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THRONE-MAKERS

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PREFACE

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SINCE 1789 every European people has been busy making a throne, or seat of government and authority, from which its ruler might preside. These thrones have been of many patterns, to correspond to the diversity in tastes of races, parties, and times. Often, the business of destroying seems to have left no leisure for building. In England alone have men learned how to remodel a throne without disturbing its occupant; as we in America raise or move large houses without interrupting the daily life of the families who dwell in them.

To portray the personality of some of the conspicuous Throne-Makers of the century is the purpose of the following studies. I have wished to show just enough of the condition of the countries under review to enable the reader to understand what Bismarck, or Napoleon III, or Kossuth, or Garibaldi, achieved. I have been brief, and yet I trust that this method has afforded scope for exhibiting that influence of the individual on the multitude which—however our partial science may try to belittle it—was never more strikingly illustrated than by such careers as these in our own time.

The group of Portraits which follow require no special introduction. In the “Tintoret” and “Giordano Bruno” I have brought together as compactly as possible, for the convenience of English readers, what little is known about these two men. Berti’s work on Bruno, from which I have drawn largely, deserves a wider recognition than it has

received outside of Italy; whoever reads it will regret that that eminent scholar was prevented from completing his volume on Bruno's philosophy. The sketch of Bryant was written in 1894, that of Carlyle in 1895, on the occasion of their centenaries.

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W. R. T.

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THRONE-MAKERS

BISMARCK

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One by one the nations of the world come to their own, have free play for their faculties, express themselves, and eventually pass onward into silence. Our age has beheld the elevation of Prussia. Well may we ask, “What has been her message? What the path by which she climbed into preëminence?” That she would reach the summit, the work of Frederick the Great in the last century, and of Stein at the beginning of this, portended. It has been Bismarck’s mission to amplify and complete their task. Through him Prussia has come to her own. What, then, does she express?

The Prussians have excelled even the Romans in the art of turning men into machines. Set a Yankee down before a heap of coal and another of iron, and he will not rest until he has changed them into an implement to save the labor of many hands; the Prussian takes flesh and blood, and the will-power latent therein, and converts them into a machine. Such soldiers, such government clerks, such administrators, have never been manufactured elsewhere. Methodical, punctilious, thorough, are those officers and officials. The government which makes them relies not on sudden spurts, but on the cumulative force of habit. It substitutes rule for whim; it suppresses individual spontaneity, unless this can be transformed into energy for the great machine to use. That Prussian system takes a turnip-fed peasant, and in a few months makes of him a military weapon, the length of whose stride is prescribed in centimetres—a machine which

presents arms to a passing lieutenant with as much gravity and precision as if the fate of Prussia hinged on that special act. It takes the average tradesman’s son, puts him into the educational mill, and brings him out a professor,—equipped even to the spectacles,—a nonpareil of knowledge, who fastens on some subject, great or small, timely or remote, with the dispassionate persistence of a leech; and who, after many years, revolutionizes our theory of Greek roots, or of microbes, or of religion. Patient and noiseless as the earthworm, this scholar accomplishes a similarly incalculable work.

A spirit of obedience, which on its upper side passes into deference not always distinguishable from servility, and on its lower side is not always free from arrogance, lies at the bottom of the Prussian nature. Except in India, caste has nowhere had more power. The Prussian does not chafe at social inequality, but he cannot endure social uncertainty; he must know where he stands, if it be only on the bootblack’s level. The satisfaction he gets from requiring from those below him every scrape and nod of deference proper to his position more than compensates him for the deference he must pay to those above him. Classification is carried to the fraction of an inch. Everybody, be he privy councilor or chimney-sweep, is known by his office. On a hotel register you will see such entries as “Frau X, widow of a school-inspector,” or “Fräulein Y, niece of an apothecary.”

This excessive particularization, which amuses foreigners, enables the Prussian to lift his hat at the height appropriate to the position occupied by each person whom he salutes. It naturally develops acuteness in detecting

social grades, and a solicitude to show the proper degree of respect to superiors and to expect as much from inferiors,—a solicitude which a stranger might mistake for servility or arrogance, according as he looked up or down. Yet, amid a punctilio so stringent, fine-breeding—the true politeness which we associate with the word “gentleman”—rarely exists; for a gentleman cannot be made by the rank he holds, which is external, but only by qualities within himself.

