Chapter One

POWER POLITICS IN THE WAKE OF NATIONAL WARS

I. AFTERMATH OF THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR

On May 10, 1871, at the Swan Hotel in Frankfurt-on-the-Main, was signed the treaty which formally terminated the Franco-Prussian War. Less than five years previously, Prussia by force of arms had smashed the German Confederation. Its most cultured and renowned member, imperial Austria, she had contemptuously thrust aside. Some lesser members she had ruthlessly seized and made into Prussian provinces. The remaining ones she had compelled to become her confederates in what was subsequently known as the Second (Hohenzollern) German Empire. Now, with the aid of this more geographically limited though much more closely knit and powerfully armed Germany, she was victoriously concluding another staccato test of strength, this time with France. France, which had occupied the center of the European ring since the days of Louis XIV, and which under the First Napoleon had dominated the Continent, was at last brought low, singlehanded, by the new German Empire.

The signers of the treaty of Frankfurt were Jules Favre, for France, and Bismarck, for Germany. Favre had declared in the preceding September that France would cede "not an inch of her territory, not a stone of her fortresses." In May he set his hand to the definitive cession of the fortresses of Strasbourg and Metz, the entire province of Alsace (except the town of Belfort),[1] and the greater part of Lorraine, and to the additional stipulations that France should pay an indemnity of five billion francs within three years, maintain a German army of occupation in the meantime, and accord to Germany "most-favored-nation" treatment in future commercial relations. Favre had no choice. France could offer no fur-

[1] Belfort had been excepted in the peace preliminaries at Versailles on February 26 on condition that the German army be permitted to parade in Paris.

ther resistance. Within six months, 139,000 French soldiers had been slain, 143,000 wounded, 339,000 hospitalized for various illnesses, almost three-quarters of a million taken prisoner, and over 90,000 interned in Switzerland. What remained of a French field army was fully engaged at the moment in the bloody task of subduing a madly rebellious Paris. Not until three weeks later was the Paris Commune finally suppressed and order restored in the midst of smoking ruins and heaped corpses in the French capital.

The peace of Frankfurt was therefore a dictated peace. In so far as there were any real negotiations, they were between the civilian and the military authorities of Germany. Bismarck confessed that "he had opposed the acquisition of Metz because of the disaffection of the inhabitants, and that he yielded only in consequence of the urgent demands of the General Staff." In the event, there was no pretense of consulting the wishes of the population of the ceded provinces, no plebiscite such as had attended most transfers of European territory during the preceding era. On the contrary, despite solemn and unanimous protest of the democratically elected deputies of Alsace-Lorraine addressed to both the French National Assembly and the German Reichstag, the provinces and their inhabitants were appropriated by Germany in a military way and primarily for military purposes. The Vosges Mountains would provide a stronger frontier than the River Rhine, and Lorraine's mineral wealth might profitably be utilized for German armaments. Behind the military front, of course, romantic German civilians shouted themselves hoarse over the triumph of German nationalism as now sealed by the "reannexation" of territories once German, but actually it was less a triumph of the nationalism prevalent from 1848 to 1870 than a harbinger of the ascendancy of material might during the ensuing years.

Nor was the formality at Frankfurt an isolated token of the passing of one era and the coming of another. On May 8, 1871, only two days before the signing of the treaty of Frankfurt, a treaty between Great Britain and the United States was concluded in faraway Washington, whereby the former expressed regret for unneutral acts during the latter's Civil War and agreed to arbitrate the resultant "Alabama Claims," and also to refer a long-standing

dispute over the Oregon boundary to the adjudication of the German Emperor. This treaty, too, was an outcome of a triumph of might. Most Englishmen, like most other Europeans, had sympathized with the South and its heroic efforts to establish its independence. Yet after four years of hard fighting and frightful destruction of life and property, the North had proved itself superior in military and material resources. It had preserved and consolidated the American Union, and, as befitted a victor of the new era, it had dictated to the South the adoption of three amendments to the federal constitution, the last of which was ratified under duress in 1870. Great Britain had no stomach to hold out against a recreated nation of her own blood and of such exemplary prowess. And who was better qualified to pass upon a territorial dispute than the aged Prussian King, his title newly refurbished as German Emperor and his spirits rejuvenated by the conquest of Alsace-Lorraine?

Moreover, while the Franco-Prussian War was still in progress and shortly after the French disaster at Sedan, the Russian foreign minister, Prince Gorchakov, had notified the European powers that Russia would no longer be bound by the treaty which she had signed in 1856 following her defeat in the Crimean War, that specifically she would resume her "sovereign rights" in the Black Sea. In his circular note Gorchakov pointed out, perhaps a bit indelicately though quite realistically, "that it would be difficult to affirm that the written law founded on respect for treaties as the basis of public right and of rule for interstate relations has preserved the same moral sanction as in former times." Protests from Great Britain and Austria were purely verbal and led merely to a perfunctory international conference in London and a pious affirmation of "the sanctity of treaties." On January 7, 1871, just when the Germans were preparing for their final assault upon Paris, the London Conference formally endorsed the unilateral Russian action and erased the obnoxious clauses of the treaty of 1856. Obviously the Crimean War, in which France and Britain had sought to bolster up the Ottoman Empire and to set bounds to Russian expansion in the Near East, had been for naught. Russia was again preparing—only fifteen years after her setback—to resume an aggressive policy in respect to the Balkans and Constantinople.

There was still another portent. The French defeat at Sedan had occurred on September 1-2, 1870. On September 12 an army of the Italian government, without any declaration of war, invaded the independent Papal State, and on the twentieth, after breaching the walls of Porta Pia and brushing aside the ornamental papal troops, occupied Rome. Pope Pius IX promptly protested to the powers, but to no avail. In this instance there was not even the formality of convoking an international conference to perform the paradoxical function of proclaiming the sanctity of treaties and ratifying their violation. The Italian state had material resources which the Papal State lacked, and the violent seizure of Rome in 1870 was viewed as but a natural and fitting climax to the successive wars of 1859, 1860, and 1866 by which diminutive Piedmont had been forcibly expanded into the united kingdom of Italy. On January 26, 1871, two days before the capitulation of Paris to the Germans, the Italian parliament decreed the expropriation of Rome from the Pope and its designation as the national capital.

