. Other triumphs followed in rapid succession. The whole fabric of Austrian government collapsed, indeed, with surprising ease. An Imperial manifesto announced wide and far-reaching concessions. Not only did it contain the promise of a Constitution, but as a liberal instalment it forthwith established freedom of the press and a National Guard, and it also summoned a Combined Diet of all the provincial Estates of the Empire. A Committee of twenty-four citizens administered the affairs of Vienna, the instruments of its authority being the National Guard and the Academic Legion, composed of University students. Without waiting, however, for the joint meeting of the Estates, the Ministry issued the new Constitution on April 25. This had already been laid before an assembly of notables, and on a first examination its terms appeared sufficiently comprehensive. It proclaimed the indivisible unity of the Austrian State, which was to comprise all the dominions of the Habsburg Empire, exclusive of Transleithanian territories, namely, Hungary, Croatia and Transylvania. It converted an autocratic system of government into a constitutional monarchy, based upon the rights of the individual to civil and religious freedom. Without abolishing the provincial Estates, it created a General Parliament (Reichstag), composed of two Chambers, and it recognized the principle of ministerial responsibility. While it undoubtedly marked
in many ways a notable advance, the new Constitution aroused widespread dissatisfaction. The democracy of Vienna would have nothing to do with "a nondescript aristocratic Constitution, and an electoral law based upon the old division of Estates"; and the attempt to dissolve one of the democratic organizations (the Central Political Committee), which was usurping the authority of the Executive, provoked a fresh insurrection on May 15. The Government bowed before the storm, and not only restored the Central Political Committee, but also modified the Constitution on democratic lines, establishing universal suffrage and substituting a single chamber for a bicameral parliament. The Imperial Court deeply resented the concessions wrung from it by popular pressure, and the Emperor, alarmed for his safety, fled from Vienna to Innsbruck, where he was soon followed by the aristocracy and middle classes. "Here the Counter-Revolutionary Party found an asylum, from whence, uncontrolled, unobserved, and safe, it might rally its scattered forces, repair and spread again all over the country the network of its plots. Communications were reopened with Radetzky, Jellacic, and with Windischgrätz... intrigues were set on foot with the Slavonic chiefs, and thus a real force at the disposal of the Counter-Revolutionary camarilla was formed, while the impotent ministers in Vienna were allowed to wear their short and feeble popularity out in continual bickerings with the revolutionary masses... Thus the policy of leaving the movement of the capital to itself for a time—a policy which must have led to the omnipotence of the movement party in a centralized and homogeneous country like France—here in Austria," as Marx acutely observes, "in a heterogeneous political conglomerate, was one of the safest means of reorganizing the strength of the reactionists." ¹

¹ Marx, op. cit. 76-77.
as a result the control of affairs passed into the hands of a new Committee of Public Safety. On July 22 was opened the General Diet; as it was elected on the basis of universal suffrage, the Slav element predominated and the German democrats found themselves in the minority. The constitutional issues of the Revolution, grave enough in themselves to tax all the resources of Austrian statesmen, were now still further complicated by the most intricate national issues. We shall have occasion to show how the Hungarian movement suffered shipwreck owing to the internecine conflicts of the Magyars with the races in their midst. The course of events in Austria revealed the same tendencies at work. In the parliamentary arena of the Austrian Reichstag the discords of rival nationalities disclosed the irreconcilable feud which divided the Germans and the Slavs. The forces of reaction found their best ally in the divisions which reigned in the nationalist camp.

The German democrats had fallen under the spell of the national movement, which was seeking to build up a United Germany and to combine together all the *disjecta membra* of the German body under a single head. They desired to merge Austria in Germany, and demanded that Austrian representatives should have a seat in the Frankfort Assembly. In this enthusiasm, however, they stood almost alone. The German provinces of the Austrian State do not appear to have shared their ardour, while the Government at any rate was naturally reluctant to compromise the integrity of the Habsburg monarchy. But the chief opposition came from the Slav races of Austria. The Czechs of Bohemia had no desire to see Cisleithanian Austria incorporated in a German Empire, for this would have given the deathblow to all their national hopes. Bohemia had never forgotten that she was once an independent kingdom, and to this day indeed she still cherishes her proud traditions. She was jealous of German ascendancy, and on the ground of 'historic rights' strove to acquire administrative autonomy. While German writers contended that "Bohemia could only exist, henceforth, as a portion of Germany, although part of her in-

1 Infra, p. 144 seq.
habitants might yet, for some centuries, continue to speak a non-German language," the Czechs, under the leadership of the great Bohemian historian, Palacky, resolutely refused to be merged in an all-embracing German State. Even before 1848 the dormant spirit of nationality was being awakened by the revival of the Czech language and the study of Slavonic antiquities. A new incentive to national self-assertion was now supplied by the aggressive provocation of the two dominant races of the Austrian Empire—the Germans and the Magyars. It bore tangible fruit in a Pan-Slav Congress held at Prague in June 1848 as the Slav rejoinder to the German Assembly at Frankfort. Whether the dream of a great Slavonic Confederation uniting all the scattered branches of the Slav race was seriously entertained is open to question. Yet the indiscretions of Slav enthusiasts afforded a handle to their adversaries, who discerned in Pan-Slavism the dread shadow of the Russian autocracy. These fears were apparently unfounded. Bohemia was content to remain an integral part of the Austrian monarchy, though it claimed an independent national existence, and stoutly resisted absorption in a purely Germanic body. Thus, on the one hand, the Germans wished either to 'merge' Austria proper in Germany, or in any case to maintain the ascendancy they had so long enjoyed over the subject races—the Czechs of Bohemia and the Slovenes of Styria, Carinthia and Carniola. The Transleithanian provinces of the Empire—Hungary, Croatia and Transylvania—they were willing to yield up to the Magyars. The Slavs, on the other hand, protested against this division of the spoils between the Germans and the Magyars. Instead of a centralized bureaucratic State, their programme was a confederation of national States, in which ample scope would be afforded for the full political development of all racial communities.