Nevertheless, these Prussians—so unsympathetic and rude compared with their kinsmen in the south and along the Rhine, not to speak of races more amiable still—kept down to our own time a strength and tenacity of character that intercourse with Western Europeans scarcely affected. Frederick the Great tried to graft on them the polished arts and the grace of the French: he might as well have decorated the granite faces of his fortresses with dainty Parisian wall-paper. But when he touched the dominant chord of his race,—its aptitude for system,—he had a large response. The genuine Prussian nature embodied itself in the army, in the bureaucracy, in state education, through all of which its astonishing talent for rules found congenial exercise. One dissipation, indeed, the Prussians allowed themselves, earlier in this century,—they reveled in Hegelianism. But even here they were true to their instinct; for the philosophy of Hegel commended itself to them because it assumed to reduce the universe to a system, and to pigeon-hole God himself.

We see, then, the elements out of which Prussia grew to be a strong state, not yet large in population, but compact

and carefully organized. Let us look now at Germany, of which she formed a part.

We are struck at once by the fact that until 1871 Germany had no political unity. During the centuries when France, England, and Spain were being welded into political units by their respective dynasties, the great Teutonic race in Central Europe escaped the unifying process. The Holy Roman Empire—at best a reminiscence—was too weak to prevent the rise of many petty princedoms and duchies and of a few large states, whose rulers were hereditary, whereas the emperor was elective. Thus particularism—what we might call states' rights—flourished, to the detriment of national union. At the end of the last century, Germany had four hundred independent sovereigns: the most powerful being the King of Prussia; the weakest, some knight whose realm embraced but a few hundred acres, or some free city whose jurisdiction was bounded by its walls. When Napoleon, the great simplifier, reduced the number of little German states, he had no idea of encouraging the formation of a strong, coherent German Empire. To guard against this, which might menace the supremacy of France, he created the kingdoms of Bavaria and Westphalia, and set up the Confederation of the Rhine. After his downfall the German Confederation was organized,—a weak institution, consisting of thirty-nine members, whose common affairs were regulated by a Diet which sat at Frankfort. Representation in this Diet was so unequal that Austria and Prussia, with forty-two million inhabitants, had only one eighth of the votes, while the small states, with but twelve million inhabitants, had seven eighths. Four tiny

principalities, with two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants each, could exactly offset Prussia with eight millions. By a similar anomaly, Nevada and New York have an equal representation in the United States Senate.

From 1816 to 1848 Austria ruled the Diet. Yet Austria was herself an interloper in any combination of German states, for her German subjects, through whom she gained admission to the Diet, numbered only four millions; but her prestige was augmented by the backing of her thirty million non-German subjects besides. Prussia fretted at this Austrian supremacy, fretted, and could not counteract it. Beside the Confederation, which so loosely bound the German particularists together, there was a Customs Union, which, though simply commercial, fostered among the Germans the idea of common interests. The spirit of nationality, potent everywhere, awakened also in the Germans a vision of political unity, but for the most part those who beheld the vision were unpractical; the men of action, the rulers, opposed a scheme which enfolded among its possibilities the curtailing of their autocracy through the adoption of constitutional government. No state held more rigidly than Prussia the tenets of absolutism.

Great, therefore, was the general surprise, and among Liberals the joy, at the announcement, in February, 1847, that the King of Prussia had consented to the creation of a Prussian Parliament. He granted to it hardly more power than would suffice for it to assemble and adjourn; but even this, to the Liberals thirsty for a constitution, was as the first premonitory raindrops after a long drought. Among the members of this Parliament, or Diet, was a tall, slim, blond-

bearded, massive-headed Brandenburger, thirty-two years old, who sat as proxy for a country gentleman. A few of his colleagues recognized him as Otto von Bismarck; the majority had never heard of him.

Bismarck was born at Schönhausen, Prussia, April 1, 1815. His paternal ancestors had been soldiers back to the time when they helped to defend the Brandenburg March against the inroads of Slav barbarians. His mother was the daughter of an employee in Frederick the Great's War Office. Thus, on both sides his roots were struck in true Prussian soil. At the age of six he was placed in a Berlin boarding-school, of which he afterward ridiculed the "spurious Spartanism;" at twelve he entered a gymnasium, where for five years he pursued the usual course of studies,—an average scholar, but already noteworthy for his fine physique; at seventeen he went up to the University at Göttingen. In the life of a Prussian, there is but one period between the cradle and the grave during which he escapes the restraints of iron-grooved routine: that period comprises the years he spends at the university. There a strange license is accorded him. By day he swaggers through the streets, leering at the women and affronting the men; by night he carouses. And from time to time he varies the monotony of drinking-bouts by a duel. Such, at least, was the life of the university student in Bismarck's time. At Göttingen, and subsequently at Berlin, he had the reputation of being the greatest beer-drinker and the fiercest fighter; yet he must also have studied somewhat, for in due time he received his degree in law, and became official reporter in one of the Berlin courts. Then he served

as referendary at Aix-la-Chapelle, and passed a year in military service.