A new age was clearly at hand. The coming generation might pay lip service to older humanitarian ideals, but at heart it felt itself destined for a more realistic—and mightier—future. It began by witnessing, almost simultaneously, the disruption of the German Confederation, the extrusion of Austria from both German and Italian affairs, the *débâcle* and helplessness of France, the extinction of the States of the Church, and the hardly less surprising deference of Britain to a newly powerful America and to a newly aggressive Russia. The old dream of a European Commonwealth, with its temporal center at Vienna or perhaps Paris and its spiritual center at Rome, was finally dispelled. Likewise dispelled was the more recent dream of a pacific European federation of self-governing and mutually respectful nationalities. As the Austrian statesman Beust expressed it, "I no longer see Europe." What was seen by everybody was the shattering of Europe into national fragments, each an entity by itself and all resigned to

> the simple plan
> That they should take who have the power
> And they should keep who can.

This was hardly in line, to be sure, with any of the so-called idealistic philosophies of the past, whether Christian or Kantian or Romantic or even Liberal Nationalist. But the generation which opened with the military and political realities of 1870-1871 was enabled to justify them—and its own abiding belief in the continuous progress of the modern world—by identifying them with "realism" and accepting this as the pragmatically sound substitute for outworn and visionary idealism. So it happened that the series of national wars between 1848 and 1871 served not only to create new national states for Germans, Italians, Hungarians, and Rumanians, and thereby to forward the nationalizing process in Europe, but also to usher in a new era. There was henceforth less concentration on an idealistic goal for Europe as a whole—a federation of nations—and more on "realistic," that is, on material and forceful, means of assuring strictly national ends.

II. HERITAGE OF MATERIAL PROGRESS AND THE COMPETITIVE SPIRIT

The Franco-Prussian War occurred, we may recall, at the very time when scientific and technological developments were reaching revolutionary proportions throughout western Europe, when "progress" was being popularly associated with a rapid multiplication of material things—steam engines, iron works, cotton goods, railways, factories, machines—and with a phenomenal increase of wealth and power for individuals and for nations. The large-scale mechanizing of industry had begun in England, and in 1871 England was the foremost manufacturing and commercial nation of the world. As such she was the admiration and model of all ambitious Europeans.

Why was England great? She was still reputed in the latter part of the nineteenth century, as in the first part of the eighteenth, to be the palladium of political liberty and parliamentary institutions, but she now had a far more concrete claim to greatness. In 1870 she produced 110 million tons of coal out of a total world production of 213 million, and 6 million tons of pig iron out of a total of 11.9 million. She operated 37.7 million cotton spindles out of an estimated world total of 57.8 million. Her foreign trade, valued at 2.6 billion dollars, was almost a fourth of the whole world's com-

merce. Her national wealth was computed at the gargantuan figure of thirty billion dollars. That such material progress redounded to the advantage of a nation was vividly illustrated by the fact that, whereas the population of agricultural (and therefore "backward") Ireland had steadily dwindled since 1845, the population of industrial (and therefore "progressive") Britain had mounted from 10½ million in 1801 to 26 million in 1871.

Carlyle reminded his fellow Britishers in 1867, with the aid of Teutonic capital letters, that "England (equally with any Judah whatsoever) has a History that is Divine; an eternal Providence presiding over every step of it, now in sunshine and soft tones, now in thunder and storm, audible to millions of awe-struck valiant hearts in the ages that are gone; guiding England forward to *its* goal and work, which too has been highly considerable in the world!" Carlyle fretted lest the British masses should be misled by democratic idealism to ignore the realistic truth that might makes right, but "incipiencies of this," he hastened to add, "I do expect from the . . . heroes that will yet be born to us."[2] What Carlyle here intimated with exuberant rhetoric, Walter Bagehot stated a year later quite categorically: "Those nations which are strongest tend to prevail over the others; and in certain marked peculiarities the strongest tend to be the best."[3]

The issue of the Franco-Prussian War, and of the other national conflicts of the time, was not determined by mere heroism of soul. Individual valor was hardly as conspicuous in the armed forces of Germany and Italy and the American North as among French infantrymen, Austrian hussars, and the cavaliers of the American South; even Papal Zouaves made a brave show. What proved decisive was material might.

Shortly before the American Civil War a Southerner had piquantly suggested the contrast between the material weakness of his own region and the material strength of the North: "In infancy we are swaddled in Northern muslin; in childhood we are humored with Northern gewgaws; in youth we are instructed out

[2] Thomas Carlyle, *Shooting Niagara* (1867), in *Works*, XVI, 445. The italics are Carlyle's.

[3] Walter Bagehot, "Physics and Politics," in *Fortnightly Review*, IX (April 1868), 453, 470.

of Northern books; . . . in old age we are drugged with Northern physic; and, finally, when we die our inanimate bodies, shrouded in Northern cambric, are stretched upon the bier, borne to the grave in a Northern carriage, entombed with a Northern spade, and memorized with a Northern slab!"[4] When the Civil War was ended, the backward agricultural South had gone down to defeat, overborne by the vastly greater resources of the industrial North in both man power and machine power.

