

underwent no change on this account.

Having drawn these preliminary conclusions from our premises, we shall see, in our next, how the aforesaid various classes of the German people were set into movement one after the other, and what character the movement assumed on the outbreak of the French Revolution of 1848.

LONDON, September, 1851.

FOOTNOTES:

[4] The "eleven men" were: Dupont de l'Eure, Lamartine, Crémieux, Aarago, Ledru Rollin, Garnier-Pages, Marrast, Clocon, Louis Blanc, and Albert.

[5] The "Zollverein" was the German Customs Union. It was originally founded in 1827, and largely extended after the war of 1866. Since the unification of Germany as an "Empire" in 1871, the States belonging to the Zollverein have been included in the German Empire. The object of the Zollverein was to obtain a uniform rate of customs duties all over Germany.

II.

THE PRUSSIAN STATE.

OCTOBER 28th, 1851.

The political movement of the middle class or bourgeoisie, in Germany, may be dated from 1840. It had been preceded by symptoms showing that the moneyed and industrial class of that country was ripening into a state which would no longer allow it to continue apathetic and passive under the pressure of a half-feudal, half-bureaucratic Monarchism. The smaller princes of Germany, partly to insure to themselves a greater independence against the supremacy of Austria and Prussia, or against the influence of the nobility of their own States, partly in order to consolidate into a whole the disconnected provinces united under their rule by the Congress of Vienna, one after the other granted constitutions of a more or less liberal character. They could do so without any danger to themselves; for if the Diet of the Confederation, this mere puppet of Austria and Prussia, was to encroach upon their independence as sovereigns, they knew that in resisting its dictates they would be backed by public opinion and the Chambers; and if, on the contrary, these Chambers grew too strong, they could readily command the power of the Diet to break down all opposition. The Bavarian, Würtemberg, Baden or Hanoverian Constitutional institutions could not, under such circumstances, give rise to any serious struggle for political power, and, therefore, the great bulk of the German middle class kept very generally aloof from the petty squabbles raised in the Legislatures of the small States, well knowing that without a fundamental change in the policy and constitution of the two great powers of Germany, no secondary efforts and victories would be of any avail. But, at the same time, a race of Liberal lawyers, professional oppositionists, sprung up in these small assemblies: the Rottecks, the Welckers, the Roemers, the Jordans, the Stüves, the Eisenmanns, those great "popular men" (*Volksmänner*) who, after a more or less noisy, but always unsuccessful, opposition of twenty years, were carried to the summit of power by the revolutionary springtide of 1848, and who, after having there shown their utter impotency and insignificance, were hurled down again in a moment. These first specimen upon German soil of the trader in politics and opposition, by their speeches and writings made familiar to the German ear the language of Constitutionalism, and by their very existence foreboded the approach of a time when the middle class would seize upon and restore to their proper meaning political phrases which these talkative attorneys and professors were in the habit of using without knowing much about the sense originally attached to them.

German literature, too, labored under the influence of the political excitement into which all Europe had been thrown by the events of 1830. A crude Constitutionalism, or a still cruder Republicanism, were preached by

almost all writers of the time. It became more and more the habit, particularly of the inferior sorts of literati, to make up for the want of cleverness in their productions, by political allusions which were sure to attract attention. Poetry, novels, reviews, the drama, every literary production teemed with what was called "tendency," that is with more or less timid exhibitions of an anti-governmental spirit. In order to complete the confusion of ideas reigning after 1830 in Germany, with these elements of political opposition there were mixed up ill-digested university-recollections of German philosophy, and misunderstood gleanings from French Socialism, particularly Saint-Simonism; and the clique of writers who expatiated upon this heterogeneous conglomerate of ideas, presumptuously called themselves "Young Germany," or "the Modern School." They have since repented their youthful sins, but not improved their style of writing.

Lastly, German philosophy, that most complicated, but at the same time most sure thermometer of the development of the German mind, had declared for the middle class, when Hegel in his "Philosophy of Law" pronounced Constitutional Monarchy to be the final and most perfect form of government. In other words, he proclaimed the approaching advent of the middle classes of the country to political power. His school, after his death, did not stop here. While the more advanced section of his followers, on one hand, subjected every religious belief to the ordeal of a rigorous criticism, and shook to its foundation the ancient fabric of Christianity, they at the same time brought forward bolder political principles than hitherto it had been the fate of German ears to hear expounded, and attempted to restore to glory the memory of the heroes of the first French Revolution. The abstruse philosophical language in which these ideas were clothed, if it obscured the mind of both the writer and the reader, equally blinded the eyes of the censor, and thus it was that the "young Hegelian" writers enjoyed a liberty of the Press unknown in every other branch of literature.

