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THE POLITICAL RELATIONS  
BETWEEN  
FRANCE AND GERMANY FROM  
1873-1875.

With an introductory treatment of  
Problems of German Occupation.

A thesis  
submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School  
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## Introduction.

### The Period of German Occupation.

By the war of 1870 between France and Germany, the old balance of power in Europe was destroyed; that new ranging of nations side by side, or facing one another, which has prevailed until 1914, came into existence only with the Dual Alliance of Germany and Austria in 1879; and with the Franco-Russian entente whose existence came to be recognized in the early nineties. There intervened, therefore, a period of transition, while the balance was still uncertain, and while Europe watched warily for the next move that may swing the scale. This is the decade with which this study concerns itself, treating of French and German relations. In this brief period, again, successive phases can be traced: The years of German occupation of the French departments, when Germany dominated in most decided fashion; and when France remained the suppliant, though the Peace of Frankfort was in operation. Next, after the evacuation of Verdun in the fall

Character  
of  
Period.

of 1873, came the period when France was working back again to independence, and recovering bit by bit her place as a European power---if never again the European power. Germany, meanwhile, was changing her policy not at all to suit the altered situation in France. In 1875, came the crisis; when German dominance and French independence were alike tested; with the result that France from 1876 on was allowed to go her own way, and that Germany began to seek security for her new position otherwise than in bullying France. The recovery of the latter is signalized in the Congress of Berlin, in which, impotent as France knew herself to be to strike out any individual path of action, she found herself besought to follow the various leaders in that body; her approval played for, her influence desirable. When Germany and Austria in 1879 assumed the defensive against Russia, it became plain that France was to be left to herself; and the story of her commercial and colonial expansion from the eighties onward tells us how steadily, if not brilliantly,

she has made use of her regained freedom.

This paper proposes to treat in some detail the series of incidents and interviews which mark the resumption on the part of France of her independence of German suggestion-- so far as any country is ever "independent" of its neighbors. One of those generalizations of which Bismarck---vast, looming figures in the background of any event of this time--- is found, expresses the philosophy of the thing: "The political relations between independent powers are the outcome of an unbroken series of events arising either from conflict, or from the objection of one or the other of the parties to renewing the conflict." (1) A dreary doctrine, this; and one which idealists have fought--- are fighting-- against. In all its grimness, it explains those years with which we have to deal.

The two and a half years immediately succeeding the War of 1870 illustrate the principle peculiarly. There is here little effort on the part of Germany to dissimulate her threat of "renewing the conflict;" and little

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(1) Bismarck, the Man and the Statesman, II, p. 149.

effort possible to France of dissimulating her dread. Though the supposedly definitive Peace of Frankfort was signed May tenth, 1871, the German ambassador to Paris wrote thereafter: "The situation seemed actually more like a truce," (2) and these words were echoed by many others of the actors in these perilous days, both French and German. Because of the extraordinary character of the period, it will be treated in a somewhat introductory fashion, and in less detail than the ensuing years.

Peace  
Negotia-  
tions.

The peace negotiations were first crystallized in the Preliminary Negotiations of Versailles, concluded the twenty-sixth of February, 1871. (3) On the twenty-fourth of March began a conference at Brussels for the determination of minor matters. The special representatives of each nation--Messieurs Baude and Goulard for the French, and von Arnim and von Balan for the German--were assisted by a mixed military commission. This conference, which dragged on to the fourth of May, struck the keynote of the attitude of both countries for the next years.

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(2) Arnim to Bismarck, Staatsarchiv, 28, #5396. See the remark of Gontaut-Biron, Meine Botschafterkeit am Berliner Hof, p.155. "We remained in reality their opponents, and indeed their conquered opponents, and all our negotiations---awakened the particular mistrust of the German government." (German translation used.)

(3) Hertslet, The Map of Europe by Treaty, III, #438.



Germany made proposals not indicated in the Preliminary Treaty of Versailles: the payment of the entire indemnity in coin, the seizure of the railways in the departments of German occupation with insufficient compensation. The French in self-defense made counter-proposals, and were reproached for attempting to violate the provisions of the Versailles agreement, and introduce features disadvantageous to Germany. Bismarck himself appeared before the Reichstag, on the occasion of the third reading of a bill to empower the Chancellor to use further appropriations for military expenses---significant in itself---to declare that the Brussels conference was accomplishing nothing, and to suggest that the French government delayed in order to make more ambitious stipulations at a later time. (4) He put graphically before the assembly the supposed danger that French prisoners of war, released by Germany, would rejoin the French army, and create or foster a radical anti-German spirit there. (5) He stated the fact, with a speaking absence of comment, that the

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(4) Kohl, Die Politische Reden des Fürsten Bismarcks, V, pp. 43-49.

(5) This problem according to the German plan would be solved by the prohibition on such soldiers entering the army before the complete execution of the peace. As this would have hindered the reconstitution of the army, the one aim of all others which Thiers at that moment cherished, (see below Chap. IV, note 7) the French made a counter-proposition which involved the neutrality of a strip between the Seine and the Loire. The troops were so imperatively needed for inner order that Germany acceded. The outbreak of troubles in Paris having made the presence of troops in the neutralized district necessary, Germany considered herself absolved from her side of the bargain, and retained the prisoners of war.

French had so far failed to meet the financial stipulations of the treaty, although they had promised to pay all arrears by the twenty-fifth of the month, (April). The speech then closed with an enunciation of the principle of non-interference of Germany in French internal affairs, and of Germany's right of action contrary to the general principle in case her own interests were threatened. She must be strong enough to meet any eventuality arising out of French disorder---a fine phrase calculated to touch the exaggerated patriotism of victorious Germany, to induce the Diet to vote the credits, and to strike terror to the heart of France.

During April and May the governments were carrying on negotiations in three places at once: Berlin, Brussels, and Compiègne, where Manteuffel, the general-in-chief of the army of occupation, was located, and received French negotiators. The intention was to facilitate matters by this multiplicity of points of conference; but as might have been foreseen, and probably was foreseen by Bismarck,

it only resulted in complications. The question of Belfort, and the French sphere of action around the town were the debated points. (6) The definition of the new boundary, too, roused antagonistic feeling in Germany, since the popular idea was that Bismarck had not claimed enough, and that Belfort, in particular, should not have been given up. On the other hand, feeling in the former French provinces made the work of delineating the boundaries almost impossible. So soon as the surveyors would plant their stakes, signifying the hateful fact of German possession, the inhabitants would follow after and pull them up again.

At last, however, Bismarck appeared resolved to hasten matters. A letter from von Fabrice, one of the German negotiators, to Thiers, accused France in the most peremptory tone of delaying the conclusion of the definitive peace. (7) Thiers replied with his usual suavity that France intended no hindrance to the negotiations, and that any such interpretation of his instructions by his representatives was a mistake. He advocated, also, the

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(6) See Map, Appendix B.

(7) Occupation et Liberation du Territoire, #1 and 2, Bismarck's change of attitude is possibly explained by his statement in 1887, about this very matter: "I was at that time much worried about the intervention of neutrals, and had been wondering for months that we did not receive a note from neutral nations." Pol. Red. XII, p. 187. We know that Bismarck would not risk European interference, in spite of his assurances from Russia.

simplest and surest way of arriving at an understanding. This, in his opinion, was a meeting between Bismarck, just returning to his post, and Jules Favre and Monsieur Pouyer-Quertier. (8) This accomplished, according to Thiers' suggestion, the matters in dispute were quickly settled; as indeed was ordained the instant that the German chancellor desired settlement. The treaty of Frankfort was finally signed May tenth and ratified soon after. (9). It might have been expected to provide the final settlement of problems of Franco-German relations, considering the time and care devoted to its formulation. But, to quote again from Bismarck, "All treaties of peace in this world are provisional, and hold good only for a time." The "provisional" character of this treaty was emphasized by the number of conventions necessary, in the course of the succeeding months, for the further arrangement of affairs. And even then, the perusal of the treaties, of the conventions of the twenty-first of May, and twelfth October, 1871, of June twenty-ninth, 1872, and of March fifteenth, 1873, (10) gives

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(8) Foreign minister, and minister of Finance, respectively.

(9) Hertslet, Map II, #446. See also Appendix B, at end of this paper. The Journal Official throws much light on the state of French feeling, in its reports of the discussion in the Assembly before the ratification. Vol. I for 1871, p. 959, 988-993, 1013, 1051. Bismarck's report to the Reichstag, Pol. Red. V, p. 70.

(10) See reference below.

only the vaguest and most inadequate idea of the voluminous interchange of notes which marks the anxious effort of France to catch her breath; the insistence of Germany; her arbitrary irritability, and supersensitive fear that conditions are not as hard for France as they might be.

European opinion of the peace was variously expressed. De Gabriac, chargé d'affaires in Berlin, was told by a "prominent diplomat" of Russia: "You will long be a chargé d'affaires. For the actual peace is only a dream, until France has recovered her strength in the next war." (11) This view, according to de Gabriac and his confidant, was widely held in political and financial circles. That it was justified in the spirit, if not in the letter, later events proved.

Resumption of Diplomatic Relations.

The resumption of diplomatic relations which actually, more than the signature of the formal treaty, gave witness that the war was done, took place early in the summer of 1871. Von Fabrice, the provisional plenipotentiary to the French government, was replaced on the

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(11) A familiar phrase in 1915. The quotation from de Gabriac, Souvenirs Diplomatiques, p.117.

twenty-seventh of June by Count von Walderssee, chargé d'affaires. (12) The Marquis de Gabriac went from a post in St. Petersburg to Berlin, after receiving full instructions at Paris; he took up his new duties on the fourth of July. The representatives were of the rank of chargé d'affaires, rather than of ambassador, as being less in the public eye, and better able to avoid embarrassment. It was thought impossible to send ambassadors, so soon after the close of the war, and during the period of occupation.

The instructions given by the French administration were couched in terms which become familiar by countless repetitions, long after chargé d'affaires had been succeeded by ambassador. "Dites bien à Berlin que nous désirons la paix, et que M. Thiers, en particulier, est décidé à tout faire pour en assurer l'exécution en ce qui concerne la France." (13) Already, the twenty-eighth of June, a diplomatic difficulty had arisen, and confronted the Marquis de Gabriac on his first arrival

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(12) The choice of Walderssee by Bismarck was notable, as tending to give the mission a military rather than a diplomatic character. De Gabriac, on his side, hesitated with very real scruples before his acceptance, since the position could hardly be other than one full of bitterness, even to the most tactful of men. He himself declares (Souvenirs, p. 110) that he felt he was going "to assist at the triumph and in the erection of an Empire built upon the ruins of our influence in Europe." Before leaving St. Petersburg he asked Gortchakoff's advice, and was urged by that elderly lover of phrases to go, since "one has rarely the occasion to render a veritable service to one's country." (Ibid, p. 111.) He received a

in the German capitol. He was commissioned to ask explanations for the didactic tone of the note addressed by Germany to France at the occasion of the reentry of the French troops into Paris. (14) De Gabriac secured satisfactory explanations, but he remarked ruefully: "It was clear that Germany was determined to demand without mercy all that the treaty of peace gave her a right to require of the vanquished." (15) It was the lesson which he had to learn--which any French representative would have had to learn; that though diplomatic relations had been resumed, they were far from standing on a footing of equality. The lesson was brought home to him further in his first interview with Bismarck, which did not take place until August twelfth. In the talk of the Chancellor at this time, were mentioned all the sources of discontent and bad feeling of the next few years. Bismarck was perfectly outspoken--as usual--about his theory that France intended a war of revenge, and that this would better be sooner than later, from the point of view of German advantage. Again, that the

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hint that his sojourn in Berlin would not be allowed to become too humiliating---a hint that it is hardly safe to accept unquestioningly. See the discussion of Franco-Russian relations, Chapter I, below.

(13) Ibid. p.121-2.

(14) Waldersee had represented that the French government were exceeding the effective force allowed for the period of occupation.

(15) de Gabriac, op. cit. p.146.

government of France was unstable, and that Germany could never be sure of any new government carrying out the terms of peace as concluded by Thiers. De Gabriac at this time began to carry out those instructions of his: he told Bismarck that Germany was not so logical as France, which had signed peace and was at peace, whereas the whole attitude of Germany remained warlike. Later, in a despatch, he analyzed the situation from a slightly different point of view from that which he attempted to transmit to Bismarck. "Germany has nothing to expect from a new war. That which she has achieved, and which will not really be ended, as you (Thiers) say very justly, until after the evacuation of our territory, has given her the three things which she lacked: national unity, military supremacy, and the silver of our milliards. She desires then, with reason, the conservation of peace, and her expressions of distrust toward us are an indication of the passion with which she desires it."

We shall see that this reasonable and not unamiable view of German intentions changed gradually after the



assumption of the post by the full ambassador, the Vicomte de Gontaut-Biron. He succeeded de Gabriac on the fourth of January, 1872, and with the formal establishment of Count Harry von Arnim as German ambassador at Paris, the two governments were placed on a normal footing, to outward appearances. Yet through the two years up to the evacuation, Gontaut's despatches are constantly weighing the significance of insignificant things, are full of reports of the fluctuations of public opinion, are written in a spirit of uneasiness and worry which contrasts powerfully with the arrogant tone of the report sent to Berlin by the German ambassador. (16)

It was Thiers, far-seeing and prudent, who made to de Gabriac that remark quoted by the latter: The war will not be over until French territory is evacuated. This he had heard from a Russian diplomat also; and the truth of the statement is proven in a thousand incidents productive of discord, arising out of the presence of German troops in the French departments. The problems of occupation may be grouped under five heads: I) The pardon

Problems  
of  
Occupation.

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(16) An interesting side light on the manner in which Bismarck dealt with diplomats is to be found in de Gabriac's Souvenirs, p.144-5. "----frankness, and even a certain broad sort of language were far from displeasing him." Again, p.152: "It was a master, rather than a minister, whom I had before me."

and release of French prisoners; II) the maintenance of the army; III) the tariff; IV) the payments; V) minor complications. The adjustment of these affairs goes on in the correspondence and interviews of Thiers, ceaselessly active, of Remusat, (17) of St.Vallier, (18) of Manteuffel, (19) and of the diplomatic representatives.

The way in which the first of these problems was involved with the effort to maintain harmony during the occupation, was pointed out in that speech of Bismarck's before the Reichstag, of April twenty-fourth, 1871. (20) So long as Frenchmen, German prisoners of war, remained in custody, ill-feeling of the French public and press,-- two powers of which we shall make frequent mention as this study proceeds--could not subside. On the other hand, it was to the interests of the German government, as we have seen, to keep the prisoners from reentry into the French army, thus hindering the building up of that body. De Gabriac, at his first opportunity after his arrival in Berlin, represented to the Chancellor that

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(17) Foreign minister.

(18) Commissioner Extraordinary of the general of the army of occupation.

(19) General.

(20) See above, page 5, note 4.

the former---the fostering of ill-feeling throughout France---was a more potent factor than the latter---the reenforcement of the shattered army---from the viewpoint of disadvantage to Germany. It was a good argument: "You do not wish our army reconstituted, and filled with a spirit of hostility toward you, since it would increase your difficulties in case of war. If you will do what we ask, and be a little lenient, it will aid in dispelling the danger of any war at all." Gontaut took up the same strain when he succeeded de Gabriac, and Manteuffel's efforts were all directed toward the extension of the amnesty. But Bismarck delayed and delayed; the German government adopted the plan of granting amnesty little by little, with long intervals between favours. This necessitated a considerable interchange of notes (21) in the matter, which, on the French side, are alternately hopeful and discouraged in tone. Bismarck seized upon the pretext afforded him by the radicalism of some of the French journals saying that he could grant no complete favours while such a spirit prevailed. The

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(21) See Occ. et Lib. #VI VII VIII IX X XI XV XLII LXII LXIII LXV LXVII LXIX LXXVI LXXVII LXXIX LXXII LXXIV XCVIII. See also de Broglie, La Mission de M. Gontaut-Biron a Berlin p.13. de Gabriac, pp.145,169; Pieces Justificatives, #G, p.319.

injustice of this was deeply felt by the government of a country where liberty of speech was almost a fetish; yet Thiers himself realized the possibilities of this journalistic source of agitation, and wrote to his ambassador of the "idiocies" of the French press. It was not until the spring of 1872 that the amnesty was finally put into satisfactory operation. The fears of Bismarck as to the evil effects of the return of the prisoners do not seem to have been realized, but he had excellently succeeded in giving the chargé d'affaires, the ambassador, the French government, the French people, and unquestionably the French prisoners, six months and more of worry and strain.

The problem of maintenance of the German army of occupation was mainly in the hands of St. Vallier. His letters about arrangements show him to us a busy little man, of great conscientiousness, a ruling patriotism, much admiration for Thiers, and, as his troubles increase, an increasing melancholy. The point of friction in most cases was the horror of the inhabitants of lodging the

soldiers, and the disinclination of the latter to be lodged anywhere else but "chez habitants" since new barracks were often uncomfortable, in spite of all the efforts of St. Vallier to see that the engineers and builders did their work well. (22) Manteuffel was in general kindly enough disposed, but he did not abate for one instant his rigorous sense of what was fitting for Germans, and if he saw just cause, indulged in complaint. Then would St. Vallier "move Heaven and earth" (23) to remedy matters. As a whole, however, owing to the excellent disposition of these two, toward each other, there was less friction from this source than might have been anticipated, when the size of the army, and the recency of open hostilities, is considered.

The tariff question was discussed in October, 1871, between Pouyer-Quertier and Bismarck; the French minister was able to report to his government: "We are in near accord." But it is not within the province of this paper to discuss the commercial aspects of the

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(22) See for example, Occ. et Lib. CCII, in which St. Vallier is unconsciously humorous in his anxieties. "As to the departmental architect of the Vosges-----I am going to find the means of stimulating his activity; it is to threaten him with inflicting upon him publicly the responsibility for delay, of which he takes his share too easily, by making known, by the voice of journals and advertisements, to the inhabitants of the three localities where the state of the works was not satisfactory, that it is solely due to the delays of the architect that they owe those few days of military lodging with which they are threatened."

(23) Ibid. #CXG-CXCI. For insight into a few days of tensity in

relations between the two countries. (24) The question of payments, also, is rather a financial than a political problem, and may be omitted with the mere mention of the fact that it required some negotiating, and the inevitable interchange of notes to clear up misunderstandings. (25)

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July, 1871, when the German government gave the French to understand that the payments for daily maintenance would be expected for the entire army up to the last evacuation, even after a part of it had left the French departments, see Ibid. #XIV-XVIII-XXI.

(24) The question of reciprocity in Alsace Lorraine was most productive of difference of opinion. See Ibid. #XXXII XXXVIII XXXIX XL XLI XLII XLIII. For the agreement of October, 1871, see Hertslet, State Papers, Series 3, vol. 62, pp.87-93. See above, page 7. For an analysis of the situation leading up to the convention of October, see de Gabriac, op. cit., pp. 160, ff.

(25) For the financial aspects see Mathieu-Bodet, Les Finances Françaises de 1870 à 1878; Journal Officiel, August 5 and 6, 1874, pp. 5657 ff, for a discussion of the situation, led by M. Leon Say; Banker's Magazine, Effect of the French War Indemnity on Germany, Gontaut, constantly fearful as he was of hostile intentions on Germany's part, feared trouble arising from delays or differences of opinion as to the mode of payment. That these hindrances were not more serious is due to the policy of Thiers, and the promptitude with which the bankers of Europe took up the French debt.

The recurrent rise of that sort of happenings which may be classified together as "minor complications," testified almost daily to the truth of Thiers' characterization of the army of occupation as an inflammatory body in a wound. "France suffered from the sensation of being treated without consideration; needlessly humiliated. The continuous concessions so wisely made by those who represented her, astonished her. Instead of the expected relaxation, a dull irritation was everywhere felt, which the most painful moments of the war had not produced. The efforts made to restrain these sentiments, added to the ever present danger of seeing them break out, and to the apprehensions that the German government had been able to develop in the French governmental circles." (26) Danger would have smouldered the more hotly, we can guess, had the general of the army of occupation been any other than a gentleman who could say of himself as did Manteuffel: "As for me, I was a student in my youth of the history of France; I have read much-----I know the French character. Then after

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(26) Hanotaux, Contemporary France, Eng. Trans., I, p.315.  
See Appendix A.

having made the acquaintance of Your Excellence (Thiers) and of several members of your ministry, I have come to the conclusion that that character is represented in the present government of France, and I have made myself a guaranty to my government of French loyalty." (27) Thiers in the first place was satisfied with the choice of Manteuffel as general, and wrote to him in a tone of the deepest sincerity that the accord between them should contribute to the general establishment of peace. (28) His hopes were to a great extent justified, for throughout the gradual readjustment Manteuffel's influence was no inconsiderable factor. He was accused by the German public, and even by German officials, speaking for Bismarck himself, of being "trop français," and there was a time when the Chancellor kept him in constant fear of losing his position. This was early in 1872. But Manteuffel's sincerity was indisputable, and after a visit to Berlin, and a talk full of mutual explanations and assurances, he was reconciled to the Chancellor, and the Chancellor to him. Thereby another danger for

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(27) Occ. et Lib. #XVII.