At twenty-four he set about recuperating the family fortunes, which had suffered through his father's incompetence. He took charge of the estates, devoted himself to agriculture, and was known for many miles round as the "mad squire." Tales of his revels at his country house, of his wild pranks and practical jokes, horrified the neighborhood. Yet here, again, his recklessness did not preclude good results. He made the lands pay, and he tamed into usefulness that restive animal, his body, which was to serve as mount for his mighty soul. Some biographers, referring to his bucolic apprenticeship, have compared him to Cromwell; in his youthful roistering he reminds us of Mirabeau.

To the Diet of 1847 the mad squire came, and during several sittings he held his peace. At last, however, when a Liberal deputy declared that Prussia had risen in arms in 1813, in the hope of getting a constitution quite as much as of expelling the French, the blond Brandenburger got leave to speak. In a voice which seemed incongruously small for his stature, but which carried far and produced the effect of being the utterance of an inflexible will, he deprecated the assertions just made, and declared that the desire to shake off foreign tyranny was a sufficient motive for the uprising in 1813. These words set the House in confusion. Liberal deputies hissed and shouted so that Bismarck could not go on; but, nothing daunted, he took a newspaper out of his pocket and read it, there in the tribune, till order was restored. Then, having added that whoever deemed that

motive inadequate held Prussia’s honor cheap, he strode haughtily to his seat, amid renewed jeers and clamor. Such was Bismarck’s parliamentary baptism of fire.

Before the session adjourned, the deputies had come to know him well. They discovered that the mad squire, the blunt “captain of the dikes,” was doubly redoubtable; he had strong opinions, and utter fearlessness in proclaiming them.

His political creed was short,—it comprised but two clauses: “I believe in the supremacy of Prussia, and in absolute monarchy.” More royalist than the King, he opposed every concession which might diminish by a hair’s breadth the royal prerogative. Constitutional government, popular representation, whatever Liberals had been struggling and dying for since 1789, he detested. Democracy, and especially German democracy, he scoffed at. For sixty years reformers had been railing at the absurdities of the Old Régime; they had denounced the injustice of the privileged classes; they had made odious the tyranny of paternalism. Bismarck entered the lists as the champion of “divine right,” and first proved his strength by exposing the defects of democracy.

Those who believe most firmly in democracy acknowledge, nevertheless, that it has many objections, both in theory and in practice. Universal suffrage—the abandoning of the state to the caprice of millions of voters, among whom the proportion of intelligence to ignorance is as one to ten—seems a process worthy of Bedlam. The ballot-box is hardly more accurate than the dice-box, as a test of the fitness of candidates. Popular government means

party government, and parties are dogmatic, overbearing, insincere, and corrupt. The men who legislate and administer, chosen by this method, avowedly serve their party, and not the state; and though, by chance, they should be both skilful and honest, they may be overturned by a sudden revulsion of the popular will. Such a system breeds a class of professional politicians,—men who make a business of getting into office, and whose only recommendation is their proficiency in the art of cajoling voters. A government should be managed as a great business corporation is managed: it has to deal with the weightiest problems of finance, and with delicate diplomatic questions, for which the trained efforts of judicious experts are needed; but instead of being intrusted to them, it is given over to politicians elected by multitudes who cannot even conduct their private business successfully, much less entertain large and patriotic views of the common welfare. To decide an election by a show of hands seems not a whit less absurd than to decide it by the aggregate weight or the color of the hair of the voters. We speak of the will of the majority as if it were infallibly right. The vast majority of men to-day would vote that the sun revolves round the earth: should this belief of a million ignoramuses countervail the knowledge of one astronomer? Shall knowledge be the test of fitness in all concerns except government, the most critical, the most far-reaching and responsible of all? Majority rule substitutes mere numbers, bulk, and quantity for quality. Putting a saddle on Intelligence, it bids Ignorance mount and ride whither it will,—even to the devil. It is the dupe of its own folly; for the politicians whom it chooses

turn out to be, not the representatives of the people, but the attorneys of some mill or mine or railway.