Thus it was evident that public opinion was undergoing a great change in Germany. By degrees the vast majority of those classes whose education or position in life enabled them, under an Absolute Monarchy, to gain some political information, and to form anything like an independent political opinion, united into one mighty phalanx of opposition against the existing system. And in passing judgment upon the slowness of political development in Germany no one ought to omit taking into account the difficulty of obtaining correct information upon any subject in a country where all sources of information were under the control of the Government, where from the Ragged School and the Sunday School to the Newspaper and University nothing was said, taught, printed, or published but what had previously obtained its approbation. Look at Vienna, for instance. The people of Vienna, in industry and manufactures, second to none perhaps in Germany; in spirit, courage, and revolutionary energy, proving themselves far superior to all, were yet more ignorant as to their real interests, and committed more blunders during the Revolution than any others, and this was due in a very great measure to the almost absolute ignorance with regard to the very commonest political subjects in which Metternich's Government had succeeded in keeping them.

It needs no further explanation why, under such a system, political information was an almost exclusive monopoly of such classes of society as could afford to pay for its being smuggled into the country, and more particularly of those whose interests were most seriously attacked by the existing state of things, namely, the manufacturing and commercial classes. They, therefore, were the first to unite in a mass against the continuance of a more or less disguised Absolutism, and from their passing into the ranks of the opposition must be dated the beginning of the real revolutionary movement in Germany.

The oppositional pronunciamento of the German bourgeoisie may be dated from 1840, from the death of the late King of Prussia, the last surviving founder of the Holy Alliance of 1815. The new King was known to be no supporter of the predominantly bureaucratic and military monarchy of his father. What the French middle class had expected from the advent of Louis XVI., the German bourgeoisie hoped, in some measure, from Frederick William IV. of Prussia. It was agreed upon all hands that the old system was exploded, worn-out, and must be given up; and what had been borne in silence under the old King now was loudly proclaimed to be intolerable.

But if Louis XVI., "Louis le Désiré," had been a plain, unpretending simpleton, half conscious of his own

nullity, without any fixed opinions, ruled principally by the habits contracted during his education, "Frederick William le Désiré" was something quite different. While he certainly surpassed his French original in weakness of character, he was neither without pretensions nor without opinions. He had made himself acquainted, in an amateur sort of way, with the rudiments of most sciences, and thought himself, therefore, learned enough to consider final his judgment upon every subject. He made sure he was a first-rate orator, and there was certainly no commercial traveller in Berlin who could beat him either in prolixity of pretended wit, or in fluency of elocution. And, above all, he had his opinions. He hated and despised the bureaucratic element of the Prussian Monarchy, but only because all his sympathies were with the feudal element. Himself one of the founders of, and chief contributors to, the *Berlin Political Weekly Paper*, the so-called Historical School (a school living upon the ideas of Bonald, De Maistre, and other writers of the first generation of French Legitimists), he aimed at a restoration, as complete as possible, of the predominant social position of the nobility. The King, first nobleman of his realm, surrounded in the first instance by a splendid court of mighty vassals, princes, dukes, and counts; in the second instance, by a numerous and wealthy lower nobility; ruling according to his discretion over his loyal burgesses and peasants, and thus being himself the chief of a complete hierarchy of social ranks or castes, each of which was to enjoy its particular privileges, and to be separated from the others by the almost insurmountable barrier of birth, or of a fixed, inalterable social position; the whole of these castes, or "estates of the realm" balancing each other at the same time so nicely in power and influence that a complete independence of action should remain to the King--such was the *beau idéal* which Frederick William IV. undertook to realize, and which he is again trying to realize at the present moment.