(28) Ibid. #III, IV, X.



France---that of his removal---was weathered.

He was, of course, the more able to exercise his kindness toward the French when no longer animated by the fear that every action of his would be misunderstood at headquarters. But even of him St. Vallier wrote: "-----the best of men have their faults, and the chief fault of M. Manteuffel is his excessive sensibility." (29) As this was aroused, St. Vallier was forced to explain, and on more than one occasion to appeal to Thiers for a soothing word. The communication of a request of the French government in regard to the army, to Count von Waldersee instead of the general, was such a cause as would require St. Vallier's best efforts and most tactful explanations.

Other troublesome incidents were the results of feeling among the inhabitants of the departments, and the soldiers. The acquittal of two French citizens, murderers of a Prussian soldier, by the local French authorities, was perhaps the most alarming of these incidents, in its consequences. It resulted in the estab-

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(29) Ibid. #L.

ishment of a state of siege in the department, which the French people considered an excessive punishment for the poor judgment of a petty French official. But the German papers declared that the French government had proven itself inefficient to control the passions of its people; and that this was the view which Bismarck desired to have circulated, is shown by his despatch to Arnim uttering the same belief.

The press again and again interfered with the smooth conduct of affairs. Now it was the utterly irresponsible excess of some French journal; now the ill-temper of a German paper which could not be said to be wholly independent of government influence. (30) The distinction is not without significance, since it implies that French resentment of Germany's policy and utterances was more naturally kept alive than the German annoyance with France.

Yet the cause for annoyance was far from being entirely restricted to the French side, as we learn from the series of despatches sent by Arnim, reporting

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(30) See below, Chapter IV, p.138.

the treatment which he, and his countrymen in general, received in Paris and throughout France. Social inconveniences, amounting sometimes to insults, were offered all Germans, in inverse proportion to their rank, and Arnim was impotent to alter conditions in the slightest degree. In reporting this state of affairs to the Chancellor, he made the pregnant comment that "The actual, unvarnished recognition of this situation is to our interest;" and he indicated more than once that the bitterness of the French people might be, in a sense, an advantage to Germany, since if allowed to go unchecked, it would attain such proportions that war would be inevitable; and this eventuality would better face Germany sooner than later. Bismarck's reply to these complaints, hints, and subtle suggestions was matter of fact, as always, yet little less alarming for France. "We have not desired war," he wrote pompously, "but we are ready for it, as soon as new aggression from France make it necessary.-----The utterances of this or that French statesman are immaterial to us, since all

pursue the same hostile end." (31)

Negotia-  
tions for  
Shorten-  
ing Term.

It is plain enough, from these countless evidences (32) of difficulties, that the main effort of the French government must be to hasten the avacuation and shorten the period of occupation. By the peace treaties, the payments were to be completed by May 2, 1874. But the astoundingly rapid recovery of France economically, beginning immediately after the cessation of the war, made possible Thiers' proposition to shorten the term. The obvious advantage to Germany in keeping her troops in France, from the point of view of dominating over that country, made the German government hesitate about concluding arrangements of the sort desired by the French. The consideration of advantage in the quick payment of the loan, however, finally prevailed, though not till after many weeks of delay and objections. The negotiations for shortening the term extended through June, 1873, up to the convention of June twenty-ninth; (33) and through the early spring of 1873, before the convention of March fifteenth. (34) In the later of these negotia-

(31) Bismarck to Arnim, Feb. 2, 1873. Staatsarchiv, 28, #5394.

(32) For information as to the multiplied incidents which indicate danger, see Occ. et Lib., passim; the occasion of the greater number of notes in this correspondence being just such happenings. See also the Arnim documents, Staatsarchiv, Band 28, #5387, 8, 5393, 3, 6, 9, 5400. Anhang enthaltend----- die verlesenen Dokumente, #48, 49. de Gabriac, op. cit., pp. 169, 174.

(33) German text, Staatsarchiv, Band 25, #5000.

(34) See Replique du Comte Harry d'Arnim, passim. Occ. et Lib. #CCXLIV to CCCXXI. Gontaut, op. cit. Chapter VIII. Convention, 25, #5000.

tions, Germany attempted to eat her cake and have it too, by permitting the payment previous to the time agreed upon, with corresponding evacuation, but with the retention of Belfort. This last, as Arnim represented to the Chancellor, would really be as excellent a guaranty as the presence of the entire army of occupation within the departments, since from this vantage point the German troops could sweep down into France at need, and since distinct reservation was made of the right of reentry in case of non-fulfilment by the French of the obligations of payment, or of violation of the provisions in regard to French armament of the territory evacuated. The substitution of Verdun for Belfort in the final convention, however it was accomplished, was the most favorable sign which France had received since the Emperor Napoleon the Third declared the unhappy war. (35)

One noteworthy feature of these negotiations, and particularly that of the spring of 1873, was the part played by Gontaut, and still more, that played by Arnim. The former undoubtedly hindered the conclusion of the

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35) See Map, Appendix B.

earlier of the conventions for evacuation (June 29, 1872) by his mistaken hesitation in seeing Bismarck personally, and by talking the matter over with other officials before interviewing the Chancellor. This was a mistake in judgment; Arnim's errors were those of intent. Although the "Antwort" in which Arnim embodied his defense attempts to represent him as wholly moved by patriotic impulses, it fails to be convincing. (36) Thiers, at least, and St. Vallier, imbibing Manteuffel's view as he did, were conscious of the duplicity of the ambassador, and in the measure that his position was complicated in Paris after these long-drawn-out discussions, the relation of the two governments was complicated as well. The French cabinet had no means of knowing how far Arnim, in his wavering and uncertain policy was guided by instructions from Berlin; and on the other hand, the German Chancellor could not easily distinguish between the actual policies of the French administration, and Arnim's misrepresentations, even with the aid afforded him through St. Vallier's relations to Manteuffel.

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(36) See Bibliography, Appendix A, Section B.

One other cause of delay was not only that conflict of German interests themselves of which we have spoken (37) but an actual conflict of policies within the German official circle. Gontaut, who was at the heart of Germany, in spite of his lack of usefulness, made a keen analysis of the disunion between the military and political parties, as he called them. The former, led by Field Marshal von Moltke, and perhaps favoured by the Emperor himself, wished to retard the evacuation; while the latter, whose opinions were formulated in the acts and words of the Chancellor, when unrestrained, recognized the danger of long occupation. This disharmony, the ambassador thought, was a fruitful cause of the nerve-racking delays and suspense. But Gontaut by no means excused Bismarck from all culpability, since he thought also that "all these delays, rumours, resistances, are tactics employed with the design of alarming and extracting the best possible (result) from the negotiations."

That the desired result was at length accomplished, and the agreement reached, is due to the tireless efforts

of the little French president, of whom after the signing of the convention of March, 1873, the Assembly voted: "That he had deserved well of the country." Throughout he had continued politic, loyal, eloquent; with Gontaut-Biron a bit reluctant; Manteuffel eager, earnest, sometimes impatient, and always pompous; St. Vallier harassed and tense; Arnim evasive, self-seeking; the Emperor hardly comprehending the actual state of affairs-- the whole thought of the aged man centering upon war and peace; behind all the rest, the penetration, the driving force, the inescapable will of Bismarck. In characterizing the necessary qualities of a minor official, St. Vallier inadvertently prescribed the disposition which any French negotiator found forced upon him: "That which he ought to be, is a man modest, tranquil, having tact, and not seeking to create difficulties nor to exaggerate them." (38)

The final agreement, reached after such prodigious effort, provided for the payment of the last milliard of the French indemnity during the summer of 1873, with

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(38) See Map, Appendix B.



evacuation of the last four departments in proportion, and the retention of Verdun until the final payment. (39) The tension was relieved so soon as the agreement was actually accomplished, and the last six months of the occupation were surprisingly quiet. The French government ordered that no demonstrations should accompany the liberation of the territory, and the German troops marched out in good order, and with some manifestations of humour, even, from the French peasants and townspeople. On the sixteenth of September, 1873, the last German soldier left Verdun. France was free.

If the sum of all these difficulties, misunderstandings, petty enmities, were the result only of the fact of occupation, normal conditions might have returned at once. It has surely been evident, even in so cursory a study as the foregoing, that they were but hints of a deep-rooted and enduring condition which had other causes than the hot temper of a German soldier, or the vanity of a German general. To discover what these conditions were, will be the purpose of the body of this paper.

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(39) St. Vallier to Thiers, Occ. et Lib. #CLXXXIV.

## Chapter One.

### Manoeuvres for Alliances. 1871-1875.

In view of the antagonism which engendered the war, the antagonism engendered by the war, and the antagonism which the war left in its train, it seemed necessary both for France and for Germany to make new and strong alliances which should serve as a counter-weight, and in some sort a protection, against the hostility of the other country. It is obvious that France was in no position, for at least the two years immediately succeeding 1871, to be a desirable ally. Germany's enmity towards her remained hardly cloaked under "peaceful relations", and while her own weakness was equally apparent she might seek in vain for partnership in any treaty on anything like fair terms. Germany then, had the advantage in this respect, and Bismarck did not let the opportunity slip. Since this was the time of his intense interest in the Kulturkampf, which was just attaining great proportions, it is natural that one of his first considerations should be Catholicism, in its probable

effect on alliances.

Catholi-  
cism and  
Alliance.

Whether he believed it himself or not, Bismarck gave utterance more than once to the fear of Ultramontane tendencies in France, before the MacMahon government with its "white policy" came into power to justify any such fears. His line of argument was as follows: France sought a pretext for a war of revenge with Germany; she hoped for conquest with the support of Catholic Austria, and aided by the decrees of the Vatican Council. Ultramontane tendencies in Germany were favorable to the French policy, but there was hope for Germany in the fact that Italy was unfavorable, any hope of France for "alliance with the latter being finally wrecked by the refusal of France to evacuate Rome." (1) Hence, the dominance of any Catholic party in France, monarchist or republican, would have meant renewal of war. In such case there was always the danger of the Austro-French alliance mentioned above, and the sympathy of Catholic Germany. Russia, by joining such an alliance, could keep Germany in a state of dependence. (2) This, Bismarck says, was

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(1) Bismarck, op. cit., II, p. 92.

(2) Ibid., p. 185.

one cause of his displeasure with Arnim; he feared Arnim's Ultramontane tendencies, in spite of the ambassador's assertions that he would do nothing that might be interpreted as conspiring with the Catholics.

(3) Gontaut-Biron, also, was to be feared; his intimacy with the Prussian royal family was great; though he might appear the most politic of men, there was no denying the fact that he was a Catholic, and by the end of 1873 this had become enough to make Bismarck distrustful, even if open hostility must be reserved for avowed Ultramontanes. The part played in the family of the emperor by Cérard, the French reader of the Empress, and a French secret agent, also distressed Bismarck. (4)

It is evident that the aspect of a possible Catholic alliance which disturbed the German chancellor was the fact that it would be Catholic; there his main preoccupation lay. On the other hand, the object of France was an alliance primarily. In other words, the French fear was of Germany, as a power; the German fear, of Catholicism as a power, which might, incidentally, be represented

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(3) Arnim to Bismarck. Staatsarchiv, 28, #5393.

(4) Bismarck, op. cit., II, p. 188.

in France. Bismarck fully recognized this difference in the situation of the two countries, and in his despatches to Arnim reiterates the point not only that there was danger if an "anti-German conspiracy fomented by the Ultramontanes of all countries," (5) but that this would actually afford opportunities to France for gaining her end. Consequently the Kulturkampf took on a character of international interest; Gontaut said of it: "What made this struggle against Catholicism especially threatening for European peace, was the effort of the Prince to draw the other powers into it, and unite them with himself." (6)

In consequence of such a train of thought, Ultramontanism and French hostility came to seem to a certain extent identical in the German mind. By the more unthinking, the Papal attack of August, 1873, was confused with the French attack of 1871, as a manifestation of the same policy. (7) France was put to it to deny, in response to the repeated inquiries of the German ambassador, that "the French identified themselves with the Ultramontanes

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(5) London Times, May 13, 1875.

(6) Gontaut-Biron, op. cit., p. 429. Cf. Bismarck's despatch to Arnim, 14 May, 1872; "the interest of every European country in future choice of Pope, whether the country officially recognizes the church, or has Catholic subjects. Concordat of the year makes interest essential. Can not governments come to understanding? Schulthess Geschichts Kalendar, Vol. 1874-5, p. 266.

(7) Cf. Annual Register, 1873, p. 196.

because they there anticipated allies" against Germany, (8) Thiers, with his gift for perceiving motives, wrote to Gontaut as early as March, 1872, that Bismarck feared this alliance, any alliance, and that France must not think of alliance until after evacuation; that she must religiously avoid even the appearance of intrigue with the German Ultramontanes, and that the appearance must accord with the reality. He was not blind to the element of danger inherent in Gontaut's temperament, and concluded with the injunction to the latter to keep out of Bismarck's quarrel with the Catholics.

England's  
Attitude.

The natural consequence to this thought of a possible Catholic alliance against Germany, is an inquiry into the attitude of the non-Catholic powers, England and Russia. Of the two, England is the less important, because her policy of aloofness from Continental interests was consistently maintained, under Derby and Disraeli. During the years 1871-5 such indications as England did give of interest in European affairs seemed to show that she was drifting away from sympathy with Germany, toward France.

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(8) Hohenlohe, op.cit., II, p.161.

In February, 1871, indeed, "at the instance of the Duc de Broglie, Lord Granville and then Mr. Gladstone brought a pressure to bear on Germany to obtain from her the reduction of a billion" in the amount of the indemnity. (9) The Duc de Broglie was a potent factor in determining this attitude on the part of England; the French diplomat Gavard wrote in December, 1873: "I am struck by the strides which the Duc de Broglie has made here in public opinion." (10) A demonstration a little threatening for France, in an indirect way, was the meeting of sympathy for Bismarck and the Kulturkampf, instigated by Lord John Russell, in January 1874. (11) But this, like most of Lord John Russell's projects at this time, was little more than a flash in the pan, and a few months later English society, if not England officially, gave a convincing evidence of interest in France, by the eagerness with which invitations to the ball of the Duc de Bissaccia were sought after. This is a small thing in the fate of nations, but serves as a weathercock; Gavard said of it: "In spite of yourself, you can't help believing in the

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(9) Gavard, A Diplomat in London (see Bibliography.) p. 4.

(10) Ibid, p. 160.

(11) See the Times, for January of this year.

existence of a country, when you are begging favours of its official representatives." (12)

Russia's  
Attitude.

Russia's attitude was a more tangible, as well as a more important, matter. There were two parties, or at least, if not quite so definitely, two factions in Russia during the war of 1870. "Imperial necessity" obviously, made official sympathy with Russia imperative; the relations between the Czar and his uncle, the Emperor William, were a matter of tradition, and not ephemeral in their promotion of good feeling. The neutrality of Russia, and her non-interference during the peace negotiations, in spite of Thiers' frantic journeys about the capitols of Europe, had stood Germany in good stead. In spite of these facts, there existed in France a general impression that popular feeling in Russia was not wholly in sympathy with the imperial policy, but leaned rather toward the protection of the vanquished country. This conviction, which betrays itself in various ways throughout the years up to 1875, (13) was born no doubt of France's great need of Russian benevolence, and the sanguine French tempera-

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(12) Gavard. op. cit., p.195.

(13) For example, Le Flo's attempt to secure Russian pressure on Germany, in the spring of 1872, during the negotiations for the evacuation Convention of June 29, 1872.



ment; but also of such popular manifestations in Russia as de Gabriac describes; the contribution of the people of Moscow and St. Petersburg to a fund for French wounded, or his reception in Russian society, for example. (14)

A rather more important testimony to Russia's absence of ill-feeling toward France, was in the immediate recognition of the Thiers government during the war. Had this been deferred, as Germany could have wished, peace would have become difficult, if not impossible, to negotiate. Other powers, considering the peculiar position of Russia toward the combatants, would have been well-nigh forced to follow Russia's example, or rather her abstinence from setting an example.

The famous telegram of the Emperor to the Czar at the close of the war, thanking him for making German victory possible, and the answer of the Czar, full of friendly and more than friendly assurances, had naturally an aspect unfavourable to France, not only from the point of view of past events, but of the future. These telegrams were published two days after the preliminaries of peace

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(14) de Gabriac says of the Czar: "One saw that the continuation of the war impressed him grievously, but that he neither would nor could intervene." This at first appears a contradiction, but on second thought seems not irreconcilable, with the words of Prince Reuss (German ambassador to St. Petersburg) "The Grand Duchess does not follow the fashion of complaining about the war; the Emperor, although he desires to see peace, pays no attention to these complaining women; "both realize" that we cannot break off this struggle like a piece at the theatre." Anhang zu den Gedanken und Erinnerungen, II, #262.

were signed at Versailles. (Feb. 28, 1871) The effect in St. Petersburg was not as good as the effect in Berlin, where rejoicing was naturally the rule. But in Russia, or that part of it which was reflected in the society of the capitol, there was a feeling that the Czar in this act might have lost to Russia the benefits of her neutrality by involving her too definitely with Prussia, and even the German party at court, felt "no unmixed satisfaction." Gortchakoff, the French representative having told him of his regret for the telegram, disavowed responsibility, and sent Thiers an extraordinarily friendly letter; this again, was no very substantial support, in view of the neutrality of Russia up to that time, during the days of crisis, but at least it was less disheartening to France than the publication of the telegrams unexplained. (15) Gortchakoff also reported to de Gabriac that the Czar had just come to the point of resolving to address representations to Versailles that peace must not be delayed on account of the question of payment in silver----(16) had just come to this point, when peace was

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(15) de Gabriac concludes his account of the matter, which covers pages 99-104 of the Souvenirs, with the remark: "We shall have for ourselves (nous aurons pour nous) the Russia of the future reign." Page 103, note.

(16) See above, page 5.

announced! This was a non-committal statement enough, and might have been interpreted as favourable to Germany, as easily as to France, but the tone of Gortchakoff's communication made it of interest to the latter country particularly. A peculiarity of these slight indications that Russia would not let France be too much harried, was that they all seemed to proceed from Gortchakoff personally. Gortchakoff's jealousy of Bismarck was not in 1871 so well known as it later became, but in view of later events it is easy for us to see that the hope of France for Russian sympathy lay in this very thing--- the personal element.

Another such personal touch calculated to send the chargé d'affaires to Berlin in 1871 with a leaning toward Russia was the fact that the Czar, at Gortchakoff's instigation, accorded an interview to de Gabriac before his departure; an unusual diplomatic proceeding. The Czar appeared kindly disposed, and promised conversationally to say a good word for de Gabriac and his cause, in Berlin; but, that this light assurance should not elate

the Frenchman unduly, concluded the interview with the wish for peace and order in French internal affairs. (17)

Bismarck with his diplomatic omniscience, could not have been blind to all these little straws in the wind. We get a glimpse at his estimate of the worth of the Russian Chancellor's inclinations, in a despatch to Arnim, of 1872. In this he assured Arnim that he need not be misled by the remarks of Remusat, nor the adulation of the French press, into considering Orloff, the Russian representative just arrived in Paris, as a friend to France to the exclusion of other interests. "Treat him with full confidence as a trustworthy friend of Germany," the Chancellor urged. (18)

The interview of the Austrian and German Emperors and ministers at Gastein and Salzburg in September, 1871, which seemed to prelude alliance between the two powers, in spite of Austria's natural antipathy toward a country which had inflicted upon her the defeats of 1866, could not fail to arouse, and to merit Russia's careful attention. Austria's attitude during the war had been neces-

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(17) de Gabriac, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-115.