For the moment the Czechs appeared in a fair way of realizing their ambitions. The Imperial Court, true to its traditional policy of playing off one race against another, saw in the clash of national ideals the means of turning the provinces against the capital. Bohemia was encouraged in her resistance to German domination. With the approval
of Prince Windischgrätz, who was in command of the Austrian army, the Bohemian administration under Count Thun renounced the authority of the Austrian ministry, and established an independent Government. These proceedings, though condemned by the Vienna Cabinet, received the sanction of the Emperor. But the nationalist movement in Bohemia proved short-lived. It was wrecked by a premature outbreak of the democrats at Prague, who thought to follow the example set by Vienna and make themselves masters of the situation. The insurrection was speedily crushed by Windischgrätz, who bombarded the city and reduced the rebels to submission. The Reaction had gained its first victory over the Revolution, and it reaped a fruitful harvest. It raised the spirits and heightened the self-confidence of the army, for it taught the lesson that insurgent democracy, fighting in barricaded streets, was not always invincible. Thus it broke the spell which the revolutionary exploits of Paris, Berlin and Vienna had cast over the mind of Europe. At the same time it intensified the hostility of the rival nationalities. The Germans regarded the collapse of the Bohemian separatist movement in the light of a national triumph. The Slavs, rendered innocuous to the Austrian Government by their failure to establish a confederation, were now employed by it as a weapon against the democracy of Vienna. Their conviction that the success of the German national movement would permanently impair their own prospects of independence made them a pliant instrument in the hands of the very party to whom they owed their downfall. They may also have hoped to win from the gratitude of the Government what they had failed to wrench from its fears. If this was their calculation they were destined to be deeply disappointed; yet it explains what the enemies of the Slavs bitterly called their ‘infamous conduct’ in the Austrian Constituent Diet, which assembled at Vienna on July 22. We have already seen how the Slav deputies preponderated in the Diet, and they proceeded to make ‘a systematic war upon the German element,’ who formed the minority on the Left. The latter were admittedly ‘the chief supporters of revolutionary
progress," but in the Revolution of 1848 the forces of nationality everywhere carried greater weight than the forces of Liberalism, and where they came into collision Liberalism invariably succumbed. Torn by racial dissensions, the Assembly failed signally to utilize its unique opportunities, and the first constitutional experiment attempted in Austria was a complete failure. One reform alone emerged out of the protracted debates of the Diet, the only enduring result of the Revolution, amidst so much that was transitory. This was the emancipation of the peasants from feudal servitude. All parties in the Reichstag were agreed as to the need for the abolition of forced labour, but they were divided on the question of compensation. The Government insisted that the landowners should receive compensation for the loss of the services paid them by the peasants; and this was done in spite of the opposition raised by the democratic party.

Meanwhile, the populace in the Austrian capital displayed ominous symptoms of unrest. The hopes which they had at first reposed in the Reichstag were speedily disillusioned by the alliance of the Slav majority with the party of reaction, and they were also disquieted at the prospect of a Counter-Revolution whose advent was now momentarily expected. After two dangerous riots the disaffection of the masses culminated with an Imperial decree (October 3), dissolving the Hungarian Diet and declaring war upon the Magyar nationalists. The Viennese democracy had taken up with enthusiasm the cause of the Magyars, whose movement showed the same democratic leanings as their own, and when Latour, the Minister of War, ordered the troops stationed in Vienna to march against the Hungarians, the people resisted their departure and broke out in open insurrection. Latour was murdered, and the Emperor was made to revoke the manifesto of October 3. This marked the turning-point in the Revolution. The Emperor, who had returned to Vienna at the wishes of the Reichstag, again fled from the capital, and set up his court at Olmütz, whence he published a manifesto denouncing the revolutionary disturbances, and appealing for support to the provinces. At the same time the Slav majority in the Reichstag transferred
itself to Brünn, leaving the German rump to sink into the condition of a mere local committee. The end of the Revolution was not long deferred. On October 11 Windischgrätz, who had won great prestige by his victory over the insurrection at Prague, announced his intention to march on Vienna. On October 16 his authority was confirmed by an Imperial edict, and a few days later the capital was invested on all sides by the Austrian army. In spite of the heroic resistance of the Viennese, organized by a Napoleonic veteran, Joseph Bem, the city was taken on October 31. The fall of Vienna could only have been averted by the intervention of the Magyars at an early stage in the struggle. But the Diet, hidebound by 'constitutional conventions,' was loath to summon the Hungarian army to its assistance. The Hungarian Government, anxious to conduct the Revolution on lines of strict legal propriety, awaited the formal authorization of the Reichstag before venturing to invade German territory. This perfunctory policy was a mistaken one, for revolutions are not made with rose-water. Events soon showed that the fate of the Magyar Revolution was bound up with that of the Viennese Revolution, for the overthrow of the latter at once set the forces of reaction free to concentrate all their strength upon the destruction of the former. At the last moment, indeed, an attempt was made to raise the siege of Vienna, but the Austrians had availed themselves of the delay to complete their preparations, and in an encounter at Schwechat they easily drove back the relieving forces.