These and similar objections to democracy Bismarck urged with a sarcasm and directness hitherto unknown in German politics. When half the world was repeating the words “Liberalism,” “Constitution,” “Equality,”—as if the words themselves possessed magic to regenerate society,—he insisted that firm nations must be based upon facts, not phrases. He had the twofold advantage of invariably separating the actual from the apparent, and of being opposed by the most incompetent Liberals in Europe. However noble the ideals of the German reformers, the men themselves were singularly incapable of dealing with realities. Nor should this surprise us; for they had but recently broken away from the machine we have described, and as they had not yet a new machine to work in, they whirled to and fro in vehement confusion, the very rigidity of their previous restraint increasing their dogmatism and their discord.

The revolution of 1848 soon put them to the ordeal. The German Liberals aimed at national unity under a constitution. Like their brothers in Austria and Italy, they enjoyed a temporary triumph; but they could not construct. Their Parliament became a cave of the winds. Their schemes clashed. By the beginning of 1850 the old order was restored.

During this stormy crisis, Bismarck, as deputy in two successive Diets, had resolutely withstood the popular tide. He regarded the revolutionists as men in whom the qualities of knave, fool, and maniac alternately ruled; the revolution

itself, he said, had no other motive than “a lust of theft.” One of its leaders he dismissed as a “phrase-watering-pot.” The right of assemblages he ridiculed as furnishing democracy with bellows; a free press he stigmatized as a blood-poisoner. When the imperial crown was offered to the King of Prussia, Bismarck argued against accepting it; he would not see his King degraded to the level of a mere “paper president.”

Such opposition would have made the speaker conspicuous, if only for its audacity. His enemies had learned, however, that it required a strong character to support that audacity continuously. They tried to silence him with abuse; but their abuse, like tar, added fuel to his fire. They tried ridicule; but their ridicule had too much of the German dulness to wound him. They called him a bigoted Junker, or squire. “Remember,” he retorted, “that the names Whig and Tory were first used opprobriously, and be assured that we will yet bring the name Junker into respect and honor.” Many anecdotes are told illustrating his quick repulse of intended insult or his disregard of formality. He was not unwilling that his enemies should remember that he held his superior physical strength in reserve, if his arguments failed. Yet on a hunting-party, or at a dinner, or in familiar conversation, he was the best of companions. Germany has not produced another, unless it were Goethe, so variedly entertaining; and Goethe had no trace of one of Bismarck’s characteristics,—humor. He possessed also tact and a sort of Homeric geniality which, coupled with unbending tenacity, fitted him to succeed as a diplomatist.

In 1851 the King appointed him to represent Prussia at the German Diet, which sat at Frankfort. The outlook was gloomy. Prussia had quelled the revolution, but she had lost prestige. Unable to break asunder the German Confederation or to dominate it, she had signed, at Olmütz, in the previous autumn, a compact which acknowledged the supremacy of her old rival, Austria. While the humiliation still rankled, Bismarck entered upon his career. Hitherto not unfriendly to Austria, because he had looked upon her as the extinguisher of the revolution, which he hated most of all, he began, now that the danger was over, to give a free rein to his jealousy of his country's hereditary competitor. In the Diet, the Austrian representative presided, the rulings were always in Austria's favor, the majority of the smaller states allowed Austria to guide them. Bismarck at once showed his colleagues that humility was not his rôle. Finding that the Austrian president alone smoked at the sittings, he took out his own cigar and lighted it,—a trifle, but significant. He resisted every encroachment, and demanded the strictest observance of the letter of the law. Gradually he extended Prussia's influence among the confederates. He unmasked Austria's insincerity; he showed how honestly Prussia walked in the path of legality; until he slowly created the impression that wickedness was to be expected from one, and virtue from the other.

During seven years Bismarck held this outpost, winning no outward victory, but storing a vast amount of knowledge about all the states of the Confederation, their rulers and public men, which was subsequently invaluable to him. His dispatches to the Prussian Secretary of State, his reports to

the King, form a body of diplomatic correspondence unmatched in fulness, vigor, directness, and insight. With him, there was no ambiguity, no diplomatic circumlocution, no German prolixity. He sketched in indelible outlines the portraits, corporal or mental, of his colleagues. He criticised the policy of Prussia with a brusqueness which must have startled his superior. He reviewed at longer range the political tendencies of Europe. Officially, he kept strictly within the limits of his instructions; but his own personality represented more than he could yet officially declare,—Prussia's ambition to become the leader of Germany. In all his dispatches, and in all places where caution did not prescribe silence, he reiterated his Cato warning, "Austria must be ousted from Germany."