(18) Staatsarchiv, 28, #5381.

sarily neutral, but she had given evidences of benevolence toward France, which led to German accusations of French sympathies, injurious to the new German Empire. Gortchakoff was forced to represent in his official utterances that this meeting was satisfactory to Russia, since it was a step toward the guaranteeing of peace in central Europe. But an aspect which could not please Russia was, that the meeting was also "one step more toward the exclusive domination of Germany." (19)

This was the significance of the meeting for France, as well as for Russia. If Austria and Germany, forgetful of old jealousies, and recognizing their common German interests, should come into a close alliance, it was a possible future prop cut out from under the feet of that unhappy country of the West. Such an outcome was not to be anticipated from the more or less personal character of the meeting of September, 1871, but this event argued a rapprochement which might pave the way for the alliance France had reason to dread. "He neglects no effort to persuade Europe that the danger of seeing peace troubled

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(19) de Gabrias, op. cit., p. 217.

can only come from France, and to show that it is necessary to be forearmed, against a power whose moral depression as well as her preponderance, are equal dangers for Europe." (20) As a matter of fact, the French foreign office was convinced that there was nothing definitely alarming to France in this series of interviews, but that it was certainly inspired by Prussian distrust of France, and might be an indication of the policy which Bismarck had marked out for himself. (21) More and more, then, France came to look upon Russia as her only hope.

It was a year later that the understanding known as the "Alliance of the Three Emperors" was consummated at Berlin, to give France more pressing cause for alarm. In the summer of 1872, a meeting of the Czar and the Emperor Francis Joseph with the Emperor William in Berlin, was first projected. The occasion was to be the celebration of the autumn manoeuvres of the German army. This meeting was intended to have no political importance in the eyes of the world, according to the German papers, but in August the German Emperor was writing to Bismarck:

The  
Three  
Emperors'  
Alliance.

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(20) Ibid., p. 209.

(21) Ibid., pp. 214-217, *passim*.

"An important political event lies before us in September---the meeting of the Emperor in Berlin; and public opinion looks upon it as favourably as do you and I. I hope your health will allow you to be in Berlin. I will not commit myself to anything binding." (22) This hardly sounds as innocuous as the first reports of the project would have had it seem. But that Bismarck had no very definite ulterior motives is the inference from his answer to the Emperor: "I fear the activities of Prince Gortchakoff, since I read in the papers that he brings with him Jomini and Hamburger, both his secretaries."

(23) This letter of Bismarck's was not intended for publication, and hence was not written to divert the attention of the news-reading public from any plane of his own. The Emperor was perfectly in sympathy with any plan which tended to confirm or maintain the friendly relations between Russia and Germany; hence it could not have been intended to ward off objection on the part of the Emperor William himself. The only explanation is that Bismarck perhaps wished by this meeting rather to

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(22) Anhang zu den Ged. u. Er. I, #242.

(23) Ibid. #243.

alarm France, and keep her in the abject state in which she was left in 1871, and from which by the fall of 1872 she was beginning to recover (24) than actually to accomplish any binding agreement. He said many years later (25) that his original intention in regard to alliances, after the formation of the empire, was such a triple alliance as might have resulted from the Berlin meeting, with the addition of monarchical Italy, for the purpose of breaking up the "vicious circle" of governmental development from "Social Republicanism to Caesarism." The possible motives of the three empires were not by any means identical, however, and Bismarck's recognition of the fact is perhaps the key to his hesitations. He wished, apparently, to bring about a useful understanding, and at the same time, commit himself to little. Such a wish breathes through the letter to the Emperor above, and also through Bismarck's utterances to Lord Odo Russell during the Berlin meeting itself, expressing disgust with Gortchakoff in his white tie, and with his secretaries brought along to "write something."

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(24) See above, Introduction, *passim*.

(25) Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, 251-252.



Bismarck saw that Germany's interest in such an alliance was the isolation of France; Russia's, a free hand in the East; Austria's, self-preservation.

France watched the meeting with the utmost attention, though her analytical ambassador recognized that in these differences in ultimate motives of the powers lay hope for her. The full significance of the meeting for her was that the bonds of friendship between the three imperial countries were made the more effective to keep the differences from breaking out. Gontaut during the stay of the two emperors in Berlin had audiences with both of them, and their ministers. His impressions at this time were rather more reassuring than might have been anticipated in Paris, for he had the friendliest reception from both sovereigns, and a repetition from the Czar of what he had said to de Gabriac of Russia's good will toward France. The fear of French Republicanism, which Gontaut had so often to combat, was also introduced into the conversation, it is true, but in a manner rather friendly than threatening. After the departure of the

visitors Gontaut wrote as follows: "Russia and Austria think that France is necessary to Europe. They are of the opinion that France has suffered sufficiently, and they intend to aid her in the happy efforts which she is making to revive again, as testified by the eulogies given by Alexander and Francis Joseph, and by the Chancellor of the Russian Empire, to the reorganization of our army. Russia and Austria wish then, a powerful France (?) and Germany a feeble one." (26)

The general feeling among diplomats was that the political importance of the meeting was slight, as it had turned out, and that its real significance was as a peace demonstration. Arnim wrote to Bismarck not long afterwards a despatch in which he speaks of the "fiasco" of the three Emperors' meeting, but Arnim, with his over-subtlety, and his chronic annoyance with Bismarck, is not so good a witness that we must accept his interpretation, and implication that Bismarck did not accomplish all that he intended from the meeting. Furthermore, as newspaper opinion of the day, in the midst of all the speculation

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(26) de Broglie, La Mission de M. de G.B., p.150.

and supposition, made clear, two things stand out; whatever else may have been projected or rejected: 1) That any guaranty of peace must necessarily be ephemeral; and 2) that this meeting marked the official recognition of the new Germany by her imperial rivals---which could but be an indirect blow to France. (27)

Other  
Visits.

This understanding, to give the result of the meeting no more dignified name, was apparently confirmed by the series of visits exchanged among the European monarchs in the course of the next year. (28) The visit of the German Emperor to St. Petersburg in April and May, 1873, was heralded by the Provincial Correspondence as a confirmation of the good understanding of the previous year. The visit of the Emperor to Vienna, in October, had the same effect. Indeed, as a German diplomat (29) confided to Gontaut-Biron, this meeting of monarchs and ministers had made a verbal agreement for union in case of a war from France. Gontaut, of course, following the line marked out for him, with which we are already familiar, remarked that this was a matter of indifference

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(27) See Daily News, London, for Sept. 7; Annual Register, 1872; Gontaut, op. cit., pp. 128-130, for reports of German press opinion.

(28) See Bismarck, op. cit., II, p. 252; see above, Chap. I, note 25.

(29) Count von Redern.

since neither under the existing government, nor under a monarchic form, would France exhibit any warlike intentions.

What looked to contemporary observers like a new element in the European situation appeared in September, 1873, when the king of Italy, Victor Emmanuel, made a visit to the Emperor William at Berlin. Before his coming the Emperor wrote to Bismarck: "If V(E. (sic.) should speak of a possible alliance against France, I would intrench myself behind my principle to conclude alliances only ad hoc." (30) The position of the king of Italy at this time was an extremely difficult one, in view of the struggle over the temporal power of the papacy, and this being the case, his natural ally was Bismarck. France, in the person of her president, had perceived this consequence early in 1872, when the Kulturkampf was getting under way, and Thiers, speaking of the conformity of interests of Germany and Italy, had counseled "seeing all and saying nothing." (31) At the time of the choice of Prince Hohenlohe as ambassador to the papal chair,

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(30) Anhang zu den Ged. u. Br., I, #253, 254.

(31) Occ. et Lib., XCI.

Bismarck had shown his realization of this French attitude by writing Arnim of the appointment as a new proof of the imperial wish for peace with Rome, and furthermore, as a weapon with which Arnim might disarm French distrust, and fear of united action from Germany and Italy. (32)

Gontaut called the visit of September, 1873, an "anti-French, anti-Catholic demonstration." (33) But he felt it less important than that of the preceding year, because of the lack of general participation. That something tangible was the result, however, was testified in October, when Gontaut wrote to the foreign minister in regard to the proposed monarchical restoration in France: "Count Launay (34) is polite, but obviously hostile; since the visit of his king in Berlin, he makes upon me a certain impression of confidence of success which I did not earlier perceive in him." (35) A few months later Bismarck himself gave utterance to a statement of the German position in relation to Italy, and in regard to France, in answer to a despatch from

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(32) There is an interesting indication of Bismarck's sincerity in wishing to avoid wrong interpretations of his relations with Italy, in the incident of his refusal to accept from the king a handsome present, which incident is related in the Autobiography, II, p. 151. "The great value of the present might--- cause it to be regarded as having some connection with the rapproachment with the German Emperor which the King of Italy at that time sought and obtained."

(33) Gontaut, op. cit. pp. 332-6.

(34) Italian ambassador in Berlin.

(35) Ibid., p. 346

Arnim, the officious. Bismarck said that Germany intended to bring to bear upon France no such pressure as the ambassador seemed to anticipate; but concluded, "We do not in the least desire to see a conflict break out between France and Italy, because in such a case we could not withhold from the latter our support." (36)

In 1875, the relations of the king of Italy with the sovereigns of Europe were further strengthened by the visit of the Austrian Emperor to Venice in April, and of the Kaiser in October. From the first of these visits, however, Decazes (37) himself did not take alarm, but declared from reading the newspapers---"between the lines"--- that he had derived a rather favourable impression; if not with any positive reference to France, at least this meeting had resulted in defining the position of these two Catholic countries in regard to the Kulturkampf. This position he thought would be one of entire separation from Bismarck's battle. Gavard reported that there was a feeling in London that Germany was disgruntled by the apparent accord of the two monarchs, irrespective of her

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(36) Staatsarchiv, 28, #5405,6.

(37) MacMahon's foreign minister. In a letter to the Marquis d'Harcourt; quoted Hanotaux, op.cit. III, p.212.

direction; and the fact that the Emperor William himself had planned a trip to Italy and given it up, seemed to lend color to the theory, which Decazes also shared. In October, 1875, however, the postponed trip took place, and though a speech from the throne is often colored, and must of necessity be colored by the wish to make a certain definite impression, it is worth while to note the following quotation from the speech of October 27, 1875, as much to illustrate the desires of the German government, and the direction of its policy, as the actual state of affairs. "-----the visit from which his Majesty the Emperor is just returning, and the hearty reception which he has received from His Majesty the King of Italy, and from the whole people, testifies to the conviction that the inner unity and mutual friendship to which Germany and Italy are mutually committed, offers a new and lasting guaranty for the peaceful forward progress of Europe." (38) Here then is another danger, another pitfall, which France must avoid if her repeated assurances of her intention to keep the peace are worth

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(38) Staatsarchiv, 29, #5539.

anything.

Her complete isolation seems to be outlined in the words of the Czar of the Russias, in the winter of 1874, at the time of a visit to St. Petersburg of the Emperor Francis Joseph. The Czar at this festive occasion gave the following toast: "I drink to the health of my friend the Emperor Francis Joseph whom we are so glad to see among us. In the friendship which binds us, as well as the Emperor William and Queen Victoria together, I see the surest guaranty for that peace in Europe which is so desired by all, and so necessary for all." (39)

England's comment on this as uttered by the Times, was to the effect that "England accepts the quadruple alliance thus indicated" so far as she is concerned in averting war; but that she will share no hostile intent against France. (40) The Czar himself, through Gortchakoff, later assured the french ambassador to Berlin that England had quite mistaken the import of the toast, and read into it implications which it did not in the least contain. Decazes before this wrote to Gontaut that

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(39) See the Times for Feb.17, 1874.

(40) Ibid.



perhaps the toast did not altogether please Bismarck, as seeming to indicate more independence than he liked in his allies, but that Bismarck well knew that "he holds Austria in the hollow of his hand through the fear which influences her, and Russia through the adherence and esteem of the Czar for the Emperor William." (41)

France  
and  
Russia.

In 1874, however, in spite of this net in which France appeared to be caught, the natural inclination of Russia toward France, aside from the imperial policy, again began to seem a loophole of escape. (42) It was too dangerous for Russia that a powerful state such as Germany should exist without check in Central Europe, for Russia to watch with equanimity the entire subduing of France. Bismarck recognized this in his comment: "That for the Russian policy there is a limit beyond which the importance of France in Europe must not be decreased, is explicable. That limit was reached, I believe, at the Peace of Frankfort---a fact which in 1870 and 1871 was not so clearly recognized in St. Petersburg as five years later." (43) So remote an observer as Gavard, in London,

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(41) Gontaut, op. cit. II, p.417.

(42) A distinction which we have pointed out above, page 36.

(43) Bismarck, op. cit. II, p.253.

upon the occasion of Schouvaloff's (44) visit to that city in the autumn of 1874, wrote that "He acts as if he were bent more than any other one thing on emancipating himself from any lurking kindness for Germany and the Germans." And again, Gavard quotes a remark of Schouvaloff in conversation: "Germany is not so strong as before the war, and her unity is at the mercy of Russia, since she must keep large forces in the West under the present state of things." (45) Schouvaloff, however, was a diplomat, with all the qualities popularly conceived as belonging to this profession, and would be no trustworthy witness to Russian feeling had we no other evidence than his words. In 1873-4, during the alarm caused by the ill-judged utterances of the French bishops (46) Leflô had found Gortchakoff willing as usual to make assurances, and as usual, to take no steps. Following this, Gontaut himself went to St. Petersburg in March, 1874. (47) He there saw Gortchakoff, had audience with the Czar, many conversations with Jomini, Gortchakoff's trusted secretary and confidant, and with many others in high places.

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(44) At that time in London on a "mission extraordinaire." After 1875, ambassador to England. Always personally in accord with Bismarck.

(45) Gavard op. cit., page 203.

(46) See below, Chapter III.

(47) See Gontaut, op. cit. Part II, pp. 403-15.

The grand Duchess Marie, for example, expressed her sympathy for all things French in such a manner as to make us suspect that one reason for the popular Russian goodwill toward the conquered country was its fashionableness. The general sense of these interviews was confirmatory of those which we have noted above, and which took place during the two first years after the war. But succeeding the meeting of the three Emperors by a year or more, during which this agreement was ostensibly the balance wheel of the continent, it is the more remarkable that Gortchakoff not only assured Gontaut of Russia's usual good wishes, but remarked that Bismarck constantly sought to prepare difficulties for France, which France must with patience avoid. The affair of the pastoral letters, for example; though this Gortchakoff refused to take seriously, and even went so far as to say: "Bismarck would not declare war upon you. The moral opinion of Europe is against it." So much was encouraging for France, but Gontaut was not allowed to come away from any such friendly exchange of opinion without the note

of deprecation for the instability of the French government, and for possible French clericalism, being sounded in his ears. As the French diplomat summed up the impressions of his visit: (A) Russia was temperamentally in sympathy with France and in antipathy to Germany; the relationship between the Czar and his uncle, the German Emperor, being the only effective bond to keep Germany and Russia in accord. (B) Russia would evidence this predilection of hers in spite of her apparent understanding with the German Empire, in case Germany should go too far in aggression. (This from Gortchakoff; was he empowered to say as much?) (C) But France must bolster up her shakiness of governmental structure, on the one hand, and on the other, avoid the pitfalls of Clericalism.

In the later part of this year (1874) a Times article, always an excellent register of opinion, asserted that a Franco-Russian alliance was surely being foreshadowed in the course of European diplomacy. What this meant to France, and the eagerness with which she must seize on any such indications, has already been pointed

out. Decazes, almost always clear-sighted and not self-deceiving, wrote in 1875 to a confidant: "I continue to rely upon England less than upon Russia."

What did this stirring beneath the surface of things mean for Germany? On the second of May, 1874, Bismarck wrote to Hohenlohe, that Germany's interest was to keep the peace between Russia and Austria, since in case of war between them she would have to choose, "und das sei schlimm." (48) But undoubtedly in the back of the Chancellor's mind existed that train of reasoning which ultimately fathered the Triple Alliance; as the choice of France must be Russia, so the choice of Germany must be Austria. Germany and France can never be ranged on the same side of the line.

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(48) Hohenlohe, op. cit., II, p.119.

## Chapter Two.

### Germany and the French Parties.

1871-1875.

In the fall of 1873, when our period begins, the problem of the relation of Germany to the French internal affairs, is the problem of adjustment to the MacMahon government. In order to understand this situation, it is necessary to review the events, and influences of Germany on the French parties, from the time of the war of 1870.

At the time of the outbreak of the Commune, there was serious consideration, both in Berlin and St. Petersburg, of a plan for German troops to march into Paris, and put down the uprising which was apparently having its own way, in spite of the efforts of the French troops. (1) Yet later argument has been adduced to prove that Bismarck in reality aided the Commune, in a policy on his part of hindrance to French recovery. The evidence for this is found in the forbearance of the German government with the administration of the Commune,

Bismarck  
and  
the  
Commune.

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(1) de Gabriac, op. cit., p.106-8.

the facility with which the insurgents obtained weapons; and such indications, quick to rouse suspicion in the alert French mind. M. Jules Favre has discussed the question, and absolved Germany from suspicion, basing his argument on his knowledge of the general policy of Germany, and her treatment of France during the remainder of that time in which he had such intimate share. It seems to the writer that in view of the sentiments of the Emperor in regard to radicalism, and the general feeling of the French people, Bismarck could hardly have engineered a policy of this nature, even with his masterly ability at manipulation. He himself was no friend of radicalism, though abstract principle had little weight, it is true, when it came to a question of more or less advantage. But the advantage itself is questionable; whether it would be worth while for Germany to keep France not only weak but wholly impotent, when the former had nothing to gain from further campaigns, and had everything to lose if the indemnity were not paid. (2) As St. Vallier said in another connection, Bismarck knew well

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(2) Hanotaux has discussed this question, but states no definite conclusion. op. cit. I, p. 278 ff.

how to take occasion to alarm France, whether he really had any ulterior intentions or not. The conclusion then, seems to be, that he was not unwilling France should think he might foster civil war, on the one hand, and on the other, that he did not desire disorder and disorganization to go too far, and get beyond his possible control.

Thiers'  
Adminis-  
tration.

The Rivet Law of August thirty-first, 1871, giving to Thiers the title of president of the French republic, was greeted by Manteuffel as that very security for the payment of the debt, which was desirable for Germany.

(3) Manteuffel, to be sure, whom we have seen accused of being "trop français", is no very good representative of German governmental opinion, but as a matter of fact, here all Germans---save the remarkable Arnim---seem to have been agreed: that Thiers' government was a guaranty for Germany. Thiers own feeling of his function in French development has been mentioned; that he wished to liberate France from the Prussian army, and bring about the beginning of that economic development which he felt

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(3) Occ. et Lib. #XXXI.



must come about to redeem her---agricultural, as well as commercial and financial. It is of interest to note here the words of the radical leader in this connection: "The monarchists designs will miscarry. M.Thiers will end either by forcing them to capitulate or by dissolving them.. Meanwhile he keeps them busy with one hand, while with the other he pays the Prussians, shortens the period of occupation---that is to say, hastens the hour of dissolution, for which at the bottom of his heart he longs -----." (4)

Bismarck  
and  
the  
Radicals

This same radical leader, as we know, was held up before France in the person of her diplomats, as Germany's great horror, and consequently, inversely, France' greatest danger. Bismarck argued that the first act of a radical government would be a declaration of war against Germany; a war of revenge; that this must be so, because of the great need which such a government would have, to unite factions in common interest, and avoid civil struggle. (5) The utterances of the radicals, and even of Gambetta himself, were claimed by the Germans as cause

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(4) Letter from Gambetta to his father; Dec. 29, 1872. Cheusi, Gambetta, Life and Letters, trans. V.M. Montagu, p. 314. Cf. Thiers: I limit my political task to what I have called the reorganization of France, and I have to begin with, brought in peace, the establishment of order, the equilibrium of finances, and the reconstitution of the army destroyed by the failure of the Empire. Occ. et Lib. #LXVIII.

(5) See for example Gontaut, op. cit., p. 233 on: "Wenn je Thiers sterben sollte--und Gott verhüte das, denn wir wünschen ihm aufrichtig ein langer Leben---so würde Gambetta ans Ruder kommen, und vierzehn Tage nachher hätten wir ein Revanche-krieg." Gontaut quotes this from Bismarck.

for alarm. In 1872 Gambetta took a vacation journey through the provinces, and was received in a manner which astonished all who had believed him out of the reckoning. Arnim, reporting the state of opinion to Bismarck, wrote that the peasants were more radical than Paris. (6) Gambetta declared for the reconstitution of the army, as the only institution which "can restore to the Fatherland its separated children." Such sentiments as these, the German government could hardly be blamed for resenting, provided there were any weight attached to them, or that they deserved to be considered weighty. This it was the policy of the French government repeatedly to deny. Gambetta's opinion of Thiers has been quoted; it is equally useful to quote Thiers on Gambetta: "Eh bien, be persuaded that M. Gambetta, unless he changes and becomes a conservative of my species (!) has no chance to succeed me. My health is good, my relations with the Assembly better than they ever were, and unless an accident happens to my life or my presidency, M. Gambetta will not succeed me!" (7)

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(6) Which may be explicable by the fact that they had not seen the horrors of the Commune enacted before their eyes. The reference is to a letter from Arnim to Bismarck, May 6, 1872; Staatsarchiv, 28, #5383.