In the pitting of Prussia and Italy against Austria in 1866, the former powers had a combined population of 51 million to the latter's 34½ million; and Prussia, with her newly industrialized districts of Westphalia, Silesia, and the Rhineland, possessed material backing which Austria lacked. Italy was much inferior to Prussia, but she was a giantess in comparison with the Papal State, and, as we know, her very material cannon effectually drowned out in 1870 the purely spiritual thunders of the Catholic Pontiff. In urging the seizure of Rome, an Italian professor—and typical Liberal—had explained that only when a nation is unified can the benefits accruing from large accumulations of capital and from big industrial enterprises be obtained.[5]

The Franco-Prussian War clinched the argument. In a polemic entitled *What We Demand of France*, which the German historian Treitschke dashed off in 1870, Germany's superiority to France was asserted in respect not only of "culture" and "religious life" but of "science" and "material progress"; the past subjection of Alsace to France was excoriated as "the vassalage of free men to half-educated barbarians"; and specific demand was made for the conquest of the rich province by Germany without any concession to the principle of self-determination, "which is the plausible solution of demagogues without a country."[6] The event was in keeping with Treitschke's counsels and convincing evidence of French decadence and German progress. France, it is true, had experienced some mechanical industrialization earlier than Germany, but just before the war Germany was forging ahead of France. In 1870 Germany mined 37½ million tons of coal to France's 16 million;

[4] Quoted by Clive Day, *A History of Commerce*, rev. ed. (1922), 545.
[5] Luigi Palma, *Del principio di nazionalità* (1867), 122.
[6] Heinrich von Treitschke, *Was von Frankreich fordern wir* (1870), 291, 328

she produced 2 million tons of pig iron to France's 1½ million; the value of her foreign trade was 1½ billion dollars, as compared with a French trade of 1¼ billion; and Germany's population exceeded that of France by two million. The war was won by the industrially stronger nation, and, in turn, the war materially strengthened the victor. By the conquest of Alsace, Germany increased the number of her cotton spindles by 50 per cent and took the lead over France in textile manufacture. By the conquest of Lorraine, Germany supplemented her already abundant mineral resources with great stores of iron and thus fortified her metallurgical hegemony on the Continent of Europe. By the acquisition of both provinces, Germany subtracted a population of one and a half million from France and added it to herself, thereby widening the gap between the two countries in man power.

The lesson was taken to heart by Frenchmen as well as by Germans. Ernest Renan acknowledged on the morrow of the French *débâcle* that "war is in a way one of the conditions of progress, the cut of the whip which prevents a country from going to sleep and which forces smug mediocrity to shake off its apathy."[7] On the other hand, Treitschke, after mature reflection, solemnly reaffirmed his "faith in the God who made Iron."[8]

Iron was indeed the symbol of the era beginning in 1871. It was the iron (and blood) of armies which Bismarck on a celebrated occasion had extolled. It was the iron of mechanized industry which all progressives now prized and hoped to profit by. But whether the symbol was heroically military or merely mercenary, it signified a heritage not only of material progress but also of competitive spirit. The industrialization which was already proceeding apace before 1871 had been guided from the outset, first in England and subsequently on the Continent, by individuals largely liberated from traditional restraints of state, church, and guild, and almost fanatically attached to the doctrine of the classical economists that the pursuit of "self-interest"—"rugged individualism"—was the indispensable condition of capitalistic enterprise and hence of material progress. In anxiety for mounting profits, individual owners

[7] Ernest Renan, *La réforme intellectuelle et morale* (1871), 111.
[8] Heinrich von Treitschke, *Deutsche Geschichte im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, I (1879), 329.

of mines and factories and individual investors would strive with one another to increase production and to lower its costs. The result of such competition seemed axiomatic even if paradoxical. "Enlightened selfishness" would promote, in Bentham's phrase, "the greatest good of the greatest number." "He helps others who helps himself." The first thing to do, of course, was to help one's self, and one would do this consciously and zealously. The helping of others would follow so automatically that none need bother about it.

The competitive spirit, rife in European machine industry by the 1860's, was given a wider meaning and vogue by the international military occurrences in that decade. It was extended from individuals to nations, from economics to politics. The series of armed conflicts, culminating in the Franco-Prussian War, was cumulative evidence that the same praiseworthy kind of competition prevailed between nations as between individuals, that the materially strong must necessarily excel the materially weak, and that therefore each nation's chief aim should be the material strengthening of itself. National self-interest might eventually benefit all Europe. In the meantime it would surely benefit the individual nations. The heritage of material progress and its competitive spirit was combining with the heritage of national wars to atomize Europe.

III. HERITAGE OF DARWINISM AND "THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE"

If the *things* most esteemed in the new era represented a heritage of recent progress in the industrial arts, in technology, and in physical science, the most captivating *thought* of the era was the heritage of a still more recent development in biological science. Everybody was impressed by mechanical contrivances and the material things they produced in multiplying profusion. But the elite were especially enamored of a novel evolutionary conception of the universe, of which Darwinism was the main source and expression.

A general idea of "evolution" was, to be sure, no novelty. It had been a prominent feature, in the first half of the nineteenth century, of the thought of such various scholars as Laplace in astronomy, Lamarck in biology, Baer in embryology, Lyell in geology, Hegel in philosophy, Comte in sociology, and Marx in economics. The

novelty about "Darwinian evolution" was its simplicity, its apparently universal applicability, and its timeliness.

Darwin had published his hypothesis, with a wealth of supporting data, in 1859, under the title *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life*. The gist of it, in the author's own words, was that, "As many more individuals of each species are born than can possibly survive, and as, consequently, there is a frequently recurring struggle for existence, it follows that any being, if it vary however slightly in any manner profitable to itself, under the complex and sometimes varying conditions of life, will have a better chance of surviving, and thus be *naturally selected*. From the strong principle of inheritance, any selected variety will tend to propagate its new and modified form." This would apply, of course, to all organic phenomena—to plants and animals—and relate their existing heterogeneity, back through a long series of purely natural steps (and struggles), to an original simple form of life. It was a neat complement, on the biological side, to the already clearly formulated postulates of physics that all inorganic phenomena are ultimately referable to eternal matter and to a strictly constant amount of energy.