Do not suppose, however, that Bismarck's political greatness was then discerned. Probably, had you inquired of Germans forty years ago, "Who among you is the coming statesman?" not one would have replied, "Bismarck." At the opera, we cannot mistake the hero, because the moonlight obligingly follows him over the stage; in real life, the hero passes for the most part unrecognized, until his appointed hour; but the historian's duty is to show how the heroic qualities were indubitably latent in him long before the world perceived them.

In 1859 Bismarck was appointed ambassador at St. Petersburg, where he stayed three years, when he was transferred to Paris. This completed his apprenticeship, for in September, 1862, he was recalled to Berlin to be minister-president.

His promotion had long been mooted. The new King William—a practical, rigid monarch, with no Liberal visions, no desire to please everybody—had been for eighteen months in conflict with his Parliament. He had determined to reorganize the Prussian army; the Liberals insisted that, as Parliament was expected to vote appropriations, it should know how they were spent. William at last turned to Bismarck to help him subjugate the unruly deputies, and Bismarck, with a true vassal's loyalty, declared his readiness to serve as "lid to the saucepan." Very soon the Liberals began to compare him with Strafford, and the King with Charles I, but neither of them quailed. "Death on the scaffold, under certain circumstances, is as honorable," Bismarck said, "as death on the battlefield. I can imagine worse modes of death than the axe." Hitherto he had strenuously maintained the first article of his creed,—"I believe in the supremacy of Prussia;" henceforth he upheld with equal vigor the second,—"I believe in the autocracy of the King."

The narrow Constitution limited the King's authority, making it coequal with that of the Upper and Lower Chambers, but Bismarck quickly taught the deputies that he would not allow "a sheet of paper" to intervene between the royal will and its fulfilment. Year after year the Lower House refused to vote the army budget; year after year Bismarck and his master pushed forward the military organization, in spite of the deputies. Noah was not more unmoved by those who came and scoffed at his huge, expensive, apparently useless ark than were the Prussian minister and his King by their critics, who did not see the purpose of the ark the two

were building. Bismarck merely insisted that the army, on which depended the integrity of the nation, could not be subjected to the caprice of parties; it was an institution above parties, above politics, he said, which the King alone must control.

At the same time, the Minister-President actively pursued his other project,—the expulsion of Austria from Germany. When the King of Denmark died, in December, 1863, the succession to the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein was disputed. Bismarck seized the occasion for occupying the disputed territory, in partnership with Austria. England protested, France muttered, but neither cared to risk a war with the allied robbers. When it came to dividing the spoils, Bismarck, who had recently gauged Austria's strength, struck for the lion's share. Austria resisted. Bismarck then approved himself a master of diplomacy. Never was he more clever or more unscrupulous, shifting from argument to argument, delaying the open rupture till Prussia was quite ready, feigning willingness to submit the dispute to European arbitration while secretly stipulating conditions which foredoomed arbitration to failure, and invariably giving the impression that Austria refused to be conciliated. As the juggler lets you see the card he wishes you to see, and no other, so Bismarck always kept in full view, amid whatever shuffling of the pack, the apparent legality of Prussia. In the end he drove Austria to desperation.

In June, 1866, war came, with fury. One Prussian army crushed with a single blow the German states which had promised to support Austria; another marched into Bohemia, and, in seven days, confronted the imperial forces

at Sadowa. There was fought a great battle, in which the Prussian crown prince repeated the master stroke of Blücher at Waterloo, and then Austria, hopelessly beaten, sued for peace.

Bismarck now showed himself astute in victory. Having ousted Austria from Germany, he had no wish to wreak a vengeance that she could not forgive. Taking none of her provinces, he exacted only a small indemnity. With the German states he was equally discriminating: those which had been inveterately hostile he annexed to Prussia; the others he let off with a fine. He set up the North German Confederation, embracing all the states north of the river Main, in place of the old German Confederation; and thus Prussia, which had now two thirds of the population of Germany, was undisputed master. The four South German states, Bavaria, Würtemberg, Hesse, and Baden, signed a secret treaty, by which they gave the Prussian King the command of their troops in case of war.