(7) Occ. et Lib. #CCXX.

Needless to say, the German government required more substantial proof than mere assertion of conviction, to give up its fears; that is to say, that Bismarck required that Germany have proof! This proof, so far as the French government could offer it, was in the form of reference to the natural conservatism of the French mind, with the example of the Commune before it, and secondly, to the overwhelming need and desire of the French people for peace. This last point, which was most emphasized in every answer to German suspicion, justifies by implication Bismarck's claim that a radical government would mean immediate war with Germany. In spite of this, for good measure, Gontaut was fond of telling him, or officials of his staff through whom the statement would penetrate to him, that there was no danger of war of revenge from any party whatsoever, so universal was the French desire for peace.

The complex question of Germany and the Bonapartists can never be solved save by inference from the material available at the present time. There are two

Bismarck  
and  
the  
Bonapart-  
ists.

aspects of this question to be considered: French sentiment, and German expressions. After the Commune, and the establishment of the Third Republic, the suspicion arose in French political circles that Germany was undermining the Thiers government by maintaining extraordinary relations with the Bonapartist faction. Although France in her humiliation was never in a position to demand a direct explanation, her fears were not unknown to the German administration, and Manteuffel, characteristically, (8) expressed to the French commissioner his regret at such an interpretation of German interest in France. The remarks of the Bonapartists themselves gave color to the idea, however, for this party, although declaring that they made no efforts to overturn the republic so long as Thiers was in power,-----which really meant so long as the Germans remained in the Eastern departments--- nevertheless boasted of German sympathy. They made a part of their program reconciliation, in the fullest sense, with the victorious country.

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(8) Occ. et Lib. #LXV.

That the "German sympathy" so far as any tangible proofs of it went, was more or less a figment of the Bonapartist imagination may be inferred from the series of despatches which Arnim wrote, and the answers which he received, on this topic. Arnim himself took the attitude that the Bonapartist was the element which, once in power, would be most favourable to Germany. He asserted, furthermore, that public sentiment in France was such that any appeal to the country in case of Thiers' fall would result in an Imperialist victory; and that hence, it behoves Bismarck to get into touch with this party. It would even be well to use German influence to hasten the next revolution, so that it might take place while German troops were still in France, and Germany, consequently, master of any turbulent situation in the occupied country. He spoke cryptically of the "advances" made by the Bonapartists, and advised meeting them half-way. (9) The Chancellor's responses were noncommittal. He recognized that the Bonapartists in power would have advantages for Germany, but repeat-

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(9) Staatsarchiv, 28, #5385.

edly made the point in his orders to Arnim that the task of Germany in 1872 was the support of the contemporary regime in France----for the sake of the indemnity, of course----which regime would but be weakened by any definite favour shown an opposition party. Later in the same year, he reprimanded Arnim severely for his rumoured scorn of the Thiers government, and prophecy of the rise of Prince Napoleon to power. Arnim denied the allegation of antagonizing the existing government, but continued to insist that Germany would do well to "take steps" toward securing her dominion over the party which would almost certainly take in hand that government in the course of a year or two. (10)

From these and other evidences, as for instance Bismarck's statement to Hohenlohe, in 1874, that the Bonapartists would be the best of rulers, even after the formation of the conservative MacMahon government, and that "they are much less objectionable to us than the Orleanists" (11); or Gontaut's repeated suggestions that the general sentiment of the German court was

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(10) Ibid, #5386. #6,10,11, in the Anhangenthaltend die---  
Dokumente.

(11) Hohenlohe, op. cit. II,p.119.

favourable to the Imperial party, it is plain that the followers of Prince Napoleon had at least the sanction of a cordial German feeling. As to the actual steps taken under Bismarck's guidance to manifest this favour, the just inference from the testimony before us seems to be: (A) That the Bonapartists did make advances to the German government, probably encouraged by the attitude of Arnim; (B) that the French public, as well as the administration, was convinced of the existence of this undercurrent; but (C) could not gauge German response; (D) that Bismarck as his usual policy was, took little trouble to disabuse the French mind of this fear, recognizing its possible usefulness to him; but (E) that he made no actual step in response to any such overtures, even though the general tendency of German feeling was toward sympathy with the Bonapartists.

But Radicals and Bonapartists, important as their relations with Germany might be for the existing government, were only parties of the future---and a wholly problematic future. The position of Germany in the

Thiers,  
Monarch-  
ists and  
Bismarck.

struggle between Thiers and the Monarchists, which ultimately resulted in the fall of the "bourgeois president", was the immediate problem of 1872 and early 1873. The German belief in Thiers' good faith, was indubitable, this has been sufficiently illustrated above so that it is unnecessary to quote at length from any of the numberless remarks of Bismarck or of Manteuffel on this point. Even the German Emperor was rumoured to have declared himself not only satisfied with the policy of the government, but under the spell of the president's personality. Thiers' own words, in the famous speech of December, 1872, illumine the situation. He said: "Le pays est sage; les parties ne le sont pas." The folly of those parties which opposed him so bitterly, before the period of occupation was over, the country liberated, his work done, is almost unbelievable. If ever there were a time when party spirit needed to be subordinated to one great national purpose, these critical years were such a time for France. And yet, the intense conviction of the various monarchist parties that they were right, and Thiers



wholly wrong, must be taken into account. The root of their opposition to him was not wholly, nor even predominantly mere lust of power, but a fundamental difference of principle. Bismarck was not alone in pointing out the "vicious circle" of republicanism to radicalism, nor Arnim alone in his notion that Thiers' policy was rapidly approaching dependence on Gambetta. The monarchists within France itself were animated by the same horror of red republicanism, and doubtless felt that though they could not appeal to the country in bringing about a dissolution, until Thiers' peculiar work was ended, that still in opposing him, they might keep a check upon his excessively republican tendencies ! (12) The struggle came to a crisis in the fall of 1872, when Thiers threw down the gauntlet in his memorable speech of the thirteenth of November, declaring for the immediate adoption of republican institutions. The effect of this speech was to put the monarchists in a most embarrassing situation. They could but oppose its implications with all their might and main, and yet Thiers in the previous session

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(12) See Hanotaux, *op. cit.*, I, p. 485, for a suggestive analysis of the session of April to August, 1872, which clearly indicates the limits of Thiers' achievements. His three great services of this session were: the passage of the army bill; the convention for evacuation; and the liberation loan. But in a tariff discussion, which had not the weight of necessity of protection against Germany, as had these other measures, he was obliged to yield.

had held up before their eyes his threat of resignation, to good result. In the words of de Broglie, that consistent critic of the president: "What moment could be less convenient for that outbreak, which must come sooner or later? Did Thiers think he could pass thus easily from all the promises that bound him?" (13) The ministerial crisis that followed was not unnoticed in Germany.

Gontaut, not without yielding to the temptation to hold up before the eyes of his readers the base intentions of which he had come to suspect Germany, had recorded carefully his impressions of the German attitude of the time. The first point which stood out to the European mind, was Thiers' assertion that "The Tricolor will make its way through the world." This did not have the conservative sound which Gontaut wished to persuade Europe, and especially Gortchakoff, that the speech was meant to convey. Gortchakoff was conferring with the German Emperor at the time, and hence Gontaut had the opportunity of conversation with him. We have already seen that France was desirous of Russia's friendship,

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(13) de Broglie, op. cit., pp.58-9.

and that Russia, though not unfavourable, looked askance upon anything but a wise conservatism in governmental policy. It was necessary, then, for Gontaut to represent the speech to the Russian Chancellor as giving no cause for alarm on the score of radicalism. The reaction of German public opinion was not quite that of Gortchakoff. To the German mind, the main thing remained the continuance of Thiers in office. In conversations with Count Redern, with von Balan, (14) and others, Gontaut learned of the importance attached to this by the Germans. The sentiment was echoed in the press, although the Spenersche Zeitung, which was generally regarded as being in close touch with official sources of information, came out with an article which Gontaut characterized as being friendly neither to France in general nor to Thiers. The complaint made in this journal was based on the really unanswerable question: "What can be expected of a country in which one crisis follows another, in never-ending succession?" The difference in the situation of the two countries in respect to one

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(14) Secretary of the German Foreign Office.

another is very clearly evidenced in (A) the effect of this crisis in Germany, no German official hesitating to express his opinion; and (B) the attitude of complete reserve adopted by Gontaut and counseled by Thiers (15) during the ministerial crisis in Germany in the next month ! (16)

To the progress of the Thiers government, against the odds mentioned above, was opposed one peculiarly complicating element. This was the hostile bearing of Arnim toward Thiers, whether recognized or not by the latter. Mention has been made of the counsels of Arnim in the matter of advances to the Bonapartists; and of his assertions that the Thiers government was on no sure foundation, and was no certain guaranty for Germany. The constancy with which he emphasizes this in his despatches shows a state of mind which could not help betraying itself in his conduct, in spite of the general German policy of supporting Thiers. As early as June, 1872, before the final signature of the evacuation convention of that month, Bismarck wrote to Arnim inquiring

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(15) Occ. et Lib. #CCXLIV-V.

(16) Gontaut's discussion of the crisis and its effect in Germany is to be found in op. cit. Part I, Chapter VII, passim. He may be convicted, I think, of the wish to hold up before the administration, in his despatches, the extreme danger of thorough-going republicanism. He himself, of course, was not in sympathy with the republicans. He makes more of the point that Europe feared them, than is justified by the facts. The German insistence upon Thiers remaining in power far outweighed any theoretical fear of republican institutions.

about a rumour that Arnim had remarked on Germany's disfavour toward the continuance of the Thiers government. It was only a few months later that he wrote again to precisely the same effect (17) and after the French internal crisis of 1872, the matter attained the dimensions of a controversy between them. Manteuffel contributed to Bismarck's knowledge of Arnim's duplicity by reporting a conversation of Arnim with St. Vallier. The former had suggested that the Thiers government was considered "untenable" because it was sure to revert to Gambetta's control. This, said Manteuffel, struck him as an utterly unexpected blow, since he had been acting on the understanding that the German government demanded the strengthening of the existing order. While Manteuffel was reporting thus to his home government, it is apparent that he could hardly have been concealing from St. Vallier his surprise, and distrust of Arnim. And indeed, his hatred of the ambassador betrayed itself in a hundred ways, in a hundred sayings; even in warnings to St. Vallier. Through St. Vallier, of course, this penetrated

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(17) Schulthess, Geschichtskalender, Bd. 15, p.253. June 18, 1872, the earlier despatch; ibid.p. 254, Nov. 8, 1872, the later.

to Versailles. Thus there came into existence, especially after the negotiations of the spring of 1873, a widespread distrust of Arnim, which was all the more alarming to France because of its very vagueness. Even Manteuffel misunderstood Arnim's game, for he continually represented him as the "creature of Bismarck". Whatever that somewhat inexplicable diplomat was, he was certainly not that ! The French knew only that he was unfriendly, and that he had come to them with a preconceived notion of French bitterness toward Germany. (18) They had little means of judging how far he was inspired by his government, in this attitude of his, and it was certainly not until after the negotiations of the spring (1873) that the breach between him and the Chancellor became known. And on the other hand, France was misrepresented to Bismarck by his reports, if not in his insistence upon the hostility of the French people, surely in his failure to report accurately during the difficult months before March 15, 1873. Hence, his presence in Paris was a fruitful source of discord. He finally reached

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(18) See St. Vallier to Thiers, Occ. et Lib., #LXI.

the length of exceeding his diplomatic function by recommending to the Emperor direct his policy in regard to Thiers, representing, as he always did, that it was desirable for the inevitable change of government to take place while German troops were still in France. His bitterness towards the president of the republic was exemplified in a despatch of 1872, in which after a speech of Thiers which proved to be of no decisive importance, he wrote that the orator: "has given a new proof of his inability to rule himself and others." (19) The source of Arnim's bitterness, and the causes of his adoption of this policy, in exact opposition to that expected of him by the government to which he was responsible, are far from clear. Bismarck ascribed his actions to a lack of political foresight, and a fatuous belief that his policy was plausible. Again, Bismarck pointed to Arnim's vanity, making him desirous of seeing his own ideas in operation, and Bismarck's refuted. In the "Reply" which he made to Bismarck's accusations, in 1876, he said little of the matter, implying, indeed,

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(19) Staatsarchiv, 28, #5380.

that his relations with Thiers were of the best, whereas, from his letters of the time, we know the contrary to be true. Bismarck later asserted that Arnim's influence was largely responsible for the fall of Thiers on May 24, 1873, so soon after the convention for liberation, and before it had been carried out. (20) It was supposed that Arnim, on the evening when the news came, was at dinner with "prominent Orleanists", and received the announcement with every sign of rejoicing. This is further confirmed by the remark of Decazes, made at the time, that it was a peculiarity of Bismarck's complaint of Arnim's complicity, that the Legitimists always considered Arnim their opponent. This was of course compatible with his having congratulated the Orleanists, but quite incompatible with his having advocated to Bismarck an agreement with the Bonapartists, if he was sincere in the latter action. But at least, whether he was directly implicated or not, his influence had weakened the faith of the opposition in Monsieur Thiers as wholly satisfactory to Bismarck. Hence; this influence was a contributing factor in Thiers' downfall. (21)

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(20) Bismarck, op. cit., II, pp.182-3. A letter from von Bülow quotes Nothomb (the Belgian ambassador to Berlin, usually well informed, and very keen) as quoting Thiers: "That man (i.e.Arnim) has done me evil; much more, even, than Bismarck knows or thinks."

(21) For purposes of convenience is here appended a table of French administrative changes, from 1871-81.



Bismarck  
and  
the  
MacMahon  
Gov't.

This brings us to the time when the adjustment to the new face of Europe is well on its way; when the extraordinary nature of the relations between France and Germany has somewhat abated, and the normal balance is at least to be hoped for the future. Immediately after

(21, Continued:)	<u>President.</u>	<u>Premier.</u>	<u>Foreign Minister.</u>
Thiers. Feb. 8, '71	de Broglie Cissey. May 22 1874	Jules Favre de Remusat, July 22 Decazes Nov. 25	
	Gavard (acting) Buffet. Feb. '75 Dufaure. " '76 Jules Simon	" "	
	Dec. 13, 1876.		
	de Broglie. May 18, 1877.	"	
	Rochebouet. Nov. 24 1877.	de Banneville.	
Jules Grévy. Feb. 3, 1879.	Dufaure. Dec. '77 Waddington. Freycinet. Jan. 1880.	Waddington. " "	
	Jules Ferry. Sept. '80	Saint-Hilaire.	
	Gambetta. Nov. '81.	Gambetta.	

the French governmental revolution of May 24, 1873, Bismarck gave the most convincing of proofs that the Thiers government had been satisfactory to Germany, in spite of the Bonapartists and the Radicals! He refused to recognize the ambassador as the representative of the government headed by Marshal MacMahon, without new credentials. Gontaut wrote: "Bismarck speaks flattering words about MacMahon, without giving me any indication by which to judge whether or not he is disturbed by the changes in our government; for that he is much too clever!" (22) Austria, Russia, and Italy---a significant grouping---followed Germany's lead, while England and Turkey, on the contrary, demanded no new credentials. Bismarck emphasized his point by giving Arnim leave of absence, and saying that he saw no reasonable cause for the ambassador delaying in Paris, since he had no new credentials to hand in. The argument of the Chancellor, with his beautiful apparent candor, was to the effect that the Assembly was the real ruler, and that he had no authorization to accept changes of this nature. This, of

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(22) The entire subject is covered in Gontaut's memoirs, Part II, Chapters X, XI. The quotation is from page 300.

course, is pure sophistry, but it served its purpose. It taught the new government the lesson which the old had learned with pain and struggle of months; the lesson of German domination. Bismarck was taking the first opportunity, the very earliest and hence most effective of occasions, to demonstrate to the Monarchists that they need not think to free themselves from the obsession which had ruled their predecessors. De Broglie's protests, suave as Thiers himself could have uttered them, met not the slightest response. The new minister of Foreign Affairs (23) might well have been convinced then and there of the futility of any attempt to make France independent of this alarming external influence. He yielded his point, as he must; the credentials were despatched; the incident closed. Germany, of course, communicated the decision to Russia. De Broglie, brooding over his lesson, wrote Gontaut that he fancied a certain "Macchiavellian" (24) element in the favour which Bismarck had shown the preceding government, thinking it would keep France in peace long enough for the

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(23) See table, page 77.

(24) De Broglie to Gontaut, May 27, 1873. Gontaut, op.cit., p. 315-6.

payment of the debt, and would then leave her exposed to "new blows of fate" which Bismarck could turn to account for his own ends. As a matter of fact, though France was left stronger economically, and apparently on the real road to recovery in this respect, she was certainly in no less turbulent a condition of party politics at the end of the Thiers regime than at the beginning---at the time of the Bordeaux compact.

Aside from official action, public opinion in Germany was pretty much divided. There was at the same time a natural feeling of satisfaction with the conservative tone of the new administration, and a distrust of French rehabilitation, as threatening to Germany. The Emperor personally, so far as we may judge from his bearing toward the ambassador, was pleased with MacMahon as the leader; but his Majesty's influence was narrow. There was some comment on the fact that a Marshal who had fought against Germany in active service, should now be at the helm. The most dyed-in-the-wool of monarchists, therefore, realized the necessity

of pursuing the policy of Thiers in foreign affairs, and adopting a wise reserve, in speech and action. This intention was made clear to Germany directly, through the diplomatic despatches sent out by the new foreign minister. "The MacMahon government will not repudiate the policy, nor, more definitely, the debts of the Thiers government," was the burthen of these communications.

In the summer of 1873 the pilgrimage of the Ultramontanes attracted the attention of the European press. In the sensitive frame of mind to which Germany was reduced by her incipient war with a portion of the Catholic Church, these demonstrations were naturally looked upon with aversion. It was unfortunate for France that her citizens ----citizens of a country where freedom of speech and action far exceeded that of any other European country---- should have been moved by this particular emotional impulse, at this particular time, and in such vast numbers. There came into existence in Germany, not only in popular but in official circles, a growing feeling that the new government stood for clericalism, if not

as yet openly, at least negatively. The Emperor remarked philosophically, and pointedly, that politics is easily taken in tow by religion. (25)

Salzburg  
Negotia-  
tions.

It was not calculated to appease this distrust that during these same months the "Salzburg negotiations" with the Duc de Chambord were going on. The visit of the Count of Paris to "Henri V" at Frohsdorf, on August fifth, which made apparent a complete reconciliation between Legitimists and Orleanists, meant to Germany the imminent probability of an avowedly clericalist control of France. The aid of the Church would be an essential factor in the success of Monarchical ideas and plans. The months of August and September, 1873, during which conferences of many sorts were undertaken and carried out by the Right, to further its ends, were months of some embarrassment, nevertheless, for that body. The passivity of the Duc de Chambord, and his failure to come forth with any definite statement of his position, and the conflicting reports brought by his visitors, though in the main encouraging, hindered the taking of those de-

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[25) Report of Gontaut of a conversation with the Emperor: op.cit., II, p.322,ff.

cisive steps for which the party were so eager. These same circumstances, giving rise to a prevailing feeling of uncertainty, injured the French nation as a whole, in Germany. The conflict between traditional sympathy with monarchist ideas, and the desire for maintenance of a Republic as of more advantage to Germany, was lost in the predominance of the latter feeling, when fear of Clericalism was thrown into the scale. The irritation of Germany, which did not fail to become manifest to France, complicated the situation of her internal affairs the more. The fear, on her side, that Germany was planning for war in 1874, began to creep in, and to find utterance in private letters and conversations, and even, vaguely, in official despatches. Orloff, that amiable go-between, suggested the possibility as not quite out of range.

De Broglie, therefore, continued to urge the futility of German fear of French clericalism, and declared more explicitly than ever, while the monarchist scheme progressed, that any government must of necessity accept

Thiers pacific policy. So long as negotiations with a claimant to the French throne continued, however, such assurances were of little avail in quieting Germany anxiety. At this exact point, stands out the important proof that France has entered on the new period of her relations with Germany. For, just as soon as evacuation was complete, de Broglie wrote to his ambassador as follows: "You have means enough to convince those who will allow themselves to be convinced. And with the rest, do not concern yourself too much-----Show neither too much excitement nor too much anxiety. The main thing is, that the country is free; our debt is paid; we are no more dependent on a smile or a frown. I know perfectly well how very precarious this independence is, on account of our empty arsenals, and our exposed borders, and upon what a weak foundation it stands; but in any case, they will have to seek new excuses to begin a strife with us. There is too much interest in monarchy in Europe to make it expedient for Bismarck to fall upon us. We have, if not might, at least right." (27)

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(27) Gontaut, op. cit., II, p.340.



