

usual standard of his capacities.

Thus, in Vienna, he saw at a glance that here, not in the midst of the would-be elegant debates of Frankfort, the fate of his country would have to be decided. He at once made up his mind, gave up all idea of retreat, took a command in the revolutionary force, and behaved with extraordinary coolness and decision. It was he who retarded for a considerable time the taking of the town, and covered one of its sides from attack by burning the Tabor Bridge over the Danube. Everybody knows how, after the storming, he was arrested, tried by court-martial, and shot. He died like a hero. And the Frankfort Assembly, horrorstruck as it was, yet took the bloody insult with a seeming good grace. A resolution was carried, which, by the softness and diplomatic decency of its language, was more an insult to the grave of the murdered martyr than a damning stain upon Austria. But it was not to be expected that this contemptible Assembly should resent the assassination of one of its members, particularly of the leader of the Left.

LONDON, March, 1852.

FOOTNOTES:

[8] "Die Neue Rheinische Zeitung" (The New Rhenish Gazette). After the March revolution, 1848, Marx returned from Paris to Germany, and settling down--for the time being--at Cologne, founded this paper. Although the "Neue Rheinische Zeitung" never went in for propounding "Communist schemes," as Mr. Dawson, e.g., says it did, it became a very nightmare to the Government. Reactionaries and Liberals alike denounced the "Gazette," especially after Marx's brilliant defence of the Paris Insurrection of June. The state of siege being declared in Cologne, the "Gazette" was suspended for six weeks--only to appear with a bigger reputation and bigger circulation than before. After the Prussian "coup d'état" in November, the "Gazette" published at the head of every issue an appeal to the people to refuse to pay taxes, and to meet force by force. For this and certain other articles the paper was twice prosecuted. On the first occasion the accused were Marx, Engels, and Korff; on the second and more important trial, they were Marx, Schapper, and Schneider. The accused were charged with "inciting the people to armed resistance against the Government and its officials." Marx mainly conducted the defence, and delivered a brilliant speech. "Marx refrains" (in this speech) "from all oratorical flourish; he goes straight to the point, and without any peroration ends with a summary of the political situation. Anyone would think that Marx's own personality was to deliver a political lecture to the jury. And, in fact, at the end of the trial, one of the jurors went to Marx to thank him, in the name of his colleagues, for the instructive lecture he had given them." (See Bernstein's work, "Ferdinand Lassalle.") The accused were unanimously acquitted by the jury. Among the better known of the contributors of the "New Rhenish Gazette," edited by Marx, were Engels, W. Wolff, Werth, Lassalle; while Freiligrath wrote for it his splendid revolutionary poems. Perhaps one of the grandest of these is the celebrated "Farewell of the 'Rhenish Gazette'," when on the 19th May, 1849, the final number of the paper--suppressed by the Government--appeared, printed in red type.

"When the last of crowns like glass shall break,
On the scene our sorrows have haunted,
And the people the last dread 'Guilty' shall speak,
By your side ye shall find me undaunted.
On Rhine or on Danube, in word and deed,
You shall witness, true to his vow,
On the wrecks of thrones, in the midst of the freed
The rebel who greets you now."

(Translated by Ernest Jones.)

XIII.

THE PRUSSIAN ASSEMBLY--THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

APRIL 17th, 1852.

On the 1st of November Vienna fell, and on the 9th of the same month the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in Berlin showed how much this event had at once raised the spirit and the strength of the Counter-Revolutionary party all over Germany.