Darwin's evolutionary doctrine obtained prompt and influential backing from other distinguished naturalists of the day, including Sir Joseph Hooker, Sir Charles Lyell, Sir John Lubbock (Baron Avebury), Thomas Huxley, and John Tyndall, in England, Asa Gray in the United States, and Ernst Haeckel in Germany. None of these scientists overlooked the bearing of the doctrine upon man's nature and origin, and some of them wrote widely read books underscoring the essential oneness of the human race with other animals and with plants. In 1863 appeared Lyell's *Antiquity of Man* and Huxley's *Man's Place in Nature*; in 1870, Lubbock's *Origin of Civilization*; in 1871, Darwin's own *Descent of Man*; and in 1874, Haeckel's *Anthropogenie.*

Soon the doctrine began to affect and reinforce the predilections of a great variety of intellectuals. It figured in the economic classic of Karl Marx (1867), whose disciples grew ever fonder of likening the "evolutionary materialism" of "scientific socialism" to that of

Darwinism. It was assumed by Edward Tylor in his epochal textbook of anthropology (1871). It was utilized by the veteran religious critic, D. F. Strauss, to justify (1872) his complete abandonment of "spiritual philosophy" in favor of "the materialism of modern science." It was adopted by Wilhelm Wundt for his revolutionary physiological psychology (1874). It was invoked by the Polish-Jewish sociologist, Gumplowicz, to buttress his contention (1875) that the whole history of human civilization consists of an unending struggle between races, nations, and classes.

Most effectively the Darwinian doctrine was seized upon by Herbert Spencer and made the leitmotiv of the philosophy which he outlined as early as 1860 and filled in during the next thirty-six years. To Spencer belonged the credit of applying Darwinism most systematically if not always soundly to psychology, sociology, and ethics. In everything organic and inorganic, in the history of mankind no less than of flora and fauna, he stressed "persistence of force," "indestructibility of matter and energy," and "natural evolution" through "struggle for existence" and "survival of the fittest" "from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous." Like nearly all of the first generation of Darwinians, Spencer was optimistic about the cosmic evolutionary process. He had as strong a faith in humanity's angelic future as in man's simian origin; and faith more than science led him—and other Darwinians—to identify evolution with progress, that is, to confuse the physically "fittest" with the morally "best." Good humanitarian as he was, Spencer shrank from glorifying modern warfare as a typical example of the perpetually improving struggle for existence; he was sure that man had already evolved beyond and above the need for that particular kind of struggle. Yet, "inconceivable as have been the horrors caused by the universal antagonism which, beginning with the chronic hostilities of small hordes tens of thousands of years ago, has ended in the occasional vast battles of immense nations, we must nevertheless admit that without it the world would still have been inhabited only by men of feeble types sheltering in caves and living on wild food."[9]

There were serious fallacies in the impulsive and manifold exploitation of Darwin's biological hypothesis of "natural selection."

[9] Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*, II, 241.

Darwin might well have said to Spencer and many others what he wrote to Haeckel: "Your boldness sometimes makes me tremble."[10] Yet despite Darwin's own pleas for further painstaking observation and experiment, the bulk of his following accepted natural selection as all-sufficing. Thereby Darwinism, shortly after its begetting, ceased to be a tentative scientific theory and became a philosophy, almost a religion. As such it could be, and was applied to the whole gamut of contemporary intellectual interests, not least among which was the interest in international war.

Indeed, it would be difficult if not impossible to account for the immense vogue of sociological and philosophical Darwinism were it not for the spectacular series of national wars which from 1859 to 1871 accompanied its rise and eventually seemed to attest its truth. However apologetic Spencer might be about the "horrors" of modern warfare, many intellectuals in Germany, in Italy, and in the Northern States of the American Union could now be satisfied, "scientifically," that the latest wars had been necessary struggles for existence and had issued in the survival of the fittest—and the best. What truer test of a doctrine than the pragmatic?

This timeliness of Darwinism, let us emphasize, even more than its scientific basis, established it, in conjunction with industrial materialism, as the chief conditioning philosophy of Europe in the 1870's. Even among intellectuals who did not dogmatize about it and in countries which had not recently demonstrated their fighting fitness, brilliant literary men were influenced by contemporary events to reflect its spirit and to spread its vogue. In 1870 the Englishman Froude completed his stirring epic of the sixteenth-century triumph of Protestant England over Catholic Spain, and between 1872 and 1874 he produced three volumes in praise of English domination of eighteenth-century Ireland and in proof of the dictum that "the superior part has a natural right to govern; the inferior part has a right to be governed."[11] Simultaneously the Frenchman Taine, who was wont to attribute all culture to a trinity of physical forces—*"la race, le milieu, et le moment"* (or, as he fur-

[10] Letter of Nov. 19, 1868.

[11] James Anthony Froude, *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada*, 12 vols. (1856-1870); *The English in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, 3 vols. (1872-1874).

ther defined them, "the internal mainspring, the external pressure, and the acquired momentum")—turned from literary and aesthetic criticism to social and political history in order to show that recent French defeat was a natural evolutionary outcome of the detestable French Revolution, which had been an "insurrection of mules and horses against men, under the conduct of apes possessing the throats of parrots."[12]

Simultaneously, too, appeared a significant volume by a Russian scientist, Danilevsky.[13] Although the author afterwards criticized Darwinism,[14] he betrayed in this volume of 1871 an indebtedness to current biological conceptions. His central theses were that there is no civilization of humankind or even of Europe as a whole but only of particular racial groups, and that the history of such groups is governed by "natural laws." Each people is an organism, passing through different stages of development. As plants are classifiable into separate species, so are nations. The Slavs are a distinct and superior species; and the Russians, being the largest and leading sub-species, have a natural obligation to act as the Prussians had acted for the Germans or as the Northerners in America had for the United States, that is, to federate all the Slavs in an imperial state with its capital at Constantinople. By means of this book Danilevsky was preparing the way intellectually, just when Gorchakov by repudiation of an international treaty was preparing the way diplomatically, for renewed Russian aggression.

That Russian aggression should be opposed not only by the Ottoman Empire but also by the British Empire was the burden of a sensational book which a famous English army officer and archaeologist, Sir Henry Rawlinson, brought out in 1875.[15] The supreme struggle for existence, it seemed, would be between Britain and Russia; and to ensure the survival of the fittest Britain should not hesitate to employ physical force.

[12] H. A. Taine, *Les origines de la France contemporaine*, 6 vols. (1878-1894). Cf. *Sa vie et sa correspondance*, III, 266, 325.

[13] Nicholas I. Danilevsky, *Rossiya i Evropa* (1st ed. 1871, 5th ed. 1895), trans. into German as *Russland und Europa* by K. Nötzel (1917). See P. N. Miliukov, *Le mouvement intellectuel russe* (1918), 377-439.