Here, then, was a mutual fear; Germany's fear of clericalism, in connection with a monarchist restoration in France; French fear of hostilities from Germany on this account. Both were apparently deprived of justification by the manifest of the Duc de Chambord, October twenty-seventh, 1873. This manifesto, (28) the death-blow to the aspirations of the Right, was a blessing, so far as relations with Germany were concerned. The voting of the seven year term for the presidency, November, 1873, which definitely counteracted that "provisional character" of the French government of which Germany had complained, was another step in advance for France. Germany greeted the act as a guaranty for French prosperity, and of the maintenance of her "good understanding" with "other states". (29) At the beginning of 1874, then, the future looked more hopeful for France than at any time since the Peace of Frankfort, so far as outward indications go. But the habit of mind which had been acquired by the MacMahon government, the dread of a German outbreak of hostility; and the conviction in Germany that a recovering

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(28) The Duc de Chambord wholly refused to be "king of the revolution" or to surrender any of the ancient traditions of his house; in particular, the flag, symbolic of reaction.

(29) Staatsarchiv, 28, #5405. A quotation from von Bülow.

France meant danger, whether from clericalism or mere lust for revenge, was not shaken off. Germany from this time on was warier, France not quite so humble, but the mutual distrust grew and grew. Arnim, on leaving his office, wrote to the Emperor, analyzing the entire situation as he saw it; and later events have borne out his prophecy--if not completely, at least in substance. "Just as soon," he wrote, "as the probable results of war become less certainly destructive for France---one can reckon on the very unreckonableness of the French nature."

### Chapter Three.

#### The Return to Normal. 1873-5.

After the period of inequality immediately succeeding the war, the return to normal meant a readjustment to something like an even balance between France and Germany. This could not be accomplished in one year, or two; France was too thoroughly crushed for that; and even when the material reasons for her subjection to the will of Germany had disappeared, the very force of administrative tradition made self-assertion difficult. It has been pointed out that there were three factors giving France the opportunity to recuperate: her own remarkable economic elasticity; Bismarck's preoccupation with the Kulturkampf; and the force of European opinion. The prevailing conviction, also, has been stated, that so soon as France recovered, war must break out. Though she had not yet abandoned her apologetic tone, entirely, France in late 1873 and 1874 was recovering. Bismarck, in the meanwhile, had not in the least modified his attitude; nor abated his arrogance one whit. Through these two years it

grows increasingly plain, therefore, that a crisis was approaching. It is the purpose of the present chapter to show in what incidents the sense of French recovery began to filter into Franco-German consciousness; and how the crisis drew near.

In late 1873 and 1874 the diplomatic calm was ruffled somewhat unnecessarily by a series of despatches from Arnim, (1) in regard to the diplomatic relations of France with the Middle States. Rumours had traversed Paris of the intention of France to modify her relations with these states, by raising her representatives to ambassadorial rank. Arnim, hearing these rumours, addressed petulant complaints to Bismarck. It was not so much fear of the ill-effect on the prestige of the Empire, which disturbed him, as dread of the personal inconveniences which the Imperial ambassador would suffer from the presence of other German ambassadors in Paris. For this he was duly rebuked, in the inimitable stinging manner of his chief; but he had succeeded in stirring up Bismarck's irritation, never far below the

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(1) Staatsarchiv, 28, #5397, 5398, 5403, 5407. Arnim's report of Dec. 18, 1873; Jan. 12, 1874; Bismarck's replies of Dec. 23, Jan. 21.

surface. Bismarck was annoyed with the French Foreign Office, and with his ambassador himself; he wrote that the French government perfectly well knew the German position. Any enlargement of the scope of diplomatic activities of the lesser German states would be considered a breach of the spirit of the peace, which must be based upon French recognition of the new status of German Empire. Bismarck doubtless saw in this multiplied German representation, a possibility of opposition to the Imperial policy, although at the time when the exchange of opinion between him and Arnim took place, the diplomatic representatives of the lesser courts had merely formal functions, and had given no cause for alarm. It was inevitably a part of his policy that the conduct of Foreign Affairs should be concentrated in the Imperial Foreign Office. The discussion with Arnim might have resulted in a note to the French government, had not Bismarck's annoyance with the ambassador been sufficient to make him distrustful of any report from that source. The futility of Arnim's alarm is obvious, when we con-

sider the conscientiousness with which the question had already been settled, and the precedent for French diplomatic action established, before Thiers went out of power. The game was most certainly, from the French point of view, not worth the candle.

Arnim  
Affair.

It was just before the fall of Thiers, as we have seen, that a feeling of dissatisfaction with Arnim arose, and in this same year Gontaut was sounded more than once on the French impression of Arnim's trustworthiness. In April, for example, Bleichröder, a German banker in intimate relations with the Chancellor, spoke to Gontaut about the probable successor to the post, in case Arnim should be removed. He asked confidentially whether it were true that Thiers had expressed a wish for the diplomat's removal, and Gontaut replied characteristically, that he had not heard a syllable of it. He had at that time, of course, no instructions, but later, on his return from a vacation in Paris, he "did not conceal from Bismarck" in a confidential conversation, that Arnim's bearing was rather cool and unfriendly. This was of course after

the negotiations of March, 1873, and Arnim was feeling himself decidedly under a cloud, in the eyes both of the French and the German world. The first of the next year he was recalled. In December, 1874, he was brought to trial in Germany for abstraction of documents belonging to the Foreign Office, and intent to use them improperly. The features of the trial, and the points of his defense, do not concern our subject in themselves. (2) the point at which the trial touched French and German relations, was in the publication of the documents during the proceedings. These were despatches of Arnim and Bismarck, and others of the Foreign Office, showing the outlines of the German policy toward France. We have quoted sufficiently, on various topics, to illustrate the character of these intimate communications, and the

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(2) The documents used in the trial may be classified roughly as follows: Topic I, Arnim and Thiers; Staatsarchiv, Bd. 28, #5380, 5385, 5392. Topic II, Germany and the French parties, #5385, 5, 6, 8, 5401, 4. Topic III, Russia and France; #5381. IV: Italy, and the Papal See: #5384, 5405, 8. See note, page 141. V: The press: #5382, 5390. VI: Anti-German feeling in France; #5387, 8, 5393, 4, 6, 9, 5400. VII: French finances: #5389. VIII: Evacuation: #5395. IX: The middle states; #5397, 8, 5403, 7. X: The pastoral letters, #5401, 2. For additional documents, see Schulthess, *op. cit.* 15, pp. 253, 4, 6. For correspondence with German officials about his sins of omission and commission, *Anhang* etc., #51-64. His withdrawal, *ibid.* #21, 22, 23, 24, 20. The *Antwort* contains Arnim's letter of the Emperor, April 7, 1873, analyzing the course of the negotiations of the month before. Bismarck's own view of the trial and of Arnim's guilt, *op. cit.* II, Chapter XXVI, p. 177 ff. The problem as to the extent of Arnim's guilt, as to his motives in delaying the negotiations if he was guilty, and Bismarck's motives if he was not guilty, are all to be solved. The justice of Arnim's defense is quite apparently flimsy, but should be definitely disproved.

lines of conduct and of bearing which were pointed out therein. The French were quite convinced that the publication of these despatches was the sole *raison d'être* of the trial; as a lesson to France. (3) Even a German official wrote after an interview with Bismarck that the latter would be pleased if the documents could be published without injury to the Emperor. (4) Doubtless Bismarck was glad of the opportunity to administer to France one of his periodic warnings, but it cannot with fairness be claimed that this was his only reason for the action against the ambassador. Personal rancour perhaps entered in to some extent, and still more, the necessity of preserving diplomatic discipline, which would be shaken to its very foundations by such conduct from ministers as Arnim's had been. The French feeling that the trial and publication of the documents displayed Bismarck's policy toward the vanquished as brutally and unduly severe was balanced by the German conviction that Arnim's line of action, shadowed so frequently in these notes, would have lost to Germany the benefits of her

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(3) See Decazes remark, quoted Hanotaux, *op. cit.* III, p. 103.

(4) Hohenlohe, *op. cit.* II, p. 136.



victory, and effected in France a highly desirable state of affairs. The French felt that Bismarck's support of the Republic was displayed as wholly actuated by self-interest; the wish to keep France divided. But on the other hand, complain of Bismarck as they might, and attribute to him brutality and tyranny, they could not help recognizing the magnitude of their own fault in allowing the anti-German feeling in Paris to swell so high as Arnim had reported it again and again; endangering the peace of Europe with petty annoyances. The trial naturally produced a reaction in favour of the Chancellor among his own people, making the dominance of any possible feeling of pity for France, or wish for a French and German rapprochement still more an impossibility. The Duc Decazes attempted to turn to account the evidences of what he considered Bismarck's unjustifiably rigorous policy, in bringing about a European sympathy for France, and this may account for the indubitable gradual spread of a feeling that France, though the aggressor in 1870, had received more in the way of retribution than her

sins deserved.

In January, 1874, once Arnim's withdrawal was certain, Bismarck had an interview with Gontaut-Biron (5) in regard to Arnim's successor. One point in the conversation is worth noting: on Manteuffel's being suggested for the post, Gontaut replied that France was completely satisfied with his conduct of affairs during the period of occupation, but that his military title was against him. This is an implicit acknowledgement by Gontaut of that militarist spirit in France which he was usually at such pains explicitly to deny.

The choice at length fell upon Prince Hohenlohe, who succeeded Arnim in the spring of 1874. (6) Before he took over the office he had several very frank talks with the Chancellor, in which the attitude of a German ambassador to France was prescribed for him. (7) Bismarck took occasion to impress upon him the importance of the post, and the difficulties which he had had in finding a suitable ambassador, in view of (A) his conviction that a non-Prussian would fill the position most satisfactorily in

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(5) Gontaut, op.cit. p.681 ff. (App.)

(6) Chlodwig, Fürst von Hohenlohe. Brother to the Cardinal. His later career as minister to Paris, and successor to Manteuffel in Alsace, and at length as Chancellor, 1894-1901, is well known.

(7) Hohenlohe, op.cit. II, pp.106-121.

the eyes of the French, and (B) the necessity that the representative of the German Empire be a German of true imperial feeling. Before the appointment was actually made, Bismarck had begun to emphasize to Hohenlohe the familiar note: "We will keep the peace, but if France begins to fortify and arm, so that they are ready in five years to strike loose, then we will begin the war in three years." In the official interviews before Hohenlohe's departure, all the beliefs of Germany in regard to France, which had been growing and clarifying during the Arnim period, were brought out into the light and given definite shape. (A) France must not win allies. (B) Hence, it is to the best interest of Germany to keep her feeble, and for this the Republic is the most suitable government. Of the other possibilities, a monarchy on Orleanist lines would be dangerous to Germany because of its Clericalism; a monarchy along Legitimist lines will never be effected; and the Bonapartist possibility is next to the Republic desirable from the German point of view, because of the inner difficulties which would confront such a government.

(C) French colonial activities---in Tunis, particularly--- should be encouraged, as distracting to the French attention. (D) As to the preparation for hostilities, keep the pacific side foremost, but bear in mind that if France prepares to strike, Germany may strike first; this is the counsel to a new ambassador. There is nothing novel here; we have seen the working out of just such ideas during the period of occupation. But Germany's interest is now more insistently expressed by Bismarck than ever, exactly because France is beginning once more to assume the aspect of a foeman worthy of the German steel. Arnim, it will be remembered, was told not to make advances; to allow things to take their own course, which, so long as it remained an unhappy course for France, was not troublesome to Germany. Hohenlohe's instructions are more specific; no longer, a course of watchful waiting, but the active insistence upon German principles, in every event..

It was little wonder that the Duc Decazes, when the new ambassador arrived, thought that the reason for Bismarck's withdrawal of Arnim was the latter's too

peaceful tendency. "Now all this is to be changed," said the Duke. Hohenlohe's attitude was unbending. In the light of our fuller knowledge Decazes' first hypothesis is absurd; Arnim's friendship for the French being far less sincere than Hohenlohe's; but the temperamental reserve of the Prince was calculated to impress France with a new conviction of the futility of the Peace of Frankfort.

The  
Pastoral  
Letters.

The explanation, then, for the events of 1873-5, is no longer in the arrogance of Germany, and the fears of France, but in a mutual distrust, tinged with fear on both sides. The first incident of a really alarming character, after the formation of the MacMahon government, was the protest of Germany in December, 1873, to the pastoral letters of the French bishops of some of the departments. The intimate relations of the Kulturkampf to the foreign policy of Germany, and the impossibility of isolating a single series of events, is perfectly illustrated in this affair. Decazes, indeed, believed that one motive force in Bismarck's struggle against the Cath-

olicism of the new papal decrees was the desire to win a favourable position against France by assuring the cooperation of Italy. (8) The unquestionably sincere and extremely impolitic French bishops were actuated by as mixed motives, on their part. They doubtless felt that in their invectives against the ferocity of the German government toward their brother Catholics, in their reference to the "Pope of Berlin", and their prayers for the restoration of the lost provinces, (9) they were expressing their love for their Church, and incidentally for their country. But we cannot question that these excellent gentlemen were urged on to such utterances, also, by mere unclerical hatred of Germany and of her Chancellor, such as any layman might have felt. Germany can hardly be blamed for her resentment of such exhortations.

This was the occasion of the protest, and the course of the incident was as follows. On December twentieth, the German government protested to the French government against any such partisan use of ecclesiastical influence. A few days later, the French Minister of Ecclesias-

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(8) Decazes to Gontaut, Gontaut, *op.cit.* II, p. 392. See the remark of Dreux (see App. A, Bibliography) *ibid.* p. 364: "The lively uneasiness which his own inner policy caused Prince Bismarck at this time, reacted upon the relations between France and Germany. This uneasiness had two causes: the struggle against the Catholic clergy, whose opposition was growing stronger; and the deliberation over an imperial military bill."

(9) The Bishops of Anger, Nimes, and Nancy are here quoted.

tical Affairs addressed to the Bishops, in response to this protest, a letter urging them to abstain from utterances on political affairs. The German government took no further official action for the present, but Decazes felt that he did not dare to consider the incident concluded. And meanwhile Gontaut was active, in an attempt to convince Bismarck and his subordinates of the entire absence of ill-intent on the part of France, and of her irresponsibility for the expressions of opinion of these members of the clergy; of her disapproval, indeed, of any such manifestations. Public opinion in Germany, however, was aroused, and was not allowed so easily to subside. On January fifth, von Bülow inquired of Gontaut whether the French government was not prepared to take some definite action to prevent the seditious utterances of the clergy. The French ambassador replied that he considered the letter of the minister (above referred to) as a sufficient guaranty. On this point the German government could not agree with him, and from a despatch from Arnim it appears that Bismarck even went so far as to busy

himself with the provisions of the French laws in regard to the protection of foreign monarchs from slander. In a further interview of the thirteenth of January, Bismarck made still more emphatic demands for a decree of the French government of more weighty import than the ministerial letter. The French government still delayed, (10) and Bismarck on the fifteenth, as the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung testified, sent to the representatives of Germany at foreign capitols a circular letter to the effect that Germany could not guarantee to wait for a declaration of war from France, if France persisted in unfriendly demonstrations. It was decidedly time for the French government to do something to avert a calamity. On the nineteenth of January, over a month after the first disturbance created by the clerical indiscretions, the French government ordered the suppression of the "Univers," an obnoxious organ which had published and made much of the pastoral letters. On the twentieth, in answer to an interpellation on the subject of French relation to Italy and the Papal See, Decazes, after a

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(10) The remark of Bismarck to Gontaut, that this affair dragged on because of Arnim's delays, was interpreted by Gontaut as of friendly import; but when the above is known--i.e., that Arnim was instructed to acquaint himself with the legal regulations, with a view to formal action on the part of the French government, Bismarck's statement takes on a sinister significance.



declaration of the pacific policy of France in this particular, made the following statement: "-----our general policy in the whole world is directed by the same considerations, and has the same foundations. We wish peace; we wish peace, because we consider it necessary for the greatness and the flowering of our country; because we believe it is eagerly desired by all, eagerly furthered. In order to assure it we will labor without ceasing, to disperse all misunderstanding, and avoid all conflicts; and we will uphold it against idle rumours, against distrustful irritation, may they come from where they will." He concluded with the point that France, which was so weak in the eyes of Europe, was not lacking in moral strength, and had the courage to be prudent. The speech was not intended for the ears of his own countrymen alone, but as a capitulation, in some sort, and in some sort a defiance to Bismarck. Its author sent it to the German capitol at once. (11)

The end was not yet. Again von Bfrow said to Gontaut: "This does not suffice,"---although the Chancellor and the

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(11)Decazes to Gontaut, Jan.18: Put off submission to the last minute; but we cannot let it come to an open breach. We are not ready for war. Gontaut, op. cit., p.385-7.

Emperor himself were rejoiced at these measures and indications! Arnim, on his return from Berlin, early in February, brought extensive proposals for legal measures of the sort suggested by the Chancellor and von Bülow. But on the objection of the French minister, this was dropped, and by the middle of the month, Gontaut could report that all was quiet, and the matter apparently closed. What was the explanation for this sudden change of front? One may be, that the German governments had secured from France a demonstration of humility, and knew that the matter could not be pushed to the point of a declaration, without European disapproval, and probably intervention. The French minister heard from London that Lord Granville was much disturbed, but "will not or can not" speak a weighty word in Berlin. (12) Decazes was convinced that the courts of Germany's colleagues in the "Three Emperors' Alliance", in spite of that bond, felt "that human arrogance cannot overstep certain bounds, and may not set itself outside certain considerations, without danger to society." (13) In St. Petersburg, indeed,

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(12) Gontaut, op. cit., II, p. 396.

(13) Ibid, 396.

Leflô received specific assurances of a comforting nature. (14) The Czar himself declared that he considered the whole affair a stratagem of Bismarck's, to divert attention from his inner difficulties; it was no threat of war, in reality, said the Czar. The Russian Chancellor went a step farther, telling the French ambassador in confidence that Russia had not always been in sympathy with Germany, of late, and that this difference was especially in regard to the Kulturkampf. The general feeling seemed to prevail throughout Europe, that Bismarck was anxious to involve other nations in this quarrel; Andrassy and Lord Odo Russell, as well as Gortchakoff, expressed themselves on this point. (15) The Times, with an air of impartiality, published an editorial to the effect that Germany considered the agitation of the Ultramontanes against her had Paris for a centre; that France, to secure a stable and lasting peace, must repudiate any policy of submission to the Ultramontanes, and had done wisely in recognizing the justice of German complaints and taking the measures of repression. (16)

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(14) Ibid., 398-9.

(15) Austrian Chancellor and the English ambassador in Berlin.

(16) Friday, Jan. 23, 1874.

That there was truth in this interpretation, and that Bismarck was actually showing France that her position in the Kulturkampf was of importance to him, was testified by the Chancellor himself in that early conversation with Gontaut, (Jan.13) before the French suppression of the Univers, or Decazes speech. At that time Bismarck had pointed out that he had undertaken war with the Church unto the end, and that it was his duty to find out who were, and who might become, the allies of his opponents. (17)

A second explanation for the cessation of all agitation early in February, was offered by Gontaut and the Duc Decazes, with some conviction, to one another. This was, that Bismarck had employed the popular feeling, the official protest, and the measures of the French government, as a campaign asset in the January elections to the Reichstag, to strengthen public feeling in favour of his policies. The election having resulted in the numerical increase both of National Liberals, and of Ultramontanes, to the cost of the intermediate parties, and with a

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(17) Yet that France, in this connection, was more the object of German watchfulness than any other possible opponent, was evidenced by von Bülow's answer to the following perfectly logical objection, made by Gontaut: that Archbishop Manning (Eng.) expressed similar sentiments to those of the French bishops, and the German government took no such steps. "The English," von Bülow replied, "are not, like you, our neighbors, and what passes there arouses less feeling here than any action of yours." Gontaut, op.cit. p.375. Unfortunate for France!

Liberal majority, Bismarck could afford to let the matter drop.

At all events, a lesson had been brought home to both countries: to France, that Bismarck as he openly stated, in case of any serious aggression would not wait for a French declaration of war; to Germany: that she had European opinion to consider, even though France was yet without those allies which Bismarck dreaded of all things. Furthermore, that close connection in the German mind of any French hostility, with the Kulturkampf, was brought to light.