Now that the army had become master of the situation, the position of affairs was radically changed. There was no longer any need to conciliate democratic opinion, and the administration was therefore placed in the hands of Prince Schwarzenberg—the brother-in-law of Windischgrätz—who was a reactionary, pure and simple. Devoid of scruples, and endowed with a strong, determined nature, he was inflexibly resolved to preserve the integrity of the Austrian monarchy. He fought successfully against the attempt of the Frankfort Assembly to absorb German Austria in Germany and against the efforts of the Magyars to emanci-
pate Hungary. The Constitution drafted by the Reichstag—which had been allowed for the time being to continue its labours at Kremsier—with its elaborate exposition of ‘fundamental rights’ (Grundrechte) and large concessions to federalist prejudices, was contemptuously thrown aside. The new Constitution, imposed on the Empire by Imperial authority (March 4, 1849), proclaimed in every line the indivisible unity of the monarchy, and welded once more into a centralized bureaucratic State all the heterogeneous dominions of the Austrian Crown. The position of the Government was enormously strengthened by the collapse of the Hungarian Revolution a few months later, and it became absolutely impregnable after the humiliation of Prussia at Olmütz ¹ sealed the fate of the German national movement also. Victorious at length over the disruptive forces of Magyar and German nationalism, one thing alone was needed as the coping-stone of the edifice of Reaction. This was supplied on December 31, 1851, by the issue of an Imperial rescript annulling the Constitution of March 4. Henceforth, even the pretence of constitutionalism was openly set aside, and the monarchy pursued the course of naked absolutism. The period of reaction is known by the name of ‘Bach’s system,’ although its leading characteristics were imprinted on it by Schwarzenberg. None the less, it was not an era of blind reaction. Constitutional reform in the body politic was dead; but administrative and economic reforms were vigorously taken in hand. One valuable treasure was rescued from the shipwreck of all the hopes with which the movement of 1848 had opened. The abolition of serfdom remained the sole practical outcome of the Revolution, and no attempt was made to restore the old feudal institutions, compulsory labour and seigniorial justice. This was the course of the Revolution in Austria; we have now to trace the course of the corresponding movement in Hungary.

In Austria-Hungary, as in Italy and Germany, the Revolution of 1848 embraced two distinct movements,

¹ Supra, p. 66.
the one constitutional, the other national. The former
sought to achieve the emancipation of individuals, the
latter the emancipation of nationalities. In all three
countries the two movements were in close alliance with
each other. In Italy, for example, the combination of the
forces of Liberalism with those of Nationalism was im-
peratively demanded by the nature of the political situation;
the pettiest Italian tyrant was omnipotent against his
subjects so long as he was backed by the resources of the
Austrian Empire.¹ This combination was equally necessary,
not in Vienna—where the revolution was exclusively
Liberal, since the Germans, as the dominant race, had no
national grievances—but in Hungary. The feudal privi-
leges of the Hungarian nobles, who alone were represented
in the Diet and were also exempt from taxation, were a
great obstacle to constitutional progress. The nobles,
however, were hardly likely to surrender their privileges at
the bidding of Liberal reformers—unless their resistance
was overborne by an outburst of national enthusiasm, such
as led the members of the French National Assembly on
August 4, 1789, to compete with one another in a generous
rivalry of self-sacrifice and voluntary renunciation. Hence
Liberalism in Hungary was driven into an alliance with
Magyar Nationalism, as the only force which could enable
it to triumph over opposition. But this alliance of Liberal-
ism and Nationalism, so fruitful in Italy, was sterile, and
even worse than sterile, in Hungary. The attempt of the
Magyars to exclude other races in Hungary from the privi-
leged position which they claimed for themselves, brought
about the ruin not only of their own national movement,
but of the constitutional movement, whose fortunes were
bound up with it. Another important difference also
emerges when we contrast the Hungarian revolution of
1848 with the Italian or the German revolution. In Italy
and Germany the national movement meant integration;
in Austria-Hungary it spelt disintegration. The bare
enumeration of the peoples comprised within the Habs-
burg monarchy—Germans, Magyars, Czechs, Slovaks,

¹ Infra, p. 166.
Roumanians, Ruthenes, Croats and Serbs—is impressive in its demonstration of racial diversities. Of these eight nationalities, we are told that each possessed "its own distinct culture and historic traditions, and, with the exception of the Croats and Serbs, each speaks a different language." Thus the Racial Question overshadowed every other problem in the Dual Monarchy, and it was recognized that any solution on strictly national lines would lead to the disruption of the Austrian Empire. We can best illustrate the complex issues involved in the Racial Question by tracing the fortunes of the Hungarian revolution.

For centuries Hungary had cherished the traditions of self-government and constitutional rights. Joseph II., the greatest of the Enlightened Despots, came into conflict with these traditions on the eve of the French Revolution, when he attempted to centralize his heterogeneous dominions and weld them into a single compact State. In violation of the Hungarian Constitution he refrained from summoning the Diet; enjoined the use of German as the official language; did away with the County Assemblies; and carved out the country into ten circles or provinces under German administrators. These drastic measures were revoked at the end of his reign, but the storm of opposition which they aroused bore permanent fruit in the revival of national feeling. The Diet of 1791 forced Leopold II., the successor of Joseph, to recognize the freedom and independence of the Hungarian nation. Henceforth the Diet was to meet every three years, and without its assent no taxes could be levied; it was also promised that Hungary should be governed "according to its own laws and customs, and not after the manner of other provinces." The concessions extorted from the Habsburgs in 1791 embodied in principle almost all the rights contained in the Magyar programme for three-quarters of a century to come. But in Hungary, as in England, the outbreak of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars retarded constitutional progress for a generation, and diverted the energies of the nation into other

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1 The Croats and Serbs speak the same language. See R. W. Seton-Watson, Racial Problems in Hungary (1908), 3.
channels. Hungary relapsed into her former condition, until she was again awakened from her lethargy by the 'Magyar Renaissance.'