[14] See the two volumes of his uncompleted work on the subject (1885-1889).

[15] Sir Henry Rawlinson, *England and Russia in the East* (1875).

IV. THE EUROPEAN POWERS

It is historical fact as well as biological theory that the past—often the distant past—lives on in the present. The era from 1871 to 1900 exhibited circumstances of technological invention and examples of materialistic philosophy so peculiar and novel that one is apt to concentrate on them and thus obtain a myopic impression of the newness of the era as a whole. Actually, however, in the vast complexity and long continuum of human life, no brief era of thirty years could possibly be without more survivals than novelties. Conservation is always deeper and stronger, if less sensational, than change; and to this rule the era here under review offered no exception.

Among innumerable survivals from earlier times was the coexistence in Europe of a bewildering variety of ethnic groups and a congeries of independent sovereignties known as *powers*. Most Europeans spoke Aryan languages,[16] but only a little scholarly minority could perceive the common Aryan etymology of such apparently diverse speech as Romanic, Teutonic, Celtic, Slavic, English, and Greek. Each ethnic group was notoriously conservative in clinging to the language and habitat it had had in the Middle Ages and in resisting every effort at coalescence in a culturally unified Europe.

Nor had there ever been a politically united Europe. Attempts to create one by force of arms, whether by Roman emperors or by a Napoleon Bonaparte, had met with but partial and transient success; and the mid-nineteenth-century dream of a voluntary federation of European nations, analogous to the United States of America, had been dispelled by the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. What persisted was the old "system" of sovereign powers, theoretically equal in right and dignity and regularly maintaining formal diplomatic relations with one another as professed members of a "European family of nations." In reality, the European powers were very unequal and diverse. A select number, distinguished from the

[16] That is, the group of languages distantly related to the Aryan speech of India and also to Persian and Armenian. The only non-Aryan languages in Europe of any importance are Finnish, Magyar (Hungarian), Turkish, and Basque. The first three of these belong to the so-called Turanian family of languages.

others by superior resources and armaments, were customarily styled *great powers*; and some of these pretended to a special importance by retaining or reviving the ancient title of *empire*.

The "system" remained, although within it occurrences of the nineteenth century, especially of the years from 1848 to 1871, effected changes of detail and shifts in what was described as "the balance of power." The rise of nationalism, with attendant striving of revolutionary Liberals to redraw the political map of Europe along lines of cultural nationality, was a direct challenge to those imperial powers which had long dominated disparate ethnic groups and held them together in a kind of Pax Romana. Once upon a time, for example, the Ottoman Empire had been the militant means of subjugating and controlling the many different peoples of southeastern Europe; it had been in fact if not in name the greatest of all great powers. Now, as its subject peoples caught the contagion of nationalism, the Ottoman Empire declined rapidly; its frontiers contracted, and it managed to survive at all only by exploiting the rival ambitions of more capable great powers. The Austrian Empire, too, was now fallen, though not so far, from the proud eminence it had once reached. Expelled from Italy in 1859 and from Germany in 1866, it continued to exercise imperial sway over the aggregation of Slavic (and other) nationalities in the central Danubian basin—and to stand as a great power—but only by recognizing the national rights of Hungary and sharing with it the governance of the empire.

Moreover, France was now worsted in war and bitterly humbled. She had proved unable to prevent the creation of a Prussian German Empire or its acquisition of Alsace-Lorraine; and as if to symbolize her debasement, she abandoned the pretentious title of *empire* in favor of the more plebeian *republic*. Nevertheless, with natural resources considerably greater than Austria-Hungary's, and with a population relatively homogeneous and intensely patriotic, France was still to be reckoned with as a great power.

The chief beneficiary of the setbacks to Austria and France was Prussia. Prussia, already accounted a great power, vested her magnified greatness in the German Empire, which she constructed and expanded. This empire, from its natal day on January 18, 1871,

when, ironically, it was proclaimed in the historic palace of Louis XIV at Versailles amidst thunderous applause of victorious German soldiers, assumed by might (and therefore by right) the primacy of honor among the European great powers. Berlin was henceforth the political center of the Continent, as Vienna or Paris had previously been.

Second only to the benefits accruing to the new Prussianized Germany were those redounding to the new Piedmontese Italy. Piedmont alone had never been a great power, but by championing the cause of Italian nationalism and aligning herself successively with France and Prussia she possessed herself of the other lesser powers of the peninsula and thus established a united Italy which gained grudging recognition as a great power.

The meteoric ascent of Italy and, even more spectacularly, of the German Empire, accompanied as it was by the partial eclipse of France and Austria, was disturbing to the whole European state system, and in particular to the two great powers which on the side lines of Europe had been mere bystanders during the stirring events of the 1860's—Russia and Britain. Both had major reputations, the one as the potentially richest, the other as the actually richest, of all European countries; the one as the largest contiguous land empire in the world, the other as the farthest-flung empire of land and sea. Neither could be expected to remain indifferent to a tilting of the European balance, and the shift that was obvious by 1871 aroused in both of them an anxiety not to be left behind in the scramble for pre-eminence and an eagerness to secure compensatory laurels—and territory. In Russia the lamp which had formerly cast long rays in the direction of the Balkans and Constantinople but which had been dimmed in the smoke of the Crimean War, was retrimmed and refueled. In Britain resurged a wave of imperialism which swept the "little-England" Liberals from office and raised Queen Victoria to the new dignity of Empress of India.

Besides the six acknowledged great powers of Germany, Italy, Britain, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and France, and the fast weakening Ottoman Empire, the European state system embraced in 1871 eleven "lesser powers": Spain, Sweden-Norway, Denmark, Portugal, the Dutch Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium, Greece,

Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro. All of these were small and weak in comparison with any of the great powers, and the majority of them were tied, like kite tails, to one or more of the great powers. Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro, though accorded autonomy, were denied sovereignty; they still belonged, at least legally, to the Ottoman Empire. Greece was pledged to follow the advice of three "protecting powers"—Russia, Britain, and France. Belgium was bound by a treaty of neutrality imposed upon her in 1839 by Britain, France, Prussia, Austria, and Russia. Switzerland and the Dutch Netherlands were similarly bound by the Congress of Vienna of 1815. Portugal, by a still older pact, was virtually a protectorate of Britain. Only Spain, Sweden-Norway, and Denmark were fully "sovereign," and Denmark had recently had a taste of the misfortune in store for a lesser power which would exercise its sovereignty contrary to the will of a great power.