The speech from the throne at the opening of the Reichstag, read by Bismarck for the Emperor, contained a passage in regard to the foreign relations of Germany which crystallized the result and significance of the whole incident. The speech concluded: "Our foreign relations justify the conviction that all alien governments, like our own, are decided and exercised to secure to the world the benefits of peace, and to allow themselves to make no mistakes-----through party differences, to destroy

this. The repeated meetings of mighty, peace-loving monarchs, standing in close personal bonds one with another, and the happy relations of Germany to that people friendly to her through all historical tradition, gives His Majesty the Emperor complete and firm trust in the continuance of peace." (18) And on his side, Decazes felt that he might justly take courage, though "far from having won the game yet, either in Vienna or St. Petersburg." Nevertheless, from the indications which he had received during this distressing month, he hoped for a change in favour of France, in European opinion, brought about by the reasonableness of French policy, and the rigour of Bismarck's. (19)

The  
Serrano  
Incident.

The tensivity between the two countries after this incident began to make each the more suspicious of the other, even in matters which in their origin had no direct bearing on Franco-German relations. Such an incident, which grew to somewhat threatening proportions, arose out of the revolutionary struggles in Spain. (20)

Early in July, 1874, a German war correspondent, one

(18) Staatsarchiv, 27, #5335.

(19) See the letter of Decazes to Gontaut, March 10, 1874. (Gontaut, op. cit., II, pp. 418-9, note.) When the strain was removed, Decazes poured out his soul to his confidant, with that eloquence and abandonment to self-pity which a French orator knows how to employ. He cited Bismarck's brusque language in describing the French; "barbers, tailors, barbarians," as quoted by a Hungarian Journalist. (Afterwards denied by the official German press.) He cited the representation of Bismarck at the time of the murder of a German teamster by certain French citizens, whereas at the same time Prussian soldiers were doing damage wholesale, unreprieved. (?) He cited

von Schmidt, was murdered by the Carlists of Estrella. Bismarck was perhaps not unwilling to seize upon this perfectly justifiable pretext, to illustrate his position. He adopted two distinct lines of action: representations to the french government that their patrolling of their Spanish border was proving inefficient, and that the penetration of arms and supplies of all kinds to the Carlists in this manner would be considered a hostile sign from France, if not checked; and second: representations to all the governments of Europe as to the feasibility of recognizing the government of Marshal Serrano, in order to give sanction to the efforts of

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the characteristic reference of Bismarck from the floor of the Reichstag, to the probable difficulties in Alsace-Lorraine, had the situation been reversed. These, in the eyes of the Duke, were insults, and only illustrations of the brutality of Bismarck's policy. Orloff, who as a rule, had much better have kept silence, asserted that Bismarck boasted of his one and only instruction to his ministers to foreign courts: "Oppose the French minister;" that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know! It was a moral war which the Chancellor was carrying on against his neighboring country (so Decazes) and the Duke, in an outburst of irony, suggested: "Prince Bismarck was of the opinion that my existence was too peaceful, and my patience not yet sufficiently tested."

This is all very pitiful, and calculated to rouse our sympathy for the minister of a government which had inherited all the distrust earned by its imperial predecessor, but it should not be forgotten that it was actually to the interests of France, until those allies which she hoped for could be secured, to represent Germany as utterly unreasonable and quite inhumane. Decazes was wise enough to know that one can hardly convince others of what one does not oneself heartily believe. Conviction, like a number of other desirable qualities, begins at home; and it extends as far as the diplomatic representatives in foreign countries, in usefulness.

(20) In this struggle the Carlists, (adherents of Don Carlos) earned German hatred by their Ultramontane character.

that government against the Carlists. To back up his first action, Bismarck ordered German gunboats down the coast of Spain, as a warning to France, and to the Carlists, while Hohenlohe explained to Decazes---quite superfluously!----the diplomatic significance of this move. (21) Decazes was again plunged into a fever of anxiety, which was not heightened by the reception of a note from the Spanish general, Serrano, in the haughtiest terms, demanding better regulation of this border traffic. The note in itself was not alarming, but Decazes understood that it necessarily had German support, for without this a government on such unsteady feet as that of Serrano would never have dared so address the French government. The French press united in the adoption of a conciliatory tone; Decazes assured Hohenlohe that there should be no neglect on the part of the French officials, and that the measures already taken would be still more thoroughly enforced. As to Bismarck's second action, Gontaut in August was commissioned to confer with von Bülou about the matter of recognition. As the Journal Des Debats

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(21) Hohenlohe, op. cit. II, p. 131. Note of July 28. It was doubtless true that this passage of supplies over the border was taking place; and the general interpretation of this carelessness of the French officials was that it was calculated to appease the French Legitimists.



very justly remarked: "What is our own after all but a de facto government?" (22) In August, then, the European countries, including France, and without Russia, (23) joined in recognizing the Serrano government, and no further danger of war involving France and Germany was to be expected from that quarter. (24)

(22) See the London Times of July 29 to Aug. 1, for French and German press comments. The German attitude was expressed thus by a Berlin correspondent: "The truly Ultramontane hatred of Germany displayed by the Carlist leaders, and the notorious connivance of the French authorities at their military operations, have produced a very strong impression in this country. --- Don Carlos --- might be tempted to become the future ally of France in a war of reprisals."

(23) See Bismarck's explanation of Russia's refusal, and of the advisability of general recognition, before the Reichstag, (Pol. Red. VI, p. 215.) The argument runs as follows: (a) No intervention in Spain intended. The murder of a German citizen, however, cannot go unavenged. (b) The Spanish government not in a condition to be held responsible; best course, then, the strengthening of the government. (c) This accomplished by the general European recognition. Russia excepted, because of her remoteness from Spain, and because Spanish disturbances do not touch her politically. The speech concludes with a reference to the attempted assassination of the Chancellor on July 14, and the declaration of the fanatic that he was in sympathy with the Centre party, and they with him. --- Was Russia's failure to accede to the German request for united European action in the recognition, an indication of the approach of Russian policy toward the support of France? In the light of those other indications of this year, discussed in Chapter I, it is perhaps not unwarrantable to assume that it was, in spite of Bismarck's plausible explanation.

(24) One rather remarkable feature of this affair, as recorded by Hohenlohe, is the relation of the Emperor to Bismarck's action. On the 30 of August the ambassador had an interview with the Emperor himself, in which the latter complained, speaking of the Spanish situation, that he hardly knew where Bismarck was taking him. "One must be conservative --- Bismarck sees that himself --- but how is it possible after one has gone so far?" Then, on the fourth of October, Hohenlohe and Bismarck talked over the same matter, and Bismarck gave his minister a somewhat surprising view of the action taken by the German government. According to this recital, the Chancellor had empowered von Bülow to sound the powers as to whether recognition were feasible. Instead of limiting himself to these instructions, von Bülow laid before the Emperor a circular despatch containing a plan of recognition. On its second presentation, the Emperor approved it, and as Bismarck picturesquely put it, the recognition followed, "like plums falling from trees." Hohenlohe, op. cit. II, p. 135.

Other  
Evidences.

Other evidences of Germany's increasingly belligerent attitude were her resentment of the condemnation of Marshal Bazaine, for example, (25) and the publication during his trial of certain information about the conduct of the war; (26) or, another example, her attitude in the International Conference on the Rights of War, in which she claimed all rights for invaders; or, a still more striking instance, her frequent reomnstrances about the increased armaments of France. (27) The feeling against Ultramontanism was mounting higher and higher; it was given impetus, too, by the attempt of one Kullman, on July fourteenth, 1874, at Kissingen, to assassinate Bismarck. (28) It was evidenced in the unnecessary severity of Bismarck's representations to Belgium, practically accusing her of general complicity in the fanatic avowals of Duchesne, a Belgian coppersmith who proposed to kill the Chancellor. This, as we have already demonstrated, reacted upon Franco-German relations, so that French Ultramontanism had come to seem all of France, in the German opinion, and Ultramontanism itself, odious. These

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(25) The trial of the Marshal, October 6-December 10, 1873, was for the capitulation of Metz, and surrender of the "Army of the Rhine."

(26) As, for example, that the German army in the battle of St. Privat exceeded the French, and at that was nearly defeated! Gontaut, *op. cit.* II, p. 377.

(27) See below, Chap. IV, note 7.

(28) See above, Chap. III, note 23.

petty complications---the Pastoral letters, the forcing of France to recognize the Serrano government, all of Germany's little triumphs-----would be wearisome to follow if it were not that they were all ripples on the surface of a deeper movement; a movement slow, constant, unceasing. The prevalent uneasiness found expression in Lord John Russell's interpellation of May fourth, 1874, in the English Parliament, in regard to the peace of Europe. (29) The reply of Lord Derby, conservative as it was, and meant to reassure, still left the little flame of anxiety creeping and alive. Though distinguishing between immediate and future cause for apprehension, the Earl admitted that he could not deny the latter, and said: "We know the feelings which they (the events of 1870) have left in the minds of two great populations, and which, as those populations are composed of human beings, it was impossible they should not have left." (30)

To summarize, then the state of affairs at the beginning of 1875; the two countries were nearer an equal footing than at the beginning of the previous year; yet

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(29) Hansard, Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 218, pp. 1564-9.  
 "Moved that an humble address be presented to Her Majesty for copies of any correspondence relating to the maintenance of the peace of Europe-----"

(30) Cf. the Times, May 6, 1865. "The French people would have been a race of seraphs if they had borne with resignation the tremendous disaster of the war, or if they had accepted the conditions of peace with meek thankfulness."

the danger of an outbreak of hostilities was far greater. The German press held up before the eyes of the German people without cessation the probability of a French declaration of war---war for revenge. The French government and population, on the other hand, placed the utmost threatening construction upon Bismarck's words to the effect that he would not wait for the French declaration when he thought it actually on the way. Both parties were playing for the benevolence, and if possible, the still sturdier support, of the other European countries, and in particular, Russia. The Czar alone, of continental figures, was optimistic; his was an optimism springing from his trust in his uncle. But the prevailing opinion was that war---not must---but very probably might come; and that peace was to be desired. Just how far that European opinion would take shape, and block the path of either country in advance on the enemy, was the problem which was decided in 1875.

## Chapter Four.

## In the Balance. 1875.

To write of the spring of 1875 in Paris and Berlin, one should be Psychologist, almost more than historian. The crisis of that time sprang not so much from any series of events, as from a morbid state of mind. What this had come to be, and what elements entered into its development, we have attempted to show in previous chapters. The purpose of the chapter before us is to describe the manifestation which this state of mind assumed, and to point out how, with its expression, the shadow of fear was to a great extent dispelled, and France and Germany appeared to one another in their true lights. (1)

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(1) To facilitate the understanding of this complicated situation, a calendar of events and diplomatic moves in the spring of 1875 is here appended.

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| March 13----- | Third reading of Staffs Law before French Assembly.  |
| " 21-----     | French Assembly adjourns (to May 11)   |
| " 30-----     | <u>Nationalzeitung</u> declares French arrangement for fourth Battalion a preparation for war.   |
| April 2-----  | Venice interview between Francis Joseph and Victor Emmanuel.   |
| " 5-----      | <u>Kölnische Zeitung</u> publishes list of grievances against France. Declares union of Monarchists and Republicans was effected for sole purpose of pushing through army law. |
| " 7-----      | Marshal MacMahon convinces Leflô in conversation at the Elysée of danger from Germany.   |
| " 9-----      | <u>Post</u> article: "War in Prospect?"  |
| " 10-----     | Statements of <u>Norddeutsche Zeitung</u> . Leflô and Gortchakoff: "You alarm yourself."   |

It was the last week of February that Germany--or her  
Chancellor--gave a sign that could not fail to be under-

(1, cont.)

- April 12-----Disraeli, in Commons, declares the  
Belgian incident closed. (See above,  
page 110.
- " 13-----Crown Prince reassures Sir Robert  
Morier.
- " 15-----The Emperor William: "They have tried  
to make us quarrel."  
Conversation of the Czar and Leflô:  
"It would be at her own risk."
- ? -----Gontaut-Biron and Radowitz.
- " 19-----Discussion of German and Belgian  
correspondence, in the English Par-  
liament.
- " 21-----The Czar gives audience to General  
von Werder.
- " 28-----Decazes converses with Hohenlohe.
- " 29-----" writes fully to Gontaut and  
Leflô.
- ? -----Baron Nothomb sees Marshal von Moltke.
- May 4-----Decazes sees Prince Hohenlohe for a  
second interview.  
Count Schouvaloff leaves St. Petersburg.  
General Leflô telegraphs of audience  
with the Czar.  
Bismarck writes to Emperor William  
that he cannot carry on duties much  
longer.
- " 5-----Schouvaloff in Berlin. Conversation  
with Bismarck.
- " 6-----Schouvaloff and Bismarck.  
General Leflô writes fully of the  
Czar's promises to secure peace.  
Times article.
- " 7-----Gontaut sees von Bïlow.
- " 8-----Decazes writes to Gontaut that he  
fears agitation from Germany for dis-  
armament.
- " 10-----Gortchakoff in Russia.  
Lord Odo Russell sees Bismarck with  
offer of friendly intervention.  
Meeting between Czar and Kaiser.  
Norddeutsche Zeitung: Nothing justifies  
alarmist campaign.
- " 11-----Foreign Secretary of England declares he  
has received assurances from Berlin.

Prohibition  
of  
Exportation  
of  
Cavalry  
Horses.

stood. Information reached Bismarck's ears (2) that German horse-dealers had received orders to buy ten thousand cavalry horses for France, without limitation as to price. This was a manifestation of the activities of France in army reorganization, but Bismarck took such action as to give it a special significance. He issued an order against the exportation of horses, reasoning that it was certainly not to Germany's interest to help France in such reorganization, "which is notoriously intended for us." (3) Gontaut himself was

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(1, cont.)

May 14 ----- "Maintenant la paix est assurée."

" 24-----Disraeli acknowledges that Queen remonstrated with Emperor William about Franco-German relations.

" 31-----Lord Derby attributes source of anxiety to "words uttered by exalted persons in Germany."

June 8-----Mittnacht (Bavarian minister) to Bismarck of the need of reorganization of the diplomatic committee of the Reichstag.

(2) Through the publication of the item by the Kölnische Zeitung and other papers popularly regarded as inspired, the story was disseminated. When Gontaut returned to Germany the middle of April, he denied entirely that the order proceeded from the war ministry, and at the same time the French government published denials of rumours of similar orders sent to Bohemia and Switzerland. The question remains open.

(3) Bismarck to Hohenlohe, Feb. 26, 1875. Hohenlohe, op. cit. II, pp. 151-2.

out of Berlin on a vacation at the time, but in his business the acting chargé d'affaires (4) telegraphed to Decazes (March 5) of this---quite characteristic!--- Bismarckian act. In Paris, naturally, it was received as a confirmation of the general suspicions; we have already noted that Decazes not wholly disinterested tendency was toward the alarmist's reading of all signs. (5) France wished more than ever to have in the eyes of the world of diplomacy an air of consistent prudence and reserve; her only fears being Bismarck's nerves, or some misstep of her own. However, in spite of this alarm, no further signs of hostility from Germany came to light for some time, as Gontaut recorded, (6) almost with a note of disappointment.

Staffs  
Law.

There is little doubt, however, that the spirit of unrest did much to hasten the passage of the Staffs Law (7) which was read for the third time on March thirteenth, and accepted by a remarkable combination of republicans and monarchists. The amendment creating a fourth battalion for every regiment aroused particularly

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(4) Marquis de Sayve.

(5) See above, Chap.III, note 19.

(6) Gontaut, *op. cit.*, II, p.432.

(7) This was the culmination of the work begun by Thiers. When, before the fall of the first president of the third republic, representations were made to him from Berlin through the French ambassador there, that his activities at reorganization were considered excessive, and omen of a desire for revenge, he replied always: France must have a powerful army for her own inner good; and second: her place in the concert of nations



the animosity of Germany. The utterances of the German militarist party headed by von Moltke, made the amendment

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(7, cont.)

demands that her military defense be on a sound basis; in this no other power whatsoever has any right of interference. The question of limitations of armaments was not treated in the Peace of Frankfort, beyond specifications for the period of occupation.

The work of reconstitution began at the close of the war, when the captured soldiers were liberated from the Prussian prisons. They were immediately marched to Versailles, and put under MacMahon's command. During the session of April-August, 1872, the army bill for a plan of military service was one of the principal measures before the Assembly. Thiers was in favour of a seven-year service; the Commission on this question in favor of three, carrying out the militia idea. A five-year term on the principle of universal service was finally adopted after many debates, and hints from Germany that she viewed with alarm the contemplated extension of service. This law provided: five years in active army; four in reserve of same; five in territorial; four in reserve of same. No substitution; one half of each class, chosen by lot, to carry on work at home on unlimited leave; certain dispensations, or suspensions of call in case of students, professional men, or supporters of families. This is apparently modelled after the Prussian system.

The Law of July 24, 1873, provided for organization of the vast body of men made available by the action of the law of 1872; stipulated methods of mobilization, and so forth. MacMahon was carrying on the work undertaken by his predecessor.

The Staffs Law of March 13, 1875, mentioned in the text, was the sequel to a series of minor laws on reorganization, passed during 1873-4; results of the indefatigable work of the Marshal, and of the Parliamentary Committees assisting him.

In 1875 an estimate of the existing forces of Europe was made by M. Amedie LE Faure, in La France:

Germany: with Reserves, Landstrum, Landwehr, and navy, 1,700,000. Cost: 20,000,000 L.

England: Including militia, volunteers, and navy: 535,000. Cost: 24,000,000 L.

Austria: 535,000. Cost, 10,800,000 L.

Russia: 1,550,000. Cost, 27,200,000 L.

France: 1,700,000. Cost, 26,600,000 L.

(Quoted in translation, Annual Register, 1875, p.230.) This table explains the agitation of Germany at the measures for a fourth battalion for every French regiment.

seem a threat, though it was in reality as much a redistribution as a reenforcement. (8)

Press

Campaign

Four weeks later the German press took up what it considered to be the challenge. The Kolnische Zeitung, April fifth, burst forth with an extremely unfriendly article on the provocations offered Germany by the French character and policy. The ninth of April the Berliner Post brought out its famous leader: "Is War in Prospect?" This article, after a review of the situation at the moment, concluded, War is in prospect. The next day, (tenth) the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung published a more conservative article, deprecating the radicalism of the Post, but actually, with exceeding tact, confirming the impression of an imminent, grave danger. (9)

Gontaut hastened back to Berlin; the Duc Decazes wrote

- (8) See Gontaut's remark after an acknowledgment that Bismarck's alarm was not wholly unfounded: "What our neighbors did not consider in the new regulation was, that in the first place, the condition of our weakness made any thoughts of attack at that time still wholly unthinkable; and then, that the creation of the fourth battalion in the bill as originally drawn up by the government, was not premeditated, but improvised, so to speak, in forty-eight hours. G., op. cit., II, p.433.
- (9) These three papers regarded as official. The Post article quoted in full, Hahn, First Bismarck, II, pp.774-6. The Nord All. Zeit. quoted in translation, Annual Register, 1875, p.218. Contained the following statement: "The leading article published in the Post----contains much that is true. It combines therewith, however, such curious views with regard to the present and future, that we are bound to contradict it; the more so as our present international relations are by no means so unfavourable as the article would fain represent. The steps taken by the French government with regard to the reorganization of the army are certainly of a disquieting character. It is clear that these measures do not aim at a solid establishment of the French forces, but on the contrary, are being undertaken for the purpose of trying out systematic armaments ad hoc, the purport of which is evous. The Post, on the other hand, when it makes its observations upon Austria and Italy, does not depict the true state of a

letters in an admirable tone of resignation, little hopeful, to his intimates; Hohenlohe said nothing. Gontaut's explanations and assurances seemed for the time to fall on listening ears, and so, on the fifteenth, the Emperor remarked to the Prince Polignac (10) "They have tried to make us quarrel, but now all is over; completely ended." The press, too adopted a milder tone; the Norddeutsche Zeitung quoting these words of the Emperor to the Prince.