It took some time before the Prussian bourgeoisie, not very well versed in theoretical questions, found out the real purport of their King's tendency. But what they very soon found out was the fact that he was bent upon things quite the reverse of what they wanted. Hardly did the new King find his "gift of the gab" unfettered by his father's death than he set about proclaiming his intentions in speeches without number; and every speech, every act of his, went far to estrange from him the sympathies of the middle class. He would not have cared much for that, if it had not been for some stern and startling realities which interrupted his poetic dreams. Alas, that romanticism is not very quick at accounts, and that feudalism, ever since Don Quixote, reckons without its host! Frederick William IV. partook too much of that contempt of ready cash which ever has been the noblest inheritance of the sons of the Crusaders. He found at his accession a costly, although parsimoniously arranged system of government, and a moderately filled State Treasury. In two years every trace of a surplus was spent in court festivals, royal progresses, largesses, subventions to needy, seedy, and greedy noblemen, etc., and the regular taxes were no longer sufficient for the exigencies of either Court or Government. And thus His Majesty found himself very soon placed between a glaring deficit on one side, and a law of 1820 on the other, by which any new loan, or any increase of the then existing taxation was made illegal without the assent of "the future Representation of the People." This representation did not exist; the new King was less inclined than even his father to create it; and if he had been, he knew that public opinion had wonderfully changed since his accession.

Indeed, the middle classes, who had partly expected that the new King would at once grant a Constitution, proclaim the Liberty of the Press, Trial by Jury, etc., etc.--in short, himself take the lead of that peaceful revolution which they wanted in order to obtain political supremacy--the middle classes had found out their error, and had turned ferociously against the King. In the Rhine Provinces, and more or less generally all over Prussia, they were so exasperated that they, being short themselves of men able to represent them in the Press, went to the length of an alliance with the extreme philosophical party, of which we have spoken above. The fruit of this alliance was the *Rhenish Gazette* of Cologne,[6] a paper which was suppressed after fifteen months' existence, but from which may be dated the existence of the Newspaper Press in Germany. This was in 1842.

The poor King, whose commercial difficulties were the keenest satire upon his Mediæval propensities, very soon found out that he could not continue to reign without making some slight concession to the popular outcry for that "Representation of the People," which, as the last remnant of the long-forgotten promises of

1813 and 1815, had been embodied in the law of 1820. He found the least objectionable mode of satisfying this untoward law in calling together the Standing Committees of the Provincial Diets. The Provincial Diets had been instituted in 1823. They consisted for every one of the eight provinces of the kingdom:--(1) Of the higher nobility, the formerly sovereign families of the German Empire, the heads of which were members of the Diet by birthright. (2) Of the representatives of the knights, or lower nobility. (3) Of representatives of towns. (4) Of deputies of the peasantry, or small farming class. The whole was arranged in such a manner that in every province the two sections of the nobility always had a majority of the Diet. Every one of these eight Provincial Diets elected a Committee, and these eight Committees were now called to Berlin in order to form a Representative Assembly for the purpose of voting the much-desired loan. It was stated that the Treasury was full, and that the loan was required, not for current wants, but for the construction of a State railway. But the united Committees gave the King a flat refusal, declaring themselves incompetent to act as the representatives of the people, and called upon His Majesty to fulfil the promise of a Representative Constitution which his father had given, when he wanted the aid of the people against Napoleon.

The sitting of the united Committees proved that the spirit of opposition was no longer confined to the bourgeoisie. A part of the peasantry had joined them, and many nobles, being themselves large farmers on their own properties, and dealers in corn, wool, spirits, and flax, requiring the same guarantees against absolutism, bureaucracy, and feudal restoration, had equally pronounced against the Government, and for a Representative Constitution. The King's plan had signally failed; he had got no money, and had increased the power of the opposition. The subsequent sitting of the Provincial Diets themselves was still more unfortunate for the King. All of them asked for reforms, for the fulfilment of the promises of 1813 and 1815, for a Constitution and a Free Press; the resolutions to this effect of some of them were rather disrespectfully worded, and the ill-humored replies of the exasperated King made the evil still greater.