The events of the summer of 1848 in Prussia are soon told. The Constituent Assembly, or rather "the Assembly elected for the purpose of agreeing upon a Constitution with the Crown," and its majority of representatives of the middle class interest, had long since forfeited all public esteem by lending itself to all the intrigues of the Court, from fear of the more energetic elements of the population. They had confirmed, or rather restored, the obnoxious privileges of feudalism, and thus betrayed the liberty and the interests of the peasantry. They had neither been able to draw up a Constitution, nor to amend in any way the general legislation. They had occupied themselves almost exclusively with nice theoretical distinctions, mere formalities, and questions of constitutional etiquette. The Assembly, in fact, was more a school of Parliamentary *savoir vivre* for its members, than a body in which the people could take any interest. The majorities were, besides, very nicely balanced, and almost always decided by the wavering centers whose oscillations from right to left, and *vice versa*, upset, first the ministry of Camphausen, then that of Auerswald and Hansemann. But while thus the Liberals, here as everywhere else, let the occasion slip out of their hands, the Court reorganized its elements of strength among the nobility, and the most uncultivated portion of the rural population, as well as in the army and the bureaucracy. After Hansemann's downfall, a ministry of bureaucrats and military officers, all staunch reactionists, was formed, which, however, seemingly gave way to the demands of the Parliament; and the Assembly acting upon the commodious principle of "measures, not men," were actually duped into applauding this ministry, while they, of course, had no eyes for the concentration and organization of Counter-Revolutionary forces, which that same ministry carried on pretty openly. At last, the signal being given by the fall of Vienna, the King dismissed its ministers, and replaced them by "men of action," under the leadership of the present premier, Manteuffel. Then the dreaming Assembly at once awoke to the danger; it passed a vote of no confidence in the Cabinet, which was at once replied to by a decree removing the Assembly from Berlin, where it might, in case of a conflict, count upon the support of the masses, to Brandenburg, a petty provincial town dependent entirely upon the Government. The Assembly, however, declared that it could not be adjourned, removed or dissolved, except with its own consent. In the meantime, General Wrangle entered Berlin at the head of some forty thousand troops. In a meeting of the municipal magistrates and the officers of the National Guard, it was resolved not to offer any resistance. And now, after the Assembly and its Constituents, the Liberal bourgeoisie, had allowed the combined reactionary party to occupy every important position, and to wrest from their hands almost every means of defence, began that grand comedy of "passive and legal resistance" which they intended to be a glorious imitation of the example of Hampden, and of the first efforts of the Americans in the War of Independence. Berlin was declared in a state of siege, and Berlin remained tranquil; the National Guard was dissolved by the Government, and its arms were delivered up with the greatest punctuality. The Assembly was hunted down during a fortnight, from one place of meeting to another, and everywhere dispersed by the military, and the members of the Assembly begged of the citizens to remain tranquil. At last the Government having declared the Assembly dissolved, it passed a resolution to declare the levying of taxes illegal, and then its members dispersed themselves over the country to organize the refusal of taxes. But they found that they had been woefully mistaken in the choice of their means. After a few agitated weeks, followed by severe measures of the Government against the Opposition, everyone gave up the idea of refusing the taxes in order to please a defunct Assembly that had not even had the courage to defend itself.

Whether it was in the beginning of November, 1848, already too late to try armed resistance, or whether a part of the army, on finding serious opposition, would have turned over to the side of the Assembly, and thus decided the matter in its favor, is a question which may never be solved. But in revolution as in war, it is always necessary to show a strong front, and he who attacks is in the advantage; and in revolution as in war, it is of the highest necessity to stake everything on the decisive moment, whatever the odds may be. There is not a single successful revolution in history that does not prove the truth of these axioms. Now, for the Prussian Revolution, the decisive moment had come in November, 1848; the Assembly, at the head, officially, of the whole revolutionary interest, did neither show a strong front, for it receded at every advance of the enemy;

much less did it attack, for it chose even not to defend itself; and when the decisive moment came, when Wrangle, at the head of forty thousand men, knocked at the gates of Berlin, instead of finding, as he and all his officers fully expected, every street studded with barricades, every window turned into a loophole, he found the gates open, and the streets obstructed only by peaceful Berliner burghers, enjoying the joke they had played upon him, by delivering themselves up, hands and feet tied, unto the astonished soldiers. It is true, the Assembly and the people, if they had resisted, might have been beaten; Berlin might have been bombarded, and many hundreds might have been killed, without preventing the ultimate victory of the Royalist party. But that was no reason why they should surrender their arms at once. A well-contested defeat is a fact of as much revolutionary importance as an easily-won victory. The defeats of Paris in June, 1848, and of Vienna in October, certainly did far more in revolutionizing the minds of the people of these two cities than the victories of February and March. The Assembly and the people of Berlin would, probably, have shared the fate of the two towns above-named; but they would have fallen gloriously, and would have left behind themselves, in the minds of the survivors, a wish of revenge which in revolutionary times is one of the highest incentives to energetic and passionate action. It is a matter of course that, in every struggle, he who takes up the gauntlet risks being beaten; but is that a reason why he should confess himself beaten, and submit to the yoke without drawing the sword?

In a revolution he who commands a decisive position and surrenders it, instead of forcing the enemy to try his hands at an assault, invariably deserves to be treated as a traitor.

The same decree of the King of Prussia which dissolved the Constituent Assembly also proclaimed a new Constitution, founded upon the draft which had been made by a Committee of that Assembly, but enlarging in some points the powers of the Crown, and rendering doubtful in others those of the Parliament. This Constitution established two Chambers, which were to meet soon for the purpose of confirming and revising it.