Language is one of the most potent of all national bonds; it enshrines the common memories and traditions which keep alive the sparks of nationality until they are ready to burst into a living flame. Conversely, the spread of a universal language is the most powerful solvent of national feeling. Now "by the middle of the eighteenth century," it has been said, "the Magyar language was in very real danger of dying out. Latin was the language of the Government, the administration, the law courts, of common intercourse between educated people; and the astute policy of Maria Theresa had won over the great nobles of Hungary to German customs and ways of thinking. Contact with the Court and intermarriage with the Austrian aristocracy rapidly turned them into little better than Germans, and their demoralizing example had begun to spread among the gentry and educated classes, while the towns were mainly German already."¹ In short, the Racial Question of the Habsburg Empire was in a fair way of being solved on the lines of least resistance by the gradual extinction of racial consciousness. The imprudent attitude of Joseph II., however, was a direct challenge to Magyar pride. He flung all compromise to the winds and pursued a policy of violent assimilation. Even more important, perhaps, was the influence of the French Revolution in arousing the dormant forces of nationality. The French Revolution not only shattered the antiquated social and political regime which had survived from the Middle Ages, it also dispelled those cosmopolitan tendencies whose influence was specially marked in the eighteenth century. Thus the revival of national feeling in Hungary, viewed from the broadest standpoint, was part and parcel of a movement which was general throughout Europe, and was particularly conspicuous in Italy and Germany. For a period of thirteen years (1812–1825) the Hungarian Diet was in abeyance, but the County Assemblies, 'miniature parliaments,' attended

¹ Watson, op. cit. 38.
by the nobles, served to keep up the traditions of independence and self-government, and their resistance to the Government forced it to summon a meeting of the Diet in 1825. At this Diet the cry was raised that Magyar should be established as the official language of Hungary. This demand was the beginning of the Language Question, which deluged the Hungarian plains in blood and for many decades remained a burning subject of controversy in Hungarian politics. The next few years witnessed the rapid progress of the Magyar tongue; they have been described, indeed, as the golden age of Magyar literature. In 1840 Magyar became the language of the Government; parish registers were ordered to be drawn up in it; and it was made compulsory for the clergy of all denominations. Four years later Magyar was constituted the official language of public business and debates in Parliament, and at the same time it became the language employed in schools, or at least a compulsory part of the curriculum.

Within twenty years the national aspirations of the Magyars, who alone enjoyed political power among the races of Hungary, had made great advance; but the demand for constitutional reform still remained unsatisfied. The permeation of Western ideas had transformed a movement, originally purely national and conservative, into a progressive and democratic movement. This new development made its influence felt in the proposals put forward in the Diets of 1844 and 1847, and it reached its zenith with the news of the revolutions at Paris and Vienna, news which fired the train already laid in Hungary. Under the inspiration of Kossuth the Address to the Crown demanded a national Government and a ministry responsible to Parliament. The revolutionary elements in the Diet were now in the ascendant. Their leader was Louis Kossuth, who had achieved a great reputation as editor of the Pesti Hirlap, a political journal commanding a wide circulation and extraordinary influence. It represented the extreme wing of the reform movement, the more conservative reformers finding a leader in Count Széchenyi. Kossuth's followers now seized the occasion to carry into operation the most extensive
and far-reaching changes. The famous March Laws of 1848 were the work of barely a month, and in this short space of time the social and political conditions of Hungary were completely revolutionized. The sweeping reforms embodied in these March Laws exhibited the twofold tendencies of the Hungarian movement, to which we have already drawn attention. On the one hand, the influence of Liberal ideas was seen in the establishment of a responsible Hungarian ministry, whose radical programme amply justified its existence. Serfdom, feudal dues, and the seigniorial courts were abolished; the nobles lost their immunity from taxation; the franchise, hitherto the exclusive possession of the nobility, was extended to every Hungarian owning property worth thirty pounds; the duration of Parliament was restricted to three years, and it was to be convoked annually; direct election of representatives was substituted for the old electoral system based upon the County Assemblies and the towns; while other measures included liberty of the press, religious freedom, a national guard, and a national University. On the other hand, the influence of national ideas was seen in the practical separation of Hungary from Austria. The Diet abolished those departments of State—the Hungarian Chancellery and the Palatinal Council—through which the central Government held Hungary in political subjection. They were replaced by an independent Hungarian Cabinet, whose sphere of authority covered not only the internal administration of Hungary, but also foreign affairs, war, finance, and the control of the army and fortresses. In addition Transylvania was united with Hungary, which was to be garrisoned for the future by Magyar troops. The Government at Vienna, powerless in the face of the catastrophe which had befallen it, conceded all the demands made upon it from Budapest. In this way Hungary was rendered independent of Austria, which was henceforth united to it only by the tie of common allegiance to the Habsburg House. The Magyars had thus achieved a great triumph, but its permanence would naturally depend upon the use which they made of their victory. Upon
this issue now turned the destinies of the Hungarian nation.

If the Magyars had acted with moderation, the course of the Hungarian revolution would have run a different course. Unfortunately they claimed for themselves rights of nationality which they denied to others. They were only one among seven nationalities, and they numbered less than half the entire population. At the beginning of the present century, for example, the inhabitants of Hungary numbered nineteen millions, of whom about eight and a half millions were Magyars, and only ten millions possessed a knowledge of the Magyar tongue. It is true that the Magyars were the most virile of the Hungarian peoples, but this did not justify them in refusing racial equality to their neighbours. From the first they sullied their cause by acting with the arrogance of a dominant race, and their own intolerance forged the weapon which their enemies employed for their destruction. The law of 1840 by which Magyar was substituted for Latin as the official language of public administration was in the circumstances reasonable; and in process of time, owing to its superior culture, Magyar might well have become the common speech of the Hungarian nation. But the Magyar patriots, carried away by their enthusiasm, resolved on the rapid and complete Magyarization of their country, a policy which involved the racial extinction of all nationalities save their own. National life, it was proclaimed, is impossible without a national language, and the Magyars did not stop short of violent means in order to transform the non-Magyar races into 'genuine Magyars.' In a word, their idea was to wipe out all racial distinctions whatsoever in Hungary; they had already captured the administration, and they endeavoured to control also the pulpit and the schools with a view to the forcible introduction of the Magyar tongue. This policy of compulsory assimilation, which was also pursued in parts of the German Empire\(^1\) and in Russia,\(^2\) was the source of great unrest in Eastern Europe during the nineteenth century.