In the meantime, the financial difficulties of the Government went on increasing. For a time, abatements made upon the moneys appropriated for the different public services, fraudulent transactions with the "Seehandlung," a commercial establishment speculating and trading for account and risk of the State, and long since acting as its money-broker, had sufficed to keep up appearances; increased issues of State paper-money had furnished some resources; and the secret, upon the whole, had been pretty well kept. But all these contrivances were soon exhausted. There was another plan tried: the establishment of a bank, the capital of which was to be furnished partly by the State and partly by private shareholders; the chief direction to belong to the State, in such a manner as to enable the Government to draw upon the funds of this bank to a large amount, and thus to repeat the same fraudulent transactions that would no longer do with the "Seehandlung." But, as a matter of course, there were no capitalists to be found who would hand over their money upon such conditions; the statutes of the bank had to be altered, and the property of the shareholders guaranteed from the encroachments of the Treasury, before any shares were subscribed for. Thus, this plan having failed, there remained nothing but to try a loan, if capitalists could be found who would lend their cash without requiring the permission and guarantee of that mysterious "future Representation of the People." Rothschild was applied to, and he declared that if the loan was to be guaranteed by this "Representation of the People," he would undertake the thing at a moment's notice--if not, he could not have anything to do with the transaction.

Thus every hope of obtaining money had vanished, and there was no possibility of escaping the fatal "Representation of the People." Rothschild's refusal was known in autumn, 1846, and in February of the next year the King called together all the eight Provincial Diets to Berlin, forming them into one "United Diet." This Diet was to do the work required, in case of need, by the law of 1820; it was to vote loans and increased taxes, but beyond that it was to have no rights. Its voice upon general legislation was to be merely consultative; it was to assemble, not at fixed periods, but whenever it pleased the King; it was to discuss nothing but what the Government pleased to lay before it. Of course, the members were very little satisfied with the part they were expected to perform. They repeated the wishes they had enounced when they met in the provincial assemblies; the relations between them and the Government soon became acrimonious, and when the loan, which was again stated to be required for railway constructions, was demanded from them, they again refused to grant it.

This vote very soon brought their sitting to a close. The King, more and more exasperated, dismissed them with a reprimand, but still remained without money. And, indeed, he had every reason to be alarmed at his position, seeing that the Liberal League, headed by the middle classes, comprising a large part of the lower nobility, and all the different sections of the lower orders--that this Liberal League was determined to have what it wanted. In vain the King had declared, in the opening speech, that he would never, never grant a Constitution in the modern sense of the word; the Liberal League insisted upon such a modern, anti-feudal, Representative Constitution, with all its sequels, Liberty of the Press, Trial by Jury, etc.; and before they got it, not a farthing of money would they grant. There was one thing evident: that things could not go on long in this manner, and that either one of the parties must give way, or that a rupture--a bloody struggle--must ensue. And the middle classes knew that they were on the eve of a revolution, and they prepared themselves for it. They sought to obtain by every possible means the support of the working class of the towns, and of the peasantry in the agricultural districts, and it is well known that there was, in the latter end of 1847, hardly a single prominent political character among the bourgeoisie who did not proclaim himself a "Socialist," in order to insure to himself the sympathy of the proletarian class. We shall see these "Socialists" at work by and by.

This eagerness of the leading bourgeoisie to adopt, at least the outward show of Socialism, was caused by a great change that had come over the working classes of Germany. There had been ever since 1840 a fraction of German workmen, who, travelling in France and Switzerland, had more or less imbibed the crude Socialist or Communist notions then current among the French workmen. The increasing attention paid to similar ideas in France ever since 1840 made Socialism and Communism fashionable in Germany also, and as far back as 1843, all newspapers teemed with discussions of social questions. A school of Socialists very soon formed itself in Germany, distinguished more for the obscurity than for the novelty of its ideas; its principal efforts consisted in the translation of French Fourierist, Saint-Simonian, and other doctrines into the abstruse language of German philosophy. The German Communist school, entirely different from this sect, was formed about the same time.

In 1844, there occurred the Silesian weavers' riots, followed by the insurrection of the calico printers of Prague. These riots, cruelly suppressed, riots of working men not against the Government, but against their employers, created a deep sensation, and gave a new stimulus to Socialist and Communist propaganda amongst the working people. So did the bread riots during the year of famine, 1847. In short, in the same manner as Constitutional Opposition rallied around its banner the great bulk of the propertied classes (with the exception of the large feudal land-holders), so the working classes of the larger towns looked for their emancipation to the Socialist and Communist doctrines, although, under the then existing Press laws, they could be made to know only very little about them. They could not be expected to have any very definite ideas as to what they wanted; they only knew that the programme of the Constitutional bourgeoisie did not contain all they wanted, and that their wants were no wise contained in the Constitutional circle of ideas.