Europe, which had witnessed with astonishment these swift proceedings, understood now that a great reality had arisen, and that Bismarck was its heart. In France, surprise gave way to indignation. Were not the French the arbiters of Europe? How had it happened that their Emperor had permitted a first-rate power to organize without their consent? Napoleon III, who knew that his sham empire could last only so long as he furnished his restless subjects food for their vanity, strove to convince them that he had not been outwitted; that he still could dictate terms. He demanded a share of Rhineland to offset Prussia’s aggrandizement; Bismarck refused to cede a single inch.

Napoleon bullied; Bismarck published the secret compact with the South Germans. Napoleon forthwith decided that it was not worth while to go to war.

We have all heard of the sportsman who boasted of always catching big strings of fish. But one day, after whipping every pool and getting never a trout, he was fain, on his way home, to stop at the fishmonger's and buy a salt herring for supper. Not otherwise did Napoleon, who had been very forward in announcing that he would *take* land wherever he chose, now stoop to offer to *buy* enough to appease his greedy countrymen. He would pay ninety million francs for Luxemburg, and the King of Holland, to whom it belonged, was willing to sell at that price; but Bismarck would consent only to withdraw the Prussian garrison from the grand duchy, after destroying the fortifications, and to its conversion into a neutral state. That was the sum of the satisfaction Napoleon and his presumptuous Frenchmen got from their first encounter. A few years before, Napoleon, who had had frequent interviews with Bismarck and liked his joviality, set him down as "a not serious man;" whence we infer that the Emperor was a dull reader of character.

Although, by this arrangement, the Luxemburg affair blew over, neither France nor Prussia believed that their quarrel was settled. Deep in the heart of each, instinct whispered that a life-and-death struggle was inevitable. Bismarck, amid vast labor on the internal organization of the kingdom, held Prussia ready for war. He would not be the aggressor, but he would decline no challenge.

In July, 1870, France threw down the glove. When the Spaniards elected Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern to their vacant throne, France demanded that King William should compel Leopold to resign. William replied that, as he had not influenced his kinsman's acceptance, he should not interfere. The prince, who was not a Prussian, withdrew of his own accord. But the French Secretary of State, the Duc de Gramont, had blustered too loudly to let the matter end without achieving his purpose of humbling the Prussian King. He therefore telegraphed Benedetti, the French Ambassador, to force King William to promise that at no future time should Leopold be a candidate for the Spanish crown. Benedetti delivered his message to William in the public garden at Ems; and William, naturally refusing to bind himself, announced that further negotiations on the subject would be referred to the Foreign Minister.

The following morning Bismarck published a dispatch containing a brief report of the interview; adding, however, that the King "declined to receive the French Ambassador again, and had him told by the adjutant in attendance that his Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the Ambassador." This deceitful addition produced exactly the effect which Bismarck intended: every German, whether Prussian or not, was incensed to learn that the representative German King had been hectored by the French emissary, and every Frenchman was enraged that the Prussian King had insulted the envoy of the "grand nation." Bismarck, who had feared that another favorable moment for war was passing, now exulted, and Moltke, who had for years been carrying the future campaign in his

head, and whose face grew sombre when peace seemed probable, now smiled a grim, contented smile. In Paris, the ministers, the deputies, the newspapers, and the populace clamored for war. Apparently, Napoleon alone felt a slight hesitation; but he could hesitate no longer when the popular demand became overwhelming. On July 19 France made a formal declaration of war, and the Parisians laid bets that their victorious troops would celebrate the Fête Napoléon—August 15—in Berlin. Had not their War Minister, Lebœuf, assured them that everything was ready, down to the last button on the last gaiter of the last soldier?

We cannot describe here the terrible campaign which followed. In numbers, in equipment, in discipline, in generalship, in everything but bravery, the French were quickly outmatched. When Napoleon groped madly for some friendly hand to stay his fall, he found that Bismarck had cut off succor from him. The South Germans, whom the French had hoped to win over, fought loyally under the command of Prussia; Austria, who might have been persuaded to strike back at her late conqueror, dared not move for fear of Russia, whose friendship Bismarck had secured; and Italy, instead of aiding France, lost no time in completing her own unification by entering Rome when the French garrison was withdrawn. Forsaken and outwitted, the French Empire sank without even an expiring flash of that tinsel glory which had so long bedizened its corruption. And when the French people, lashed to desperation, continued the war which the Empire had brought upon them, they but suffered a long agony of losses before accepting the inevitable defeat. They paid the penalty of their former arrogance in every coin