\(^1\) *Infra, p. 236 seq.*  
\(^2\) *Infra, p. 238 seq.*
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Other races in Hungary, however, were conscious of their nationality, and resented the oppression to which they were subjected. "Rather the Russian knout," said the North Hungarian Slavs, called Slovaks, "than Magyar domination, for the one could only enslave our bodies while the other threatens us with moral ruin and death." The French Revolution left its traces upon the Slovaks as upon the Magyars, and among them also the regeneration of the Slav language found expression in the growth of a native literature. In this linguistic revival two great names were prominent: Safarik, a professor, who collected the folksongs and antiquities of the Slav race, and the national poet, Kollár, whose Daughter of Slava was published in 1824. This famous poem had a considerable political significance because it exalted the Slav name, revealing to the Slav world "the great memories of the Slav race, and its departed glories." Kollár protested against the unjust decree, "that in Hungary the Slav should bury his language." "Grant not the soil on which we dwell the sacred name of fatherland," he cried; "The true fatherland, which none can misuse, of which none can rob us . . . we carry in our hearts . . . Dear are the woods, the streams, the homes inherited from our sires. But the sole fatherland which endures, and defies all shame and insult, is that unity of custom and language and mood which blends soul with soul." Elsewhere he added: "Scattered Slavs, let us be a united whole, and no longer mere fragments!" But he made clear that the Panslavism of his dreams was literary and not political, and the doctrine he enunciated in this connexion merits quotation. "It does not consist in a political union of all Slavs," he explained, "nor in demagogic agitation against the various governments and rulers, since this could only produce confusion and misfortune. Literary reciprocity can also subsist in the case of a nation which is divided into several States," or "which has several religions and confessions, and where differences of writing, of climate and territory, of manners and customs prevail. It is not dangerous to the temporal authorities and rulers, since it leaves frontiers and territories undisturbed, is content with
the existing order of things, and adapts itself to all forms of
government, and to all grades of civil life." It is not
necessary for the cohesion of a State that all men should
think alike, share a common speech, profess the same
religion, and adopt uniform manners and customs. Unity
does not demand uniformity and diversity is more often a
source of strength than of weakness. What the Slovaks
wanted was explicitly set forth in a petition to the Crown
in 1842, in which they represented that they "form a
peculiar nationality, which is only capable of further pro-
gress through the cultivation of its own language, and which
has for centuries offered its life and property to the common
fatherland, enjoying in return equal rights with the other
races of Hungary." But this perfectly reasonable claim to
retain their language, and develop their own racial culture,
was interpreted by the Magyars as a traitorous plea for
autonomy and separation. Yet, even among the Magyars,
moderate elements were not wanting to denounce a policy
conducted on the narrowest racial lines, and voices were
raised on behalf of the oppressed nationalities. The great
Hungarian patriot, Count Stephen Széchenyi, whose loyalty
was unquestioned since his economic writings had done so
much for the regeneration of Hungary, warned his country-
men of the perilous course upon which they were embarking
in their attempts to absorb the non-Magyar races by com-
pulsion instead of by conciliation. "It is only our intel-
lectual superiority," he said, "that can attach these races
to the Hungarian nationality"; and he charged Kossuth
with "goading [them] into madness against the Magyar
nation." But his remonstrance went unheeded and the
Magyar politicians, blinded by racial passions, proceeded to
plunge Hungary into all the horrors of civil strife.

The linguistic monopoly asserted by the Magyars brought
them into conflict not only with the Slavs of North Hungary,
but also with the Southern Slavs—the Croats and Serbs.
The latter were settled in the kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia,
usually called Croatia, lying to the south-west of Hungary,
with which it was politically united. There were also

\[\text{1 Watson, op. cit. 56.} \]
\[\text{2 Francis Duhé, A Memoir (1880), 57.} \]
Serbs to the east of Croatia, in the plain known as the Banat. The Croats, apart from their representation in the Hungarian Diet, had their own provincial Diet at Agram, where they were able to organize resistance to the forcible introduction of the Magyar language. The antipathy between the Croats and the Magyars was shown in Kossuth's statement that he could not find Croatia on the map, and it stimulated the growth of national feeling. 'Illyrism,' as this national movement among the Southern Slavs was called, was at first only a literary movement; its organ was the Illyrian National Gazette, edited by Louis Gaj. The Magyars, however, saw in it a menace to their political ascendancy, and their relations with the Croats became embittered. To complete this survey of the racial situation it is necessary to add that two other nationalities, the Roumanians—who constituted two-thirds of the population of Transylvania, yet were treated by the Magyars with the utmost contempt—and also the Saxons, opposed the desire of the Magyars to incorporate Transylvania in the Hungarian State. The position of affairs in Hungary was thus extremely critical; and the fate of the Magyar nation, as we have already said, hung in the balance. In asserting their independence they had thrown down the gage to the Habsburg monarchy, and the privileges they had extorted from its weakness would have to be defended, sooner or later, at the point of the sword. At the same time they were ringed round by hostile nationalities, who outnumbered them by two to three millions, and whom their racial intolerance had driven into the arms of their enemies. It was clearly impossible to carry on a foreign war abroad and civil war at home, and the Magyar leaders committed an irreparable blunder when they refused to conciliate the other races by timely concessions. Kossuth failed to recognize the wisdom and expediency, as well as the justice, of a generous and liberal policy; and as the apostle of a narrow racial creed he showed himself deficient in true statesmanship. He told the Serb deputation, as early as April 1848, that "before there could be any question of an equal treatment of the Slavonian with the Magyar tongue, appeal would have to be
made to the decision of the sword." The Slav nationalities took up the challenge and began to agitate for their separation from Hungary, the restoration of their ancient rights and traditional liberties, and the creation of a South-Slavonic State.