It should be observed that in 1871, despite preceding nationalist agitation and a series of nationalist insurrections and wars, the political boundaries of the eighteen European powers, "great" and "lesser," were still far from coinciding with the ethnic frontiers of the several European peoples. Most notably was this true in eastern Europe, where the Ottoman, Austrian, and Russian empires sprawled over a confusing assortment of nationalities. But it was true to some extent even in western Europe, where national states had long existed, and in central Europe where they had just been founded for Germans and Italians. Germany included Poles, Danes, and French-speaking Lorrainers, and excluded Germans in Austria and Switzerland. Italy lacked Italians of Istria, Trentino, and Switzerland. Sweden-Norway was a "personal union" of two different peoples. Belgium was half Flemish and half French. Switzerland was half German, a quarter French, and a quarter Italian. Spain contained Catalans and Basques as well as Castilians. France embraced Bretons and Provençals, and in Britain Scots, Welsh, and especially Irish were much in evidence.

There was something impressive about the very word *powers*. It connoted might; and might took on added significance in an era of flourishing materialism, physical and intellectual. What things the powers had, they meant to keep. What things they wanted,

ey meant to have. The means to the end would be pacific if pos-
le—Europe was still haunted by humanitarianism—but if neces-
y they would be forceful. In backing the use of force the ethnic
oups, now inspired by nationalism, would be influential. But in
ploying force the existent powers, particularly the great powers,
uld be decisive.

V. THE ARMED PEACE

Of the hundred years which separated the battle of the Marne
m the battle of Waterloo, only a short middle span of seventeen
ars (from 1854 to 1871) witnessed actual armed conflict between
ropean great powers. No such fighting occurred during the
riod of thirty-nine years prior to 1854 and none during the even
ger period of forty-three years after 1871. A truce quite un-
ecedented in the annals of Europe!

Peace among the great powers may seem a stranger phenome-
n in the last period than in the first. The generation after 1871
s not exhausted, as the generation after 1815 had been, by pro-
cted warfare all over the Continent. On the contrary, the wars
th which it was ushered in had been brief and stimulating, some-
at in the nature of *apéritifs*. Intellectual fashions also had
anged. Mental dandies of the '70's were already a bit ashamed of
ir grandparents' beruffled romanticism and crinoline pacifism;
ey felt more up-to-date in a tailored realism and with a tight-
ing faith in "war as an instrument of national policy."

That the great powers refrained from fighting one another for
ir decades after 1871 is attributable less to a universal "will to
ace" than to the absorption of each in preparedness for war. For
e peace of the period was an uneasy peace and an armed peace.
marck wittily described the situation to a Russian diplomatist
1879: "The great powers of our time are like travellers, unknown
one another, whom chance has brought together in a carriage.
ey watch each other, and when one of them puts his hand into
pocket, his neighbor gets ready his own revolver in order to be
e to fire the first shot."[17]

What "will to peace" there was, was strongest in Germany and in

[17] Bismarck to Prince Orlov, *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, I (1922), 86-87.

her stout statesman, Prince Bismarck. Germany, in the latter's words, was a "saturated" and "satisfied" power. She had had her way with Austria; she had gotten what she wanted from France. She contemplated no further territorial conquests. She wished merely to preserve the fruits of her recent victories. The task before her, therefore, was to keep the peace herself and to deter other and less satisfied powers from resorting to any war which might impair or subvert the *status quo* of 1871 so advantageous to herself. This she would do by retaining the military superiority she had acquired during the '60's and by employing her enhanced prestige and the great diplomatic talents of Bismarck to draw as many powers as possible into the orbit of her influence.

Germany's military superiority was a legacy of Prussia's, and this had been pragmatically demonstrated in the wars of 1866 and 1870. Upon analysis it was generally conceded to derive from two peculiarities. One was the principle of universal compulsory army service (*Allgemeine Wehrpflicht*), the rule that all able-bodied young men were liable to military service and that as many of them as could financially be provided for should be put into the active army for a few years' continuous training and then passed to a reserve army (*Landwehr*) for occasional rehearsals. The other was a matter of organization, an emphasis on a fixed number of army corps, each regularly stationed in the territory where its regiments were recruited and from which they drew their reserves, and all co-ordinated and ultimately directed by an efficient general staff.

The development of these peculiarities in Prussia had been gradual but steady. The special type of army organization, begun by Scharnhorst during the Napoleonic era, was perfected by Count Moltke, chief of staff from 1858. Universal compulsory service in the army, though adopted in principle and more or less imperfectly applied during the Napoleonic Wars by several nations—France and Austria as well as by Prussia—had elsewhere been abandoned when those wars had ceased, in favor of the older army of professional soldiers, recruited voluntarily and hence fewer in number, but serving long terms and therefore more thoroughly trained. It was professional armies, supplemented by random

conscription, which until 1866 had been generally employed. Prussia alone adhered to the principle of universal short-term service. To be sure, she no more than any other great power could carry it into full effect; necessary funds and *matériel* were lacking. Nevertheless, by paying her drafted amateur soldiers a mere pittance, instead of the higher wages required for professional soldiers, she was enabled for a given expenditure to keep at least three times as many men under arms as could be maintained under any voluntary system. What thereby she sacrificed in thoroughness of training, she compensated for in big reserves of partially trained men and in a relatively large officers' corps.