If this shortlived flurry in the press were all, Europe had never been aroused to the point of Russian intervention, and the "epistolatory reproaches of Queen Victoria." (11) But meanwhile that inveterate alarmist, Gontaut, had sent back to Paris full report of a conversation, which put the Duke Decazes as much on his guard as did the press utterances. Herr von Radowitz had been sent to St. Petersburg in February, in the absence of Prince Reuss. Bismarck's own statement of his aim in sending him leaves France little ground for interpreting the mission as a hostile one. The visit, according to the Chancellor was in the ordinary course of di-

Radowitz  
Mission

(10) Military Attaché. Gontaut, op. cit., II, p.438. The use of the indefinite pronoun does not permit us to infer to whom the Emperor attributed the blame; except that his own innocence thereby asserts itself. It is probable that he knew of the French suspicion that he himself was in sympathy with the war party.  
(11) Decazes to Harcourt, April 9. Quoted Hanotaux, op.cit., III, p.212.

plomacy, and the choice fell upon Herr von Radowitz that he might free the German embassy from the embarrassing tradition of extraordinary relations to Prince Gortchakoff. (12) The French officials assumed, however, that Radowitz was to sound Russia as to her attitude in case of a German war with France. This view was current in St. Petersburg; Leflo was convinced, (13) and wrote to Paris to spread the news. After the press campaign was under way, Gontaut met Radowitz at Lord Russell's, and demanded of him why the German papers persisted in such an attitude. Radowitz replied that Germany was bound to maintain the position she had gained, and---- this had a familiar Bismarckian ring in the ears of the French ambassador----could not allow France to strike the first blow, when the French lust for revenge reached its height. Such utterances as this, from a man of whom France was already suspicious, were received in Paris as of great weight. That this was excessive, appears not only from Bismarck's denials (14) but from the very tone of the conversation as Gontaut reports it. (15) It

Radowitz  
on  
War.

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(12) B. op. cit., II, p. 190. The long existing custom of Gortchakoff of communicating with Bismarck through the German embassy in St. Petersburg rather than the Russian embassy in Berlin, was the result, according to Bismarck, of Gortchakoff's wish to appear a great man before subordinates, and was inconvenient to Germany.

(13) 1887, Radowitz denied the truth of this report; Leflo again asserted it. Gontaut, op. cit., II, 464, note.

(14) See below, page 136, and note 41.

(15) Gontaut, op. cit., II, p. 442-9.

seemed an after-dinner tilt between two amiable diplomats, in which the German had no intention of asserting an official position. Bismarck goes so far as to say that the conversations of Radowitz "adduced as proof of our (German) warlike intentions," were traps laid by Gortchakoff in St. Petersburg, and Gontaut in Berlin. But Bismarck's aversion to both these others leads him here to overstatement. Gontaut was doubtless sincere in his alarm; though there seems room for doubt whether Radowitz were giving any more than a personal view. (16)

The suspicions of France were not yet stilled, nor the German agitation. The Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung of April eighteenth renewed the campaign against France with the thesis that French journals had originated the rumours; and with many citations to prove this. (17) So long as this paper continued explicit about wars and rumours of wars, Decazes would continue wary, since he considered it to represent the views of Bismarck himself.

Little light was thrown on the wishes of Germany by two conversations of the Duke with Prince Hohenlohe,

Conversations.

(16) We have heard the same sentiments from Bismarck, from Arnim, and others. There was nothing startlingly novel, nor freshly alarming, about it, save that it struck upon ears prepared for shock.

(17) G. II, 439-441. The Frankfurter Zeitung, organ of the opposition, maintained the contrary; that the Post spoke independent of any provocation from French journalistic utterances.

April twenty-ninth and May fifth; (18) nor by the interview of Gontaut with von Bülow. The former conversations were the result of the initiative of the German ambassador, and the first of them, in which Hohenlohe was the listener, Decazes the orator, was of a more reassuring tone than the second. Hohenlohe was just about to depart for Berlin, so that the interviews took on the character of subjects for first hand reports to Bismarck. On May fifth Hohenlohe told Decazes of a letter from Bismarck which seemed to wish to make the point that Germany was not alarmed for the immediate future, yet would not have it thought that the new military law could go into effect without protest. Next, Hohenlohe outlined a letter from Bismarck, which Decazes inferred to be the real motive force behind this second visit from the ambassador. The letter suggested "that we (man) must seek a common ground upon which we can stand together;" (19) and brought up the subject of the Eastern question, with the observation that there France and Germany had no conflicting interests. What was the

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(18) Ibid., II, 451-3; 457-60.

(19) Ibid., II, p.459.

purpose of all this? No wonder that the Duc Decazes was puzzled, and wrote commissioning Gontaut to seek enlightenment wherever possible. What could not appear so plainly to him as to us, was that Bismarck probably had no such intention of mystification, as Hohenlohe succeeded in effecting. Hohenlohe's ideal was a significant reserve in diplomacy; a half-suggestive, half-evasive attitude which at such a time as this was unexpectedly alarming. These conversations adduced by Gontaut to prove that Bismarck wished to alarm France, seem to me to prove that he did not intend to let matters go too far; that he was acting on no new policy whatever. He was maintaining his old threat, and at the same time giving indication of a wish to sound his ancient enemy along more than one line. What he said to Hohenlohe seems to me to be something like this: "The opportunity to catch French diplomacy unawares has presented itself to you. Make such use of it as you can, to find out just where we stand."

Gontaut's interviews with the German secretary of state on the seventh of May, had no more satisfactory outcome. After some mention by von Bülow of Marshal von Moltke's theory of the military future, he proceeded to speak of "an interview which Prince Hohenlohe on instruction from the Cancellor, had with Your Excellence (Decazes) today; but in such general and obscure terms, that I really could not tell what impression the Berlin Cabinet had derived from it. I could hardly understand-----whether it was about the proposal or the possibility of an understanding of our two countries about certain questions at present of secondary rank, as for example Eastern policy----- But as I said, Herr von Bülow expressed himself with so little clearness that I could not understand whether the conversation which might have taken such a turn, actually did so or not!" (20)

There was surely, at all events, no particularly affrighting element in such a conversation, and I think, this corroborates the theory enunciated above; That the German government was not pursuing a predetermined policy

(20) Orloff. Quoted ibid. 328



of special alarm, but that Gontaut and Decazes, under the influence of that intimidation which Bismarck had for five years wrought in France, were looking for something which did not exist. However this may have been, the popular excitement in both countries, accompanied by uncertainty in financial operations, continued.

Russia

Before inquiring further into the German motives, it would be well to survey the effect of the agitation in other countries. In what manner Russia was concerned with French and German destinies had been pointed out. Here was the test of the Three Emperors' Alliance, and on the other hand, of French trust in Russia, ready and recognizable. It was a Russian who said of Bismarck in connection with war scares: "Wer kann wissen, was er plant?" (21) Bismarck was probably justified, to some degree, in his suggestion that Gortchakoff thought of the situation as a chance to gratify his own vanity.

Leflo's  
Impres-  
sions.

The Russian Chancellor during the month of April held several conversations with General Leflo, the French ambassador to St. Petersburg. The bearing of

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(21) Orloff. Quoted ibid. 328.

Gortchakpff was such that Leflo, on his visit to Paris early in April, was quite convinced of the needlessness of his government's alarm. But so contagious was this state of mind, that on his return to St. Petersburg he told Gortchakoff (April 10) as his own opinion, as well as that of the European world, that "war was in prospect." Gortchakoff resented Bismarck's preponderance---rather than Germany's preponderance!---in Europe. Though he knew the strength of the bond between Russian and German Emperors, he was confident of his own diplomatic abilities. He probably believed firmly that the matter would not come to an open break, which would be finally destructive to the Three Emperors' Alliance. So he took the course that appealed to him, and told Leflo first, that the danger was not so great as was feared; and second, that Russia's disapproval would confront Bismarck if the matter were carried further. The Czar himself (April 15) repeated these two assertions, with more emphasis, as was natural, on the first point than the second. "I am convinced," was the sense of his words, "that Germany

does not want war. It would be upon her own responsibility." (22)

The Duc Decazes felt that his moment had come. The truism that France remained subjugated just as long as she remained without allies, was no less present to the mind of the French minister than the German Chancellor. (23) On the twenty-ninth of April the Duke took what he felt to be a decisive step, and wrote Leflo a letter, which he knew would be shown to Gortchakoff, if not to the Emperor himself. In this letter he instructed Leflo to make a plea for Russian intervention-- not merely Russian good-will, but Russian intervention to avert a catastrophe. (24) The Duke had the appealing gift of speech; he painted the picture in vivid colors; it is not necessary to repeat that he perfectly recognized his advantage in exaggerating German ill-treatment. (25) The Czar was impressed, as Decazes meant him to be, and Gortchakoff was glad enough to see materializing before him the opportunity for which he longed, of administering a rebuke to Bismarck.

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(22) Ibid., II, p. 469.

(23) See above, page 95.

(24) Gontaut, op. cit. II, p. 472-4.

(25) See above, Chap. III, note 19.

Schouva-  
loff.

The  
Czar

On the fifth and sixth of May, Count Peter Schouvaloff (26) was in Berlin, and conversed with the German Chancellor. According to his own statements he represented the opinion of the Russian court that an anti-French feeling had been unwarrantably instigated in Germany, and that Russia herself would prevent any further heckling of France. This (from the same source we learn) met with the astonishment of Bismarck. Five days later Gortchakoff, accompanying Alexander the Second, was in Berlin. This visit had been planned as were those other royal visits of the preceding years, as a friendly demonstration. But the intensity of the time focussed every eye upon Berlin. Europe waited in expectancy for the outcome of those interviews of the tenth of May and the days immediately following. What went on behind the doors which guarded the interview of the two Chancellors, has not been divulged. All that we know is what Gortchakoff said to Gontaut May eleventh: "Bismarck's attitude is friendly; he desires no war; and recognizes the necessity of measures for French army reorganization." (27)

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(26) See above, Chap. I, note 43.

(27) Gontaut, op. cit., II, pp.490-95.

This, and Bismarck's statement that Gortchakoff "dated from this place a telegraphic circular destined for publication, beginning with the words, 'Maintenant la paix est assurée'," (28) are our directest evidences..

England If Gortchakoff actually believed, as he probably did, that peace was now assured after an interval of real instability, he could hardly claim, nevertheless, the full thanks. If European intervention averted a war, it was due to England, hardly less than Russia. In London, M. Charles Gavard, in the absence of the minister, took charge of the French embassy on March twenty-second. As late as April eighth--the day preceding the startling Post article---Gavard met no response from Lord Derby when he referred to alarming indications of Bismarck's rage toward the entire continent. (29) Lord Derby remained "quite without anxiety," and expressed the view that Bismarck was playing a game to intimidate his opponents in domestic affairs. "He has got his hands full with the Catholic Church-----Germany sees a coalition in everything, and wishes to conjure it away."

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(28) Bismarck, op.cit., II, p.191.

(29) Gavard referred not only to the order against the exportation of horses, but to the appeal of Bismarck to the Italian Law of Guaranties; and more particularly to the notes addressed to Belgium. The Belgian question touched England more nearly than the French, geographically, dynastically, and---with especial force---commercially.

The press of London, however, did not preserve this same enviable detachment, nor philosophic calm. The English press had no such connection with the government as made every utterance of the leading German papers worthy of remark. European disturbances which the English government failed to recognize, met with unfavourable comment in the newspapers; and on the tenth of April, after the Post article of the ninth, there was a general outbreak of excitement, and in some sort, of consternation. The English people seemed to have the feeling that Bismarck was up to something which was just a little bit beyond the range of English interests, and consequently difficult to understand; yet which was by no means trivial. On the twelfth this feeling found utterance in an inquiry in Parliament, not as to the German intentions against France, but as to the German notes to Belgium. The question came up again on the nineteenth, and on the twentieth Gavard and Lord Derby discussed Bismarck's motives in this case—the two diplomats steering clear of any reference to France.

On the twenty-eighth of April the French acting minister was a bit more insistent. He tried to convince Lord Derby---a thankless task in any case,---of the importance of knowing "the purpose of these experiments of all sorts,---- spreading alarm throughout Europe." The remarkable doctrine which the Englishman propounded in this conversation (30) granted that a storm seemed to be approaching, but assumed that it was to be directed against Austria! Bismarck, thought Lord Derby, would "reproach Austria for making alliances."

Little satisfaction here, so far, for France. But Gavard was not to give up the task of overcoming the seeming sluggishness of the English government. On April thirtieth he received full instructions from Paris, with extracts from Gontaut's correspondence, and a report of the so-called "Radowitz doctrine" of the advantage to Germany of imminent attack. After an interview based on these revelations, Derby still clung to his fixed idea, but did concede the existence of grounds for alarm so far as to say that Russia might influence Bismarck to be

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(30) In which conviction he was evidently not alone, for Gavard refers to an article in the Spectator on this same theme---- either inspired by Derby, or written by someone of similar persuasions.

lenient to France. "No more than England," said Gavard, as he was instructed to say.

A week later England had made the overtures which France desired. (32) For on the sixth of May the Times published an article from its Paris correspondent, M. de Blowitz (33) describing the excitement, reporting the war rumours, and saying little about the probable source. In Germany the government suggests, the press responds; in England, one can almost go so far as to say that the opposite holds true. On the same day that this Paris letter was published, the Editorial column offered the

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(32) On the sixth of May Schouvaloff went on to London. On this same day Lord Derby reported to Gavard what Odo Russell had said of Bismarck: that he wished not war, but a war scare. May 9, telegram from Russell reporting the Czar's peaceful counsel. This same date telegram from Hohenlohe to Münster, informing him of the activities of the English ambassador in Berlin. (See text) It is difficult to tell exactly when Russell saw the German officials; whether before or after the sixth of May, when the English government had the impetus of the Times article and of Schouvaloff's arrival. We may infer that it was after, since Derby did not tell Gavard of Bismarck's telegram of thanks until May 11, (Monday). The Annual Register asserts that Russell saw Bismarck the tenth, Sunday.

(33) This article according to Gavard, was written "at the instance of the Duc Decazes." (p.24b) The letter in his correspondence gives the impression that he was not responsible, and the Moniteur expressly denied the official responsibility. There is a note in Hohenlohe's journal describing an interview with de Blowitz, in which the points treated in the Times article were touched upon. The fact, however, that the tone of the article was such that it finally resulted in something of a revulsion of feeling against Germany is a fairly good reason for thinking that Hohenlohe's inspiration was not the primary source of the article. The Duc Decazes probably recognized the effect such an article would have, and encouraged de Blowitz.



suggestion that the probable origin of the rumours "if--- probed deeply enough---would be found in the careless blustering of Prussian soldiers, in the strange recklessness of the Berlin press, in some empty menaces let fall by statesmen who place great reliance on the diplomatic value of fear." This was followed on the eighth by the editorial inference that "these apprehensions-----appear to be rather an induction from a variety of circumstances, most of them inevitable, than to arise from anything which is even remotely the act of the German government." The article of this date went on to attribute the bitterness as much to France as to Germany, and to emphasize the entirely unofficial character of the utterances of the German war party. On the tenth, however, the Times took the next step, and asserted: "The statesmen of Berlin cannot be acquitted of all blame for this mischievous scare." It is easy to see where English public opinion was tending.

Meanwhile Lord Derby had reported to Gavard that Odo Russell had tendered to good offices of the English gov-

ernment in Berlin; and Münster (34) had heard from Hohenlohe of this "laughable anxiety" for peace. Derby received a telegram from Bismarck after the Czar's arrival in Berlin, thanking him for England's offer of "kind and unnecessary services." (35) It was the fourteenth that Gortchakoff's circular telegram was sent.

The extent to which England had been shaken by the European disturbances is shown by the fact that Queen Victoria had written personally to the Emperor, in the interests of peace. England had actually come to feel, then, that intervention---dread word---was necessary. Schouvaloff, of course, was rejoiced; since he assumed that England had followed the lead of Russia. The explanations of the English government were greeted "with cheers" in the Commons also. The Times itself (May 12) reviewing the course of the excitement, and mentioning again its thesis of the inevitable bitterness between the two countries, concluded: "Who cannot see that we are likely to have a "scare" every six months or oftener?" There was need---so ran the article---of some powerful

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(34) German ambassador to England. From Hohenlohe, op.cit. II, p.156-7.

(35) Gavard, op.cit. p.247.

external influence, such as the Emperor of Russia, and, though this is not explicitly stated, the Queen of England, might exert.

England and Russia, then, felt that they had saved the peace of Europe. France as a whole felt that Germany had desired war, and was animated by extraordinary bitterness. (36) The Duc Decazes with his accustomed subtlety, inferred that Bismarck did not want war, but a war scare. (37) What was Bismarck's own testimony in the matter?

Bismarck

Perfectly conscious that he was under censure, Bismarck, during the visit of the Czar, was quite obviously in a bad temper, if we may believe Gontaut. It is a vivid picture that Gontaut presents to us: of the Chancellor in his wrath and pride alienating Italy, Belgium, the clergy; directing "coarse lunges against France; France meanwhile earnestly and prayerfully hoping for peace and quiet. But it must not be forgotten that Gontaut's despatches form the only detailed portrayal of the daily events available; other statements---the Times,

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(37) The opinion which was shared by Odo Russell. See Gavard op. cit., pp. 243-5.

Gavard's narrative, Hohenlohe's surprisingly reticent word or two---are only fragmentary. Gontaut was by 1875 personally antagonistic to Bismarck, with the aggravations of four years of little humiliations. Had we evidence from Hohenlohe to counterbalance Gontaut's, we might accept the latter with less of mental reservation. But Hohenlohe was wholly silent on the subject all through April, and indeed, up to his telegram of May ninth. (38)

#### Denials

Bismarck himself, in his autobiography, in a speech before the Reichstag, in a letter to the Emperor, and in conversations, denied entirely that he was responsible for the war rumours. (39) He attributed them (a) to Gortchakoff's jealousy, and Gontaut's enmity, together; (b) to the ill-will of the Empress and the circle of ladies about her. Both ideas are consistent with his usual habit of thought. (40) But the autobiography, no more than a speech before the Reichstag, is hardly a non-partisan document. (41) It was to his interest to represent his own culpability as a figment of non-German

(38) On this point Dreux has a note (Gontaut, *op. cit.*, II, ;. 534) that Hohenlohe may have been kept in ignorance of his plans by the Chancellor. This is decidedly unconvincing. The same commentator intimates that Hohenlohe in his note of September 8, 1875, (H. II, p. 171-2) referred to Bismarck's guilt. The note read as follows: "And he will not concede that anyone but the Empress shares the guilt. Dreux' inference seems wholly unwarrantable to me, in view of the tone of the note as a whole, although the elderly ambassador does not confess that he "found difficulty in following Bismarck's argument."

(39) See B., *op. cit.*, II, pp. 188-95. *Pol. Red. Vi*, pp. 333-55. Hohenlohe, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 171-2. *Anhang* ---- *Errinnerungen*: II, #271.

(40) The feeling toward Gortchakoff and Gontaut has been amply illustrated. On the opposition offered him by the Kaiserin see Hohenlohe, II, p. 110. Bismarck, II, p. 126. Gontaut, II, p. 635. Busch, *Secrets*, II, pp. 120-151, etc. etc.

(41) See Bibliography, D. (Appendix A below.)

imagination. The very fact that explanations before the Reichstag were necessary, indicates that all of Germany was far from sympathizing with the war party. (42)

Press

The crisis in its entirety, it is evident, was very largely precipitated and fostered in the press, English, French, and German. It was the Kölnische Zeitung and the Berliner Post which first voiced the agitation, and the Norddeutsche Zeitung which showed restraint, it will be remembered. After the visit of the Czar--indeed, on May ninth, the day of his arrival itself, as well as later, the latter organ adopted a tone of perfect peacefulness, holding to the theme that nothing had happened to disturb the peaceful relations between France and Germany. (43) The Deutsche Allgemeine Correspondenz, while conceding that the crisis was past, gave warning that military measures in France would continue to receive the watchfulness of Germany. According to the analysis of press relations made by Bismarck, (44) none of these journals was "official." Official character was limited to the Provincial Correspondenz, and to ad-

(42) See also Anhang, I, #286-8. Mittnacht to Bismarck of the re-organization of the diplomatic committee of the Reichstag, since that body was lately limited to conflicting newspaper reports of so vast and vital a matter as the possibility of war.

(43) See the Times May 12, quotations from foreign press; An. Reg. 1875; p. 219.

(44) In the speech before the Reichstag, 1876. See above, note 39.

vertisements. Because a minister is known once to have looked through an editorial of some paper, that organ is forever after regarded as directly inspired, said Bismarck. In spite of these denials, we know that none of the supposedly offending papers were of the opposition, and that Bismarck could have checked them if he so desired. Such an attitude as that of the Berliner Post on April ninth, could never have dared risk his disapproval. Indeed, in the very speech on the press, referred to, he admitted that the Post article was not groundless; that every thinking man must concede that the lust for revenge in France would be strengthened by the rapid reconstitution of the army.

Conclusions.

From the foregoing evidence it seems possible to draw the following conclusions: (a) That Bismarck did not desire war, nor did the Duc Decazes.

(b) That Bismarck was acting along the line of that policy of intimidation pursued by him since 1871, in allowing the press alarm subsequent to the French mil-

itary laws.