The Croats found a leader in Baron Jellacic, the son of a Croatian nobleman, who had been appointed Ban (viceroys) of Croatia. He professed himself in favour of the ‘Illyrian’ movement, which had now a definite political object—the formation of a Slav kingdom under Habsburg rule. It is doubtful whether Jellacic was genuinely concerned about Slav national ideals, or whether from the first he worked for the restoration of the Imperial power. Certainly the net result of his policy was to divide Hungary into two armed camps, and so render inevitable the failure of the Magyar Revolution. In pursuance of the course of action which he had marked out for himself, he expelled Magyar officials, and summoned the Croatian Diet to meet on June 5 at Agram. As soon as it met, the Diet proceeded to repudiate the authority of the Hungarian ministry established at Budapest, and to decree the separation of Croatia from Hungary. The Serbs of the Banat also seized the occasion to rise in revolt against the Magyars; and a Serb national congress, held at Carlowitz, set up a provisional Government and made common cause with their kinsfolk of Croatia. The spirit of insurrection extended even to the Slavs of North Hungary (the Slovaks), but the terror inspired by the ‘Kossuth gallows’ paralysed the efforts of the Slovak leaders to organize an effective resistance among their countrymen. The Magyars thus found themselves in the anomalous position of carrying on two distinct wars, the one against German Austria, the other against Hungarian Slavs, fighting the former in order to secure those rights of free national development which they denied to the latter.

The first step taken by the Magyars was to sow distrust between the Imperial Court at Innsbruck and the Ban of Croatia. Batthyány, the President of the Hungarian Cabinet, successfully worked upon the Emperor’s fears that the real object of the ‘Illyrian’ movement was to establish an independent Slav Confederation; it is probable also
that the Imperial Court was relying upon Magyar assistance to restore order in Vienna. The outcome of Batthyány’s visit to Innsbruck was an Imperial manifesto suspending Jellacic from his office, and condemning the attempt of the Roumanians and Saxons in Transylvania to make themselves independent of the Hungarian Government. Jellacic, however, managed to win over the Emperor to his point of view, and was allowed to keep his position. The Hungarian Diet, under the influence of Kossuth, now resolved to settle the Croatian question by an appeal to arms. For a time the Imperial Government refused to commit itself either on the side of the Magyars or of the Slavs, but two considerations speedily forced it to a decision. Kossuth’s financial policy, the issue of Hungarian paper money in place of Austrian notes, was evidently designed to pave the way for a complete breach between Austria and Hungary. Yet the Austrian Government would still have shrunk from a conflict, had it not also received the news of Radetzky’s victory at Custozza (July 25) and of his entrance into Milan. The time for action, therefore, appeared ripe, and early in September the Ban of Croatia, with the approval of the Imperial Government, opened the campaign by crossing the Drave and invading Hungary at the head of a Croatian army.

In the opening stages of the war fortune favoured the arms of Austria. The Hungarian army attempted to relieve Vienna, but met with a serious repulse at Schwechat (October 30), and during the next few months suffered reverse after reverse. On January 5 the Austrian general, Windischgrätz, the conqueror of Vienna, occupied the Hungarian capital, which had already been evacuated by the Government. This was followed a few weeks later by an overwhelming defeat of the Magyars at Kapolna, after which the campaign appeared at an end and the triumph of the Austrians seemed completely assured. The course of events, however, showed that in war it is the unexpected which happens. When by all the rules of warfare the Magyars were hopelessly beaten, they suddenly developed unsuspected powers of resistance; and their spirit, so far from being quenched by defeat, drew

1 *Infra*, p. 173.
fresh inspiration from the disasters which had befallen them. They threw themselves into the struggle with renewed ardour, and their achievements astonished a world which had given up their cause for lost. In Transylvania, Bem, the Polish veteran who had organized the defence of Vienna, drove the Austrians and Russians across the frontier of Wallachia and made himself master of the country. In the south, Perczel subdued the Serbs of Slavonia and the Banat; while the main army under Görgei, who was now commander-in-chief, inflicted a succession of defeats on the Austrians, even compelling them to withdraw from Hungary. This was the climax of the struggle, and if the Magyars had shown political wisdom they might have obtained from the Austrian Government honourable terms of peace. But the destinies of Hungary were in the hands of Kossuth, who was now practically dictator, and with Kossuth counsels of moderation had no weight. On April 14, elated by his victories, he took the most fatal step in his career by issuing a Declaration of Independence, deposing the Habsburg dynasty and proclaiming a Republic. His action was a direct challenge to the principle of 'Legitimacy'; and as such it afforded an excuse for Russian intervention. The Tsar Nicholas I. was the relentless enemy of all progressive movements; a nineteenth-century Don Quixote, his divine mission was to succour distressed autocrats. While Jellacic again advanced from Croatia, and the Austrian army once more approached from the west, the Russians poured over the Carpathians and entered from the east. It was impossible for the Magyars, overpowered by sheer weight of numbers, to save a cause that was doomed. The Diet made a last despairing effort to retrieve the situation by removing the grievances of the non-Magyar races, and acknowledging their right to the free development of their language. But the concession came too late to reverse the tide of events, and on August 11, Kossuth abdicated in favour of Görgei and took refuge across the Turkish frontier. Two days later the Hungarian army under

1 Russian forces had come to the assistance of the Austrians.
2 He died at Turin in 1895.
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Görgei surrendered at Világos to the Russians, and the Hungarian Revolution forthwith collapsed.