Until the early 1860's the Prussian active army had included annual levies of 40,000 men serving for two years. Then, under pressure from King William I and his war minister Roon, the term of service had been lengthened to three years and the annual levies increased to 63,000 men, so that the enlarged standing army comprised roughly one per cent of the total population at a per capita expenditure of two hundred and twenty-five dollars. This army justified itself in the ensuing war of 1866 with Austria, with the result that the German states which were forced into federation with Prussia adopted the Prussian army system at once, and Austria did likewise in 1868. Simultaneously France made a gesture at similar reform, though it was still essentially a professional army with which she met and went down to defeat before Prussia's better organized and better led conscript army.

The Prussian system was now fully justified. It had crushed all resistance to the creation of the Hohenzollern German Empire and its conquest of Alsace-Lorraine. It must be continued so as to preserve in peace what it had built in war. Accordingly, the system was immediately extended to all states within the empire, and in December 1871 the Reichstag voted funds to maintain until the end of 1874 one per cent of the whole German nation under arms.

The lesson was not lost on other great powers. In France a law of 1872 made every young Frenchman, with a few specified exemptions, liable to military service for five years and forbade substitutions, and another law of 1873 reorganized the French army

after the German model, with territorial corps and a directing general staff. Although for financial and other reasons the standing army could absorb fewer than half of those liable to service, the reforms promised to expand it to a size comparable with Germany's. And meanwhile French military engineers were busily strengthening the line of fortifications from Verdun to Belfort, hard by the new Franco-German frontier. France was clearly determined to remain a great power, to suffer no repetition of her recent disasters, and to be ready, if opportunity arose, to regain Alsace-Lorraine.

Russia, too, soon imitated the German example. She had vaulting ambitions in the Balkans and a dangerously exposed flank between Germany and Austria. She must be prepared for war according to the latest and most approved principles. In 1874 she formally adopted the system of obligatory service, first for six years and then for five. Could she have fully applied it, she would have had an army as large as any two other armies combined. Indeed, her numbers (on paper) scared many a foreign publicist almost to death. Nevertheless, chronic shortage or mismanagement of public funds severely limited the number of conscripts that could be trained, and paucity of railways gravely handicapped the general staff.

Italy followed suit in 1875, reorganizing her army and basing it on the liability of every able-bodied young Italian to active service for from three to five years. Actually she trained only a small proportion of available recruits; she was too financially embarrassed to do otherwise. The new system was flattering to her, however, and helped her to keep up the appearance of being a great power.

Only Great Britain, of the six great powers, stuck to the professional long-service army. It seemed to comport better with her insular situation and with her special need of small but highly trained expeditionary forces for quick dispatch to distant possessions oversea. Yet Britain was not proof against the wave of military preparedness which swept over Europe in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War. Viscount Cardwell, war secretary at the time in Gladstone's cabinet, devoted himself vigorously to reforming the British army. Its organization was rendered more efficient by

abolishing the purchase of officers' commissions and inaugurating a localization of units. Its rank and file were improved in quality and augmented in quantity by readjusting the wage schedule and authorizing supplementary kinds of voluntary enlistment, either for short service or in a reserve.

Even little Switzerland felt the military urgency. Wherever she looked out across her narrow borders, she saw preparations for war—in Germany, in Austria, in France, in Italy. In the circumstances, some military preparations on her own part might operate, more realistically than existing international treaties, to guarantee her neutrality. In 1874 Switzerland, by a new federal constitution, consecrated an interesting militia system, one that was widely imitated by "lesser" powers in later years. There would be no standing army in the strict sense of the term, but all Swiss men between the ages of twenty and forty-eight would receive periodical training in arms.

Of course, all this military preparedness could not be achieved overnight. It would take several years for France and Austria to remodel their armies after the German pattern and to raise them to maximum strength; and for Russia and Italy it would take still longer. In the meantime Germany's military preparedness was an accomplished and demonstrated fact. Her army had just won thumping successes, and it needed no respite to be ready for another test. No wonder, then, that while war ministers of other nations were studying and copying the German military system, sovereigns and foreign ministers were hastening to compliment the newly enthroned German Emperor and to curry favor with his astute chancellor.

The Austrian Emperor, Francis Joseph, was a stubborn man, a stickler for form and a firm believer in the God-given prerogatives of Austria and the Hapsburgs. His foreign minister, Count Beust, had been notoriously anti-Prussian. Yet in the late summer of 1871 Francis Joseph and Beust consorted with the Emperor William and Bismarck at a variety of watering places; and in order to seal an Austro-Prussian entente, Francis Joseph obligingly parted with Beust and appointed in his place a pro-Prussian Hungarian nobleman, Count Julius Andrássy. Whereupon, in Septem-

ber 1872, William and Bismarck received at Berlin a state visit from Francis Joseph and Andrássy, and who should drop in upon the pleasant party but the Tsar Alexander II of Russia, accompanied by his foreign minister, old Prince Gorchakov (who imagined that Bismarck was a pupil of his), and the war minister Marshal Berg, who had won some renown by suppressing the Polish insurrection of 1863 and was to win more by championing a military alliance between Russia and Germany. William I was highly honored and Bismarck very happy.

In the following spring these amenities bore fruit in a definite Three Emperors' League. By a military convention signed at St. Petersburg in May, Germany and Russia pledged themselves that if either were attacked by another European power, the other would come to the aid of its ally with 200,000 men. Then, by a more general treaty signed at Vienna in June, Russia and Austria mutually promised, with the concurrence of Germany, to reach a preliminary agreement about any threatened aggression from another power and to consider what joint action they should take. Thus was revived, in new garb, the Holy Alliance of 1815. The same three great powers of eastern and central Europe were again formally committed to uphold monarchical institutions and the international *status quo*. Of the Three Emperors' League, however, not Russia or Austria, but Germany, was the leader, and the Russo-German part of it had military "teeth" instead of the merely pious mouthings which had characterized the old Holy Alliance.