We need hardly ask where the German National Assembly was during the "legal and peaceful" struggle of the Prussian Constitutionalists. It was, as usual, at Frankfort, occupied with passing very tame resolutions against the proceedings of the Prussian Government, and admiring the "imposing spectacle of the passive, legal, and unanimous resistance of a whole people against brutal force." The Central Government sent commissioners to Berlin to intercede between the Ministry and the Assembly; but they met the same fate as their predecessors at Olmütz, and were politely shown out. The Left of the National Assembly, *i.e.*, the so-called Radical party, sent also their commissioners; but after having duly convinced themselves of the utter helplessness of the Berlin Assembly, and confessed their own equal helplessness, they returned to Frankfort to report progress, and to testify to the admirably peaceful conduct of the population of Berlin. Nay, more; when Herr Bassermann, one of the Central Government's commissioners, reported that the late stringent measures of the Prussian ministers were not without foundation, inasmuch as there had of late been seen loitering about the streets of Berlin sundry, savage-looking characters, such as always appear previous to anarchical movements (and which ever since have been named "Bassermannic characters"), these worthy deputies of the Left and energetic representatives of the revolutionary interest actually arose to make oath, and testify that such was not the case! Thus within two months the total impotency of the Frankfort Assembly was signally proved. There could be no more glaring proofs that this body was totally inadequate to its task; nay, that it had not even the remotest idea of what its task really was. The fact that both in Vienna and in Berlin the fate of the Revolution was settled, that in both these capitals the most important and vital questions were disposed of, without the existence of the Frankfort Assembly ever being taken the slightest notice of--this fact alone is sufficient to establish that the body in question was a mere debating-club, composed of a set of dupes, who allowed the Governments to use them as Parliamentary puppet, shown to amuse the shopkeepers and petty tradesmen of petty States and petty towns, as long as it was considered convenient to divert the attention of these parties. How long this was considered convenient we shall soon see. But it is a fact worthy of attention that among all the "eminent" men of this Assembly there was not one who had the slightest apprehension of the part they were made to perform, and that even up to the present day ex-members of the Frankfort Club have invariably organs of historical perception quite peculiar to themselves.

LONDON, March, 1852.

XIV.

THE RESTORATION OF ORDER--DIET AND CHAMBER

APRIL 24th, 1852.

The first months of the year 1849 were employed by the Austrian and Prussian Governments in following up the advantages obtained in October and November, 1848. The Austrian Diet, ever since the taking of Vienna, had carried on a merely nominal existence in a small Moravian country-town, named Kremsir. Here the Slavonian deputies, who, with their constituents, had been mainly instrumental in raising the Austrian Government from its prostration, were singularly punished for their treachery against the European Revolution. As soon as the Government had recovered its strength, it treated the Diet and its Slavonian majority with the utmost contempt, and when the first successes of the Imperial arms foreboded a speedy termination of the Hungarian War, the Diet, on the 4th of March, was dissolved, and the deputies dispersed by military force. Then at last the Slavonians saw that they were duped, and then they shouted: "Let us go to Frankfort and carry on there the opposition which we cannot pursue here!" But it was then too late, and the very fact that they had no other alternative than either to remain quiet or to join the impotent Frankfort Assembly, this fact alone was sufficient to show their utter helplessness.

Thus ended for the present, and most likely for ever, the attempts of the Slavonians of Germany to recover an independent national existence. Scattered remnants of numerous nations, whose nationality and political vitality had long been extinguished, and who in consequence had been obliged, for almost a thousand years, to follow in the wake of a mightier nation, their conqueror, the same as the Welsh in England, the Basques in Spain, the Bas-Bretons in France, and at a more recent period the Spanish and French Creoles in those portions of North America occupied of late by the Anglo-American race--these dying nationalities, the Bohemians, Carinthians, Dalmatians, etc., had tried to profit by the universal confusion of 1848, in order to restore their political *status quo* of A.D. 800. The history of a thousand years ought to have shown them that such a retrogression was impossible; that if all the territory east of the Elbe and Saale had at one time been occupied by kindred Slavonians, this fact merely proved the historical tendency, and at the same time physical and intellectual power of the German nation to subdue, absorb, and assimilate its ancient eastern neighbors; that this tendency of absorption on the part of the Germans had always been, and still was, one of the mightiest means by which the civilization of Western Europe had been spread in the east of that continent; that it could only cease whenever the process of Germanization had reached the frontier of large, compact, unbroken nations, capable of an independent national life, such as the Hungarians, and in some degree the Poles; and that, therefore, the natural and inevitable fate of these dying nations was to allow this process of dissolution and absorption by their stronger neighbors to complete itself. Certainly this is no very flattering prospect for the national ambition of the Panslavistic dreamers who succeeded in agitating a portion of the Bohemian and South Slavonian people; but can they expect that history would retrograde a thousand years in order to please a few phthisical bodies of men, who in every part of the territory they occupy are interspersed with and surrounded by Germans, who from time almost immemorial have had for all purposes of civilization no other language but the German, and who lack the very first conditions of national existence, numbers and compactness of territory? Thus, the Panslavistic rising, which everywhere in the German and Hungarian Slavonic territories was the cloak for the restoration to independence of all these numberless petty nations, everywhere clashed with the European revolutionary movements, and the Slavonians, although pretending to fight for liberty, were invariably (the Democratic portion of the Poles excepted) found on the side of despotism and reaction. Thus it was in Germany, thus in Hungary, thus even here and there in Turkey. Traitors to the popular cause, supporters and chief props to the Austrian Government's cabal, they placed themselves in the position of outlaws in the eyes of all revolutionary nations. And although nowhere the mass of the people had a part in the petty squabbles about nationality raised by the Panslavistic leaders, for the very reason that they were too ignorant, yet it will never be forgotten that in Prague, in a half-German town,