(c) That he had no intention, however, of allowing the matter to go farther than the affair of the Pastoral letters, for example, and was as astounded as he was annoyed at the arousing of European alarm. (45)

(d) That this very stimulation of European sentiment was to the interest of, and largely due to, the Duc Decazes.

(e) That Gortchakoff was eager for a chance to display his own importance, and interfered partly from this motive, partly because of a desire to take a step toward a Franco-Russian policy to which the Emperor of Russia could not so entirely accede. (46)

The crisis past, what is the result? Decazes seemed to have made a start toward the goal he had looked for: Russian alliance. Bismarck, unexpectedly to himself, had learned that he could not browbeat France with impunity forever. Both governments, by force of circumstances,

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(45) Decazes attributed Bismarck's talk of resigning to sulks brought about by the European exhortations. As a matter of fact, Bismarck's first suggestion of resignation at this time was made May 4, Anhang, I, #266-7. This was before the Czar's visit or Odo Russell's.

(46) The "semi-official" despatch from St. Petersburg spoken of in An. Reg. 1875, p. 220, containing the information that Russia had delivered no note to the Berlin government, and that the Czar was convinced of the Kaiser's peaceful sentiments, should not be forgotten.

and still more, of habit, had looked upon each step, heard each word, of the other, far more seriously than there was need. Had war burst out in 1875, it would have been not the result of any provocation of one government to the other, but the expression of a deep, slow-moving, and enduring force; the traditional opposition of the interests of the countries on either side of the Rhine.



Conclusion.  
After 1875.

As the Kulturkampf was the focus of German attention during the first five years of the decade beginning with the Peace of Frankfort, so, in the summer of 1875, the Eastern question comes to be the centre for the remainder of the period. The outbreak of trouble in Bosnia and Herzegovina turned the eyes of all Europe away from the attenuated hostilities of the Western nations, to the horrifying conflicts in the Balkans. Here, as Bismarck had earlier in the year commissioned Hohenlohe to say to Decazes, France and Germany could have no violently conflicting interests, and might even act in concert. In spite of the new strength and courage with which France viewed her future, after the favorable demonstrations which Russia had given her in the spring, she had still little weight in the counsels of Europe, and this she knew. What she had gained by the Russian support and the English rebuke to Bismarck, was the right to be left alone.

Following the path of French and German relationship through the tortuous maze of international complications, we find it blocked out only indirectly. France did not forget her problem of the years up to 1875; indeed, the Duc Decazes confessed it on his mind, while he was determining the policy of France in the period before the outbreak of the Eastern war. (1) Bismarck had trained his opponent so well that the Duke was reduced not only to circumspection, but to a sort of suspension. (2)

Bismarck, too, gave frequent hints that he was not forgetting his age-long enemy. Such were the German press comments on the politics of French parties. (3) and the urgency of Bismarck through Hohenlohe, that Gontaut be recalled. This recall, which took place January fifth, 1878, was an excellent omen for the stability of Franco-Ferman relations, since the ill-feeling of the Chancellor for the monarchical and Catholic ambassador was always likely to affect the feeling of the Chancellor for France as a whole. (4) This tension between the two has been too abundantly illustrated throughout this paper

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(1) See Gontaut, op. cit. II, p. 542. "Far from claiming a leading role for France in these dangerous proceedings which neither his interest, nor his position at the time allowed, he was only concerned to do all he could for the maintenance of unanimity, so much did he fear lest Prince Bismarck could use the complications and the conflict threatening Europe, against us." (Drieux)

(2) See despatch to Gontaut, ibid. pp. 557-560.

(3) Ibid., II, Chapter IV entire. Busch, op. cit. II, pp. 174-5.

Bismarck's speech in Reichstag, Pol. Red. XII, pp. 169-212. (11 Jan. '87)

(4) Gontaut, op. cit. II, Chapter VIII.

to require elucidation here.

The maxim upon which Bismarck had built his whole policy toward France was that France held no terrors for Germany so long as she remained without allies. France had recognized the truth of this, but until 1875 had been unable to act upon it. After this date, the fear that Eastern affairs would afford France the opportunity so far denied her, harrassed German statesmanship in the midst of these preoccupations. It was to be expected that France and Russia would draw together openly, after the "service" of the latter in May. Decazes had been jubilant at that time about the Russian support afforded him. But he had not reckoned on any necessity for the payment of a debt of gratitude, and Russia, in her excitement and her difficulties in the last six months of 1875, and in 1876, was a little too importunate. France was in no position to be drawn into a struggle; better to put off the day of cementing her foreign alliances, than to risk taking part in any hostilities in which she had no direct end to gain. During 1876, therefore,

there grew up a certain coolness between France and Russia, (5) rising very largely out of Gortchakoff's tactics. This could not fail to be apparent to Germany, and as the months went on, her vigilance relaxed.

It must be remembered that the Kulturkampf, shifted from the centre of attention as it was by more pressing questions, did not end with 1875. The repulsion of the German government from anything that savored of Ultramontanism continued to affect relations with the French. Out of this grew a noteworthy development: the favour shown by Bismarck to the Radical party in France. One of the Catholic ministers remarked: "And they prefer to us-- My Heaven!--the Radicals!" Such was actually the case, in so far as Bismarck made it clear that he regarded the continued triumphs of the ultra-conservative party as directly menacing to Germany; but the Radicalism which he smiled upon had little in common with that which set up the Commune in 1871. The projected visit of Gambetta to Berlin for an interview with Bismarck, in the latter months of 1877 and early in 1878 (6) seemed for a day to

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(5) Ibid. Iv, Chapter V.

(6) Anhang---Erinnerungen II, #309. The letter of Count Herbert Bismarck, Oct. 30, '77; #2. See Gambetta's comment on B's speech in Reichstag, Feb. 19, 1878, quoted Hanotaux, Iv, p. 258: "There now rises within the man the radiant dawn of rightful dealing."

prophecy that France might at last emerge free of the shadow of Clericalism which Germany saw always hovering near. In a letter of Count Herbert Bismarck to the common friend who proposed the meeting, Bismarck's convictions and political views are set forth at length: the pacific intentions of Germany; the fear of clericalism; the belief that France also was largely pacific; the belief that a Restoration would inevitably mean attack on Germany. An outstanding phrase of this letter reads: "We need and wish for no war with France, and we also believe that there is no reason why it must of necessity break out, so long as the Pope is not supreme there. There was no new element here which was not introduced into a hundred diplomatic interviews in the first years after the close of the war; no point of protest which was not made before the fall of Thiers. The point of difference lies in the mildness of tone, as compared with the tone of diplomatic communications of Germany to France during and immediately after the period of occupation.

The visit never took place; and indeed, it was a dangerous plan, from the point of view of Gambetta's position in France. But the motive which prompted it was the telling thing. Bismarck seemed to be willing at last for a better modus vivendi with France.

This was just before the Berlin Congress. France took part in the series of diplomatic skirmishes which go by that name, but without hesitation. Gambetta, thinking for his country, dared to acknowledge that he was afraid. But the part which the country actually played, was nothing if not creditable; inconspicuous, but gratefully so, since to be conspicuous in the Congress meant to be under the ceaseless, piercing regard of the great dictator of the group. France being neither capable nor desirous of any independent policy, her assent served as a balance wheel, and in consequence she found herself treated with more consideration than she had known since the days of Napoleon the Third. The accepted traditions of those still somewhat mysterious negotiations is that Lord Salisbury, the English representative, said to

Waddington, of France: "Do as you please in Tunis." This was in connection with English colonial policy, especially in Cyprus. (7) But the suggestion could hardly have come from Salisbury without the sanction of Bismarck, and political historians unite in interpreting it as the direct outcome of Bismarck's own idea that to turn France loose in Tunis was, in the first place, to strengthen German relations with Italy, which would turn to Germany in self-defense; and in the second, to divert the attention of France from European affairs, and her near neighbor.

The Congress finally marked the return of France to a position independent of Germany; and the persuasion of Germany that to reign in one great country was not for long compatible with reigning over her nearest enemy! After the Congress, each of the two very distinctly took up her own burdens, and went her own way. The feverish period was over. But this was not the only result of importance for this particular international situation. It also threw light upon the instability of the Three

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(7) So far as we know the reservation stipulated by France at the very beginning of the Congress--that Egypt should not be discussed--was not violated.

Emperors' Alliance, by bringing into clear relief the fundamental differences in the interests of the three imperial courts. Hence, after the Congress, although the understanding which had ostensibly existed intact since 1872, (in spite of Russia's backing of France in 1875) was not explicitly repudiated, its hollowness was exposed. "Put not your trust in Emperors," might well have been Bismarck's text.

With France recovered, or well recovering, and the unity of the three central European nations disturbed, the necessity for some new strengthening of his position was brought home to Bismarck; and out of this necessity grew the Dual Alliance of 1879, with Austria, which in 1882, by the addition of Italy became the Triple Alliance. Bismarck's own statement of his policy and motives is more illuminating than any other could be. (A) He states first of all:

(a) That his first idea of a Triple Alliance was such an one as might have grown out of the meeting of the Three Emperors; with the addi-

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(8) Bismarck, op. cit., II, Chapter XXIX.



tion of "monarchic Italy."

(b) That the stumbling blocks in the way were  
 (1) Russia's policy toward France; the "limit  
 beyond which" the weakening of France would not  
 be allowed to go; and (2) the differences in  
 the interests of the three powers in regard to  
 the Eastern question.

He then analyzes the necessity of alliance for Ger-  
 many:

(c) Two great European powers having been beat-  
en in the field, could but be desirous of re-  
venge.

(d) Old elements in Austria still surviving, the  
 ancient rivalry for the leadership of Germany  
 might again become a factor in Austrian policy.

(e) The secret convention of Reichstadt (9)  
 evidenced the possibility of a Franco-Austro-  
 Russian alliance, since France would inevitably  
 join a coalition against Germany.

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(9) The secret meeting of Russian and Austrian diplomats, in  
 July, 1875, which was a plan of Gortchakoff's. At this meeting  
 Russia and Austria agreed to act together, and independent of  
 Germany, if need be, in order to secure the ends which each  
 sought in the East. It was later asserted by Bismarck that the  
 division of things after the Russo-Turkish war, and in partic-  
 ular the annexation of the Eastern provinces by Austria, was  
 on the basis of this convention.

In making her choice of possible allies, Germany must be guided by the following considerations:

(f) That the constitution of England prevents any alliance with her on a sure footing, since one government may adopt an entirely different policy from that of its predecessor.

(g) That Italy would not promise sufficient counterppise to an alliance of the other three powers (i.e. France, Russia, and Austria) even were she free from French and Austrian influence.

(h) That Russia would give Germany the advantage of material force, and of the ancient tradition of dynastic friendship.

(i) That Austrian alliance would satisfy all German parties in some sort; the Catholics, obviously; the Conservatives, because of what he calls the "conservative nimbus" of the Austrian name; that this alliance would carry on the tradition of the Holy Roman Empire; that

it would fill the need of decisive measures against Russia. The difficulties, on the other hand, with an Austrian alliance, would be the imperfect appreciation of political possibilities by the German element in Austria; the religious question, and the possibility of a rapprochement of France and Austria on the basis of their common Catholicism; the Polish question, in which Russia might induce Austria to give up Galicia, for compensation on the Danube, while Prussian Poland could not be abandoned by Prussia without danger to the state itself.

(j) That "to all who knew the history and character of the Gallic race, it was obvious that that power (i.e. Germany's ally) could never be France." (10)

On the Austrian side, also, there was need of support; if Austria sought this from Russia, Germany would be left isolated on the continent, because of her relation with France. If Austria turned to France and possi-

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(10) Bismarck, op. cit., II, p.255.

bly England, Germany would be forced to subject herself to the Russian alliance, with its dangerous implication of common action on points in which Germany had no interest. Therefore, Bismarck made the choice of Austria, and undertook the negotiations of 1879, between Austria and Germany, which resulted in the Treaty of Alliance of October seventh, 1879. (11) This treaty, published in 1888, was largely directed toward defence against Russia, and we find most writers dealing with the Triple Alliance as distinctly intanded for this purpose, with the inference that Germany's greatest danger in the last years of the nineteenth century was from her neighbor on the north.

But as to this last, we have Bismarck's contrary statement. He mentions the existence of an analgous treaty of the two powers for defense against France, not published at the time of publication of the agreement for defense against Russia. Although admitting that the alliance does not provide the same defense against France as against Russia, Bismarck attributed this to the fact

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(11) Hertslet, State Papers, Vol. 73, p. 270.

that Austria was not threatened by the Western country, and even had some basis for common action with her. (12) The Alliance as a whole, therefore, was more advantageous to Austria than to Germany, for Bismarck specifically says that Germany is primarily threatened by a French war, and suffers her greatest danger on her Western frontier, "by reason of the aggressive, plundering instincts of the French people." (13)

Here is the underlying theme of this period of Franco-German relations, clearly expressed. These rigours and petty exactions, these constantly recurring difficulties, had more behind them than the fact of the War of 1870. To Bismarck, this underlying motive was opposition to the "aggressive, plundering instincts;" to the French, it was the preservation of the balance of power, and the diminution of the overwhelming aggrandizement of Germany. It is for this reason that the relations between France and Germany have almost always, and especially since the War of 1870, been a "latent state of war." The wonder is not that France has at

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(12) See above, page 149.

(13) B., op. cit. II, p.279. It is important to note, also, that Italy came into the alliance in 1882 because of her grievance---not against Russia---but against France.

last joined Russia in an attack primarily occasioned by the Balkan situation, but that peace has been preserved between the two, and colonial and commercial projects allowed to develop with so little hindrance, until the last years. Though pacificists may advance every plausible argument to convince the world that there is no fundamental opposition of the German to the French temperament, the fulfilment of Bismarck's prophecy of war "when France has recovered" is being enacted before us.

(14) When the struggle is over, who can say what will take the place of Bismarck's great work, the Triple Alliance? There are no more Bismarck's now, in our industrialized and commercialized world. Perhaps we are watching the death struggle of the old world which made the policy of a Bismarck possible; which made "all treaties of peace provisional, and dependent on conflict" or the mere wish to avoid it. (15) The idealists would have us believe it.

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(14) Bismarck in the Reichstag, Jan. 11, 1887: "France is like an engine which is filled up with steam to the point of explosion, and a spark, a clumsy movement of the hand, may suffice to cause this explosion---to bring on war. However, the spark is so carefully tended that it seems at first sight that it will never be used for causing a conflagration in the neighboring country." Pol. Red. XII, p. 190.

(15) See above, page 3.

Appendix A.  
Critical Bibliography  
of works bearing on  
this period and topic.

Brief Bibliography  
of works bearing on this period  
and topic.

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tions.
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Gontaut (see p 3) Meine Botschafterkeit am Berliner Hof. Gen. der Infanterie z.D.V. Pfaff. This translation used exclusively in this paper. Relentless anti-Germanism in every letter; every note. Hostility to Bismarck. Alarmist tendency.

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1907. One gets very little information from this punctilious old gentleman, but the German point of view.

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Paris. 1900. Correspondence. "Plusieurs lettres qui n'ont pas été retrouvées, manquent à cette correspondance, Néanmoins, celles qui sont ici reproduites, permettent de suivre le progrès des négociations qui s'ouvrirent entre les Cabinets de Paris et de Berlin.-----" Thus characterized by the introductory note. Contains letters of Thiers, of Pouyer-Quertier, Gontaut-Biron, Saint Vallier, Manteuffel, von Fabrice, Arnim. Wholly without editorial comment save for one explanation of an apparent discrepancy in dates.

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furter Frieden bis Zen Gegenwart Stuttgart 1909.

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1871-1900. Four vols. Paris.n.d.English translation, E. Sparvel-Bayly. N.Y. 1909. This translation used in this paper. Contains many selections from letters, notes, memoirs and documents, not here available; though accurate citation of references is most unfortunately largely neglected. Its political bias in favor of Republicanism makes itself felt.

Köschwitz, Dr. Edouard. Les Français, avant, pendant, et après la guerre de 1870-0. Translated from the German by Jules Felix. Paris. 1897.

#Laur, Francis. The Heart of Gambetta. Translated from the French by V.M. Montagu. London, N.Y. 1908. Contains letters in regard to the proposed visit to Bismarck in 1878.

#Mathieu-Bodet. Les Finances Françaises de 1870 à 1878.

Tardieu, André. France and the Alliances. MacMillan. N.Y. and London. 1908. The preface states that: "In this diplomatic drama----France has fought for the balance of power.----It exists today.

But it is unstable. The ehirs of Bismarck have not yet resigned themselves to the loss of the hegemony which, though it could be only temporary, he had secured for his country." This is the theme of the book. It is not unprejudiced in favour of France.

D. Criticism of the trustworthiness of Bismarck as a Historian.

Ford, Guy Stanton. Bismarck as Historiographer. Report of the American Historical Association for 1909, pp.125-139. Pages 128-9, note, contain bibliography of criticism, and appreciation of the Gedanken und Erinnerungen.

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Versuch einer kritischen Würdigung. 1899.

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Meinecke, .Historische Zeitschrift Band 82, pp.282-295.

E. Periodical Literature reflecting Contemporary Opinion of the Triple Alliance.



Ellis, J. Barker. The Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance. Nineteenth Century and After, Vol. 64, pp.1-17.

Blind, Karl. A Plea for the Triple Alliance. National Review, Vol.17, pp.767-783. Pro-German.

Crispi, Francesco. The Dual and Triple Alliance. Nineteenth Century, Vol.42, pp.673-7. Baldest of statements.

See Library of Congress, List of References on Europe and International Politics; H.B.Meyer, Chief Bibliographer. 1914.

Note: The most of this periodical literature on the alliance is on the occasion of renewal of the alliance; of on the position of the alliance in regard to the Eastern question and the Balkan wars. There seems to have been very little discussion of the possible meaning of Bismarck's meeting with Andrassy in 1879. In regard to Section B, it should be stated that one great difficulty which confronts the student of this period, in addition to the fact that diplomatic archives are to a great extent unopened, is the preponderance of French memoirs over the German. This inequality makes just inferences purely inferences, without decisive quality.

Treaty Provisions for Evacuation.

Preliminary Treaty of Versailles. Feb. 26, 1871. (Hertslet, State Papers. 62, p. 59)

- 1) After ratification of present treaty; City of Paris as far as forts on left bank of Seine.
- 2) As early as possible: Calvados, l'Orne, la Sarthe, l'Eure-et-Loir, Loiret, Loir-et-Cher, Indes-et-Loire, Yonne. To left bank of Seine: Seine-Inferieure, l'Eure, Seine-et-Marne, l'Aube, Cote-d'Or.

3) Between right bank of Seine and frontier, gradually, from ratification of definitive peace, and payment of first demi-milliard.

a) After first half-milliard: Somme, Oise, Seine-Inferieure, Seine-et-Oise, Seine-et-Marne, on right bank. (See 2)

b) After payment of second milliard, not more than: Marne, Ardennes, Haute-Marne, Vosges, Meurthe fortress of Belfort, to be occupied.

German troops not to exceed 50,000.

Treaty of Peace. May 10, 1871. (Hertslet, State Papers, 62, p. 77)

1) After ratification, and first half milliard:

Somme, Seine-Inferieure, l'Eure.

2) When German government considers order sufficiently established: l'Oise, Seine-et-Oise, Seine-et-Marne, Seine, forts of Paris. Not to be retained in any case, after payment of third half-milliard.

3) "The stipulations of the Treaty of February twenty-sixth relative to the occupation of French territories after the payment of two milliards remain in force."

Convention, Oct. 12, 1871. (Hertslet, op. cit. 62, p. 87.)

After payment of fourth milliard and interest:

l'Aisne, Cote-d'Or, Haute-Saone, Doubs, Jura.

Convention. June 29, 1872. (Ibid. 62, p. 983.)

Three milliards in three installments to March 1, 1875.

1) Marne and Haute-Marne, fifteen days after first half-milliard.

2) Ardennes and Vosges, " " " second half-milliard.

3) Meuse and Meurthe-et-Moselle, fifteen days after  
third milliard, and interest.

4) Belfort, as 3).

Convention. March 15, 1873, (Ibid, 63, p. 1011.)

Four weeks after the fifth of July; Belfort,  
Ardennes, Meurthe-et-Moselle, Meuse, except Verdun.  
Verdun, fifteen days after September fifth.

Appendix B.

Map of the Eastern Border  
of France, after the War  
of 1870. With an explanatory  
note on the treaty provisions.

# The Eastern Border of France after the War of 1870.



Scale of miles - Eng.

— = Old Boundary  
 --- = New ..  
 - - - - - = Departments evacuated

after conclusion of  
 March 15-1873.  
 (P) = East evacuation. (M) = (Sept. 15-1873)