The Austrian Government proceeded to exact a barbarous penalty, condemning to death a considerable number of those implicated in the revolutionary movement—among them, thirteen generals and Count Batthyány, the late Premier, who had striven throughout to avert war—and also imprisoning a great many others. In other respects the results of the struggle were equally disastrous, and Hungarian political development received an immense setback. Indeed, the war brought neither satisfaction nor profit to any of the Hungarian nationalities. The Croats, who had rendered inestimable services to the Imperial Crown, were deprived of their Diet, while the Serbs of Southern Hungary, and the Saxons and Roumanians of Transylvania, were also denied the political privileges for which they had contended. The Magyars themselves lost every vestige of their constitutional liberties, and Hungary became a province of Austria like Bohemia. She ceased to be an independent national State, and her Constitution and administrative autonomy were completely suppressed. Croatia, Transylvania and Southern Hungary were made separate provinces, and the rest of Hungary was divided for administrative purposes into five districts. These measures entirely destroyed the political unity of the old Hungarian kingdom. The aim of Schwarzenberg, in fact, was to create a United Austrian State, and with this end in view he pursued a policy of the most rigid centralization. It was equally a policy of undisguised absolutism. "The former Constitution of Hungary," it was officially announced, "is annulled by the Revolution." The system of local government based on the County Assemblies was superseded, and administrative and judicial posts were filled by Austrian officials—Germans and Czechs. German was also substituted for Magyar as 'the State language'; and the assimilating processes of Germanization were now in full swing. On the other hand, it is fair to remark that the social changes of 1848—the most abiding effect of the Hungarian Revolution—were not disturbed, but were
developed under the new regime. It was only on its political side that the work of the Revolution was so completely undone.

Nevertheless, in spite of the apparent strength of the Bach system,¹ "the centralizing and Germanizing absolutism," as Dr. Friedjung has justly remarked, "stood on a basis of clay, and was incapable of resisting any attack from without." Its weakness was exposed in the Italian War of Liberation, and the defeats of Magenta and Solferino ² proved fatal to Austrian hegemony in Hungary no less than in Lombardy. The Bach system was doomed, and in 1860 the period of reaction in Hungarian history came to a sudden end. But while all parties in the Empire were agreed as to the necessity for political reconstruction, there was a divergence of opinion as to how reform could best be effected. The German Liberals wished to preserve the system of centralized administration inaugurated by Schwarzenberg, though they were willing to broaden its basis; in other words, they sought to establish a central Parliament for the whole Empire. The fundamental principle of the Bach system, administrative unity, was maintained as a guarantee of German ascendancy, but it was clothed in constitutional garb. It was thought that the concession of political liberty would induce the various nationalities to forgo their demand for a separate national existence in return for constitutional rights. But the Magyars and Slavs were not content to be merged into a German Empire, and their pertinacity extorted from the Crown the partial restoration of their lost privileges. The October Charter, or Diploma (1860), restored Hungary to the condition in which she was prior to the outbreak of the Revolution. It abolished the five administrative districts, and revived both the Diet and the system of self-government based on the County Assemblies, which obtained once more the right to appoint Hungarian officials. In this way administrative power was again vested in the hands of the Magyars, and taken away from the Germans, who were removed from their posts. The Charter thus brought to an end the absolutist regime,

¹ Supra, p. 138. ² Infra, p. 178.
and seemed to pave the way for the reconciliation of the Hungarian nationalities. But the Magyars did not rest satisfied with the revival of those institutions alone which had existed before 1848, and in their County Assemblies they demanded the enforcement of the March Laws. Their uncompromising attitude widened the breach between Austria and Hungary, and the Emperor found that he had sacrificed his authority without effecting any material improvement in the situation. To prevent Hungary breaking away from the Empire a new ministry was formed under Schmerling, who represented the 'centralist' policy of the German Liberals. The October Charter was now supplemented by the February Patent (1861), which framed a Constitution for the whole Empire, setting up an Imperial Diet elected from the provincial Parliaments, including that of Hungary. The February Patent proved no less unworkable than the October Charter. It reduced Hungary to the condition of a province, and amidst great excitement was unanimously rejected by the Hungarian Diet, which refused to send deputies to the Reichsrath at Vienna. The national leader of the opposition to Austria was Francis Deák, one of the noblest statesmen the nineteenth century produced. The watchword of his policy was "the recognition of the laws of 1848": "For these laws were enacted by the common consent of king and nation, and are therefore binding until repealed by common consent."¹ The famous Address, moved by Deák in the Diet of 1861, insisted upon the legal continuity of Hungarian political development, and asserted the historic principle that Austria and Hungary were joined only by a 'personal union,' based on allegiance to a common ruler. On these grounds the Address claimed "the complete restoration of our fundamental laws, our parliamentary government, and our responsible ministry."²

Excitement in Hungary was now intense; the country seemed once more on the verge of revolution. The debates in the Diet breathed the spirit of stormy defiance which

¹ Second Address of the Hungarian Diet: Francis Deák, 186.
² Ibid. 169.
1861–67 had animated the 'forties. But Deák was a different leader from Kossuth, at once wiser and more moderate in his demands. There is a marked contrast between the Revolution of 1848 and the movement which culminated in the bloodless victory of 1867. In the first place, Kossuth was a revolutionist, and Deák a constitutionalist. "You may blow up whole fortresses with gunpowder," was a saying of Deák's, "but you cannot build the smallest hut with it." Taking his stand on strictly legal grounds, he showed a sound and remarkable grasp of constitutional principles. Without the consent of the Hungarian people, so ran the argument, the king had no power to set aside the Constitution in favour of an Imperial Parliament endowed with functions usurped from the Hungarian Diet. "Where would be the guarantee of the constitutional independence of Hungary," he asked, "if at a future period a successor of your Majesty, appealing to this precedent, should act in the same manner with our other laws and rights, and should by a command of his own power and authority suppress or modify these without the previous consent of the nation?" In a constitutional State, laws can only be abrogated "by the power which brought them into existence." These words might have fallen from the lips of an English statesman. Deák fought the battle of freedom, as Englishmen did in the seventeenth century, by appealing to the bar of history and the verdict of legal precedents. In the second place, Deák throughout the struggle with Austria remained loyal to the monarchy. He took no part in the War of Independence of 1849. "We have no desire," declared the Hungarian Diet in an Address drawn up by Deák, "to endanger the existence of the Empire. We do not wish to dissolve the union." It admitted the need for joint action in the 'common affairs' of the monarchy. But "a forced unity will never make the Empire strong. . . . The position of an Empire as a great Power, whose unity can only be maintained by force of arms, is precarious." In the third place, Deák upheld the free development of the individual nationalities, and the equal rights of Magyars

1 Ibid. 168, 182.
2 Ibid. 189-191.
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and non-Magyars, so far as this was not incompatible with the political unity of the Hungarian State.