There was then no separate Republican party in Germany. People were either Constitutional Monarchists, or more or less clearly defined Socialists or Communists.

With such elements the slightest collision must have brought about a great revolution. While the higher nobility and the older civil and military officers were the only safe supports of the existing system; while the lower nobility, the trading middle classes, the universities, the school-masters of every degree, and even part of the lower ranks of the bureaucracy and military officers were all leagued against the Government; while behind these there stood the dissatisfied masses of the peasantry, and of the proletarians of the large towns, supporting, for the time being, the Liberal Opposition, but already muttering strange words about taking things into their own hands; while the bourgeoisie was ready to hurl down the Government, and the proletarians were preparing to hurl down the bourgeoisie in its turn; this Government went on obstinately in a course which must bring about a collision. Germany was, in the beginning of 1848, on the eve of a revolution, and this revolution was sure to come, even had the French Revolution of February not hastened it.

What the effects of this Parisian Revolution were upon Germany we shall see in our next.

LONDON, September, 1851.

FOOTNOTES:

[6] "The Rhenish Gazette." This paper was published at Cologne, as the organ of the Liberal leaders, Hansemann and Camphausen. Marx contributed certain articles on the Landtag, which created so great a sensation that he was offered in 1842--although only 24 years of age--the editorship of the paper. He accepted the offer, and then began his long fight with the Prussian Government. Of course the paper was published under the supervision of a censor, but he, good, easy man, was hopelessly outwitted by the young firebrand. So the Government sent a second "special" censor from Berlin, but the double censorship proved unequal to the task, and in 1843 the paper was suppressed.

III.

THE OTHER GERMAN STATES.

NOVEMBER 6th, 1851.

In our last we confined ourselves almost exclusively to that State which, during the years 1840 to 1848, was by far the most important in the German movement, namely, to Prussia. It is, however, time to pass a rapid glance over the other States of Germany during the same period.

As to the petty States, they had, ever since the revolutionary movements of 1830, completely passed under the dictatorship of the Diet, that is of Austria and Prussia. The several Constitutions, established as much as a means of defence against the dictates of the larger States, as to insure popularity to their princely authors, and unity to heterogeneous Assemblies of Provinces, formed by the Congress of Vienna, without any leading principle whatever--these Constitutions, illusory as they were, had yet proved dangerous to the authority of the petty princes themselves during the exciting times of 1830 and 1831. They were all but destroyed; whatever of them was allowed to remain was less than a shadow, and it required the loquacious self-complacency of a Welcker, a Rotteck, a Dahlmann, to imagine that any results could possibly flow from the humble opposition, mingled with degrading flattery, which they were allowed to show off in the impotent Chambers of these petty States.

The more energetic portion of the middle class in these smaller States, very soon after 1840, abandoned all the hopes they had formerly based upon the development of Parliamentary government in these dependencies of Austria and Prussia. No sooner had the Prussian bourgeoisie and the classes allied to it shown a serious resolution to struggle for Parliamentary government in Prussia, than they were allowed to take the lead of the Constitutional movement over all non-Austrian Germany. It is a fact which now will not any longer be contested, that the nucleus of those Constitutionals of Central Germany, who afterwards seceded from the Frankfort National Assembly, and who, from the place of their separate meetings, were called the Gotha party, long before 1848 contemplated a plan which, with little modification, they in 1849 proposed to the representatives of all Germany. They intended a complete exclusion of Austria from the German Confederation, the establishment of a new Confederation, with a new fundamental law, and with a Federal Parliament, of the more insignificant States into the larger ones. All this was to be carried out the moment Prussia entered into the ranks of Constitutional Monarchy, established the Liberty of the Press, assumed a policy independent from that of Russia and Austria, and thus enabled the Constitutionals of the lesser States to obtain a real control over their respective Governments. The inventor of this scheme was Professor Gervinus, of Heidelberg (Baden). Thus the emancipation of the Prussian bourgeoisie was to be the signal for that of the middle classes of Germany generally, and for an alliance, offensive and defensive of both against Russia and Austria, for Austria was, as we shall see presently, considered as an entirely barbarian country, of