The October Charter of 1860 owed its origin to Solferino; the Compromise of 1867 was the sequel of Sadowa. The Emperor was alive to the necessity of conciliating his Hungarian subjects, who had held coldly aloof from the Austro-Prussian War, and in the event of another Austrian defeat might be tempted to make a second bid for independence. Deák was therefore approached with the question: "What does Hungary demand?" He made the famous reply: "Hungary asks no more after Königgrätz than she asked before it." But the favourable situation in which Hungary was now placed as a result of the war necessarily gave her the advantage in any bargain she might make with the sovereign. She also found a powerful ally in the Austrian foreign minister, Baron Beust, an enemy of Bismarck. Beust was determined at all costs to recover for Austria the ascendancy she had lost in German affairs, and urged Francis Joseph to yield to the Magyars in order to win their support for an anti-Prussian policy. He carried his point, and in 1867 the relations of Austria and Hungary entered upon a new stage. The celebrated Compromise (Ausgleich) established what is known as the Dual Monarchy. Strictly speaking, it embodied no new principles, for the independence of the Hungarian kingdom had always been a political axiom, though one frequently violated in practice. But the Ausgleich made the position of Hungary absolutely impregnable. Henceforth she was placed on a footing of complete equality with Austria, and obtained supreme control over the administration of her internal affairs. The Constitution was restored on the lines of the March Laws, and a separate Hungarian ministry was set up. On the other hand, Deák, as we have seen, recognized that Austria and Hungary shared mutual interests; united under one sovereign, it was expedient that they should co-operate for purposes of defence, and possess a common diplomatic service and a joint army. Hence the institution of a Common Ministry for the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, comprising ministers

1 Supra, p. 73.
for foreign affairs, war, and finance. The ministry of finance administered the Imperial revenues, which defrayed the cost of the diplomatic service and the army. To establish control over the Common Ministers, a system of Delegations, or committees, was devised. These committees were two in number, one for Austria, the other for Hungary, each composed of sixty members, elected annually by their respective legislatures. In addition, economic conventions were drawn up between the two countries, regulating their commercial relations and custom tariffs.

Viewed from the broadest racial standpoint, the Compromise was one-sided. "While it is true to describe the Ausgleich as the logical outcome of the Pragmatic Sanction," which in 1723 established the legal independence of Hungary, "subsequent events have none the less shown it to rest upon a far more cynical basis than that of historic evolution. The real motive force which underlies the Dual System is a league between the two strongest races, the Germans and the Magyars, who divided the Monarchy between them, and by the grant of autonomy to the two next strongest races, the Poles and the Croats, made them their accomplices in holding down the remaining eight." ¹ The Slavs advocated Federalism instead of Dualism—in other words, the autonomy of all nationalities which could lay claim to 'historic rights.' Bohemia, in particular, found herself denied the position to which she considered herself traditionally entitled. Thus the settlement of 1867 contained within it the seeds of future discord, while within Hungary herself the racial intolerance of the Magyars impaired the smooth working of the new institutions. Deák exhibited a statesmanlike grasp of the situation in the measures taken to reconcile the non-Magyars to the Ausgleich. To the Croats he offered the famous 'blank-sheet' to be filled in as they pleased. Croatia was given "complete autonomy in all matters of administration, justice, religion and education, and Croatian is everywhere the language of the legislature and executive." Foreign affairs alone remained the province of the Hungarian Diet, to which Croatia

¹ Watson, Racial Problems in Hungary, 137.
contributed forty members, while she had also her own Diet at Agram. At the same time an attempt was made to solve the vexed problem of the non-Magyar races in Hungary proper by the celebrated 'Law of Nationalities' (1868). For the sake of the political unity of the State, Magyar was constituted the official language of Hungary both in Parliament and in all branches of the administration; but in the County Assemblies, courts of law and schools, the use of other languages was permitted. As the law stood, its provisions appeared on the whole just and equitable. While preserving the administrative unity of the State by the use of a common language, it afforded opportunity to the different nationalities for the development of their racial culture. It achieved the fundamental purpose of the Magyars as expressed in the preamble to the Law of Nationalities: "All citizens of Hungary . . . form from a political point of view one nation—the indivisible unitary Hungarian nation—of which every citizen of the fatherland is a member, no matter to what nationality he belongs." It equally satisfied the 'lawful national claims' of the different races comprised within the Hungarian State. Actually the Law of Nationalities seems to have been from the outset a dead letter. The condition of the Slovaks prior to the war of 1914–18 was summed up by a competent authority in these words: "Their language has been banished from all secondary schools, colleges and seminaries, and is being steadily expelled even from the primary schools. It is excluded from the administration and from every public office; even on the railways and in the post-offices Slovak inscriptions are not tolerated. The Slovak press has for years been subject to brutal persecution. Right of assembly or association does not exist for the unhappy Slovaks, or indeed for the other non-Magyar races of Hungary. The small intellectual class is the victim of official pressure and persecution in every imaginable form; and the most drastic steps are taken to prevent the Slovak people from securing its due representation in Parliament. Nowhere has the

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1 Printed in Watson, op. cit. App. iii. The subject is exhaustively treated in ibid. 147 seq.
scandalous system of electoral corruption and violence weighed more heavy than among the Slovaks. . . . 'In Hungary the Magyar is the master.' The other races are mere helots.'

Though half a century had elapsed since the Ausgleich created the Dualism of the Austrian Empire in the form in which it existed upon the eve of the war of 1914-18, the passage of time had not solved the racial problems of either Hungary or Austria. It had not reconciled the Roumanians, or the Serbs, or the Slovaks to the ascendancy of the Magyars, and it had not weakened the resolution of the Czechs to establish an autonomous Bohemian State. Thus the ground was prepared for the eventual dissolution of the Austrian Empire when it rashly exposed itself to the arbitrament of war.