The Emperors of Austria and Russia were not the only mothlike sovereigns attracted by the brilliantly illuminated countenances of the German Emperor and his chancellor. The King of Italy, hearty Victor Emmanuel II, who had been gratefully sympathetic with France in 1870, traveled hopefully to Berlin with his foreign minister, in September 1873, and, propelled on by Bismarck, they visited Vienna also! Italy was obviously associating herself with the Three Emperors' League. Great Britain was a trifle more aloof. Queen Victoria did not go in person to Berlin—she was still doggedly in widow's weeds for her Teutonic consort who had died a dozen years before—but she addressed innumerable encouraging epistles to the Emperor William, and her ambassador, Lord Odo Russell,

reported from Berlin in February 1874 that "our relations with Germany were never better, more cordial, or more satisfactory than at present."

Bismarck had no illusions. He knew why all the great powers—except France—were temporarily gravitating toward Germany. He recognized that prolongation of his country's hegemony depended basically upon its own peaceful intent—and armed preponderance. In February 1874, therefore, he joined Moltke in begging the Reichstag to fix permanently the size of Germany's standing army at one per cent of her population, which for the moment would mean about 400,000 men. In the ensuing debates Moltke dwelt particularly upon the need of "defending for fifty years the fruits of the victories of '66 and '70," upon the useful role which the army performed at home as "the Prussian schoolmaster of the entire nation," and upon the rapidity with which foreign powers, especially France, were piling up armaments. Despite their best efforts, however, Moltke and Bismarck could not prevail upon the Reichstag to accept the military bill in perpetuity. They had to content themselves with its enactment for seven years, from the end of 1874 to the end of 1881. They were not too depressed. Subsequent septennates could and would be voted.

Following the German military enactment of 1874, France authorized in March 1875 some additions to her army. This was immediately seized upon by officials of the German foreign office as an alarmist text for a series of "inspired" newspaper articles, culminating in a famous article in the Berlin *Post* of April 8, "Is War in Sight?" At the same time German army officers talked openly about the desirability of a "preventive war"—a present attack by Germany upon France to forestall a future attack by France upon Germany.

It is almost certain that Bismarck himself had no mind to precipitate another war with France. Presumably he permitted the rattling of German sabers only in order to frighten France into halting her military preparations. Be that as it may, "the war scare" of 1875 caused him no slight discomfiture. The French foreign minister, the Duc de Decazes, appealed straightway to the other great powers to "save" his country from renewed invasion and

partition by Germany. The other powers might respect Germany and seek alliance with her, but, as Moltke had recently said, none loved her and all feared her. Prince Gorchakov responded to the Duc de Decazes promptly and ardently: he assured the French ambassador at St. Petersburg that Russia would not allow Germany to make war on France; he secured similar assurance from Great Britain; and he journeyed to Berlin, with the Tsar in tow, to give personal notice to Bismarck of the joint Russo-British resolve. Bismarck was intensely irritated. In his memoirs he tells of having reproached Gorchakov: "It was not, I said, a friendly part to jump suddenly and unexpectedly upon the back of a trustful and unsuspecting friend, and to get up a circus performance at his cost; proceedings of this kind between us, the directing ministers, could only injure the two monarchies and the two states. If he was anxious to be applauded in Paris, he need not on that account injure our relations with Russia; I was quite ready to assist him and to have five-franc pieces struck at Berlin, with the inscription: *'Gorchakov protège la France.'* "

Bismarck's sarcasm scarcely disguised his anger and alarm. However unmerited, a rebuke had been administered to him. Germany, after all, regardless of peaceful intent, would not have a free hand with France. Russia was an undependable ally, and Britain a dubious neutral. Peace would have to be ever more heavily armed.

VI. THE RUSSO-TURKISH WAR AND THE CONGRESS OF BERLIN

The more or less imaginary crisis of 1875 in Franco-German relations was speedily overshadowed by a very real one within the Ottoman Empire. The "sick man of Europe" suffered in 1875 a recurrent attack of ague, and as usual his council of physicians, the great powers, disagreed about remedies.

The susceptibility of the Ottoman Empire to spasmodic chills and fever was a symptom of constitutional weakness. So long as the mass of its European subjects were primarily Christian and only incidentally nationalist, it had known how to manage them. So long, moreover, as its central government was backed by an army and a revenue comparable with other powers', it had been relatively efficient. In the nineteenth century, however, nationalism

obsessed the Christian populations and incited in them an unwonted rebelliousness. Simultaneously, by falling behind the rest of Europe in material development, the empire was deprived of the means of maintaining an adequate army and a competent administration. Local tax officials gouged the peasantry and personally pocketed the greater part of the proceeds. Army officers made themselves quasi-independent of the central government and tyrannized over the districts they commanded. All of which contributed to the unrest of subject nationalities—and to international complications.

The bed of the "sick man" at Constantinople in 1875 was occupied by the Sultan Abdul-Aziz, who, like the proverbial man with the beer income and the champagne appetite, had squandered every penny he could get his hands upon[18] in palace-building and prodigal living. Fluttering about him, most solicitously, were a horde of banking and brokerage agents from Paris and London, together with a Russian general and a British admiral. The former of these, Count Nicholas Ignatiev, a scheming Pan-Slavist of the school of Danilevsky, intent upon supplanting the Ottoman Empire with a confederation of Slavic states, played the role of Russian ambassador at Constantinople. The latter, Augustus Hobart, a doughty adventurer who had done service for Great Britain as a naval captain in the Crimean War, for the Southern Confederacy as a blockade-runner in the American Civil War, and for the Ottoman Empire as an admiral in the suppression of a Cretan revolt in 1869, enjoyed the Turkish title of Pasha and saw his own advantage —and Great Britain's—in circumventing the Russian doctor and bolstering up the "sick man."

The sickness grew grave in 1875. In the spring the Austrian Emperor, prompted by his military entourage, who longed to regain in the Balkans some of the prestige they had lost in Italy and Germany, made a state tour along the Dalmatian coast, arousing the national spirit of his own Slavic subjects and also of their kinsmen in the Ottoman hinterland of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In July a revolt against Turkish rule broke out in Herzegovina, inviting further machinations not only of Austrian army officers

[18] He had utilized public loans floated in western Europe, and also monies paid him by the khedive of Egypt for the series of firmans from 1866 to 1872 which conferred upon the khedive hereditary rights and a practically independent status

but also of Russian Pan-Slavists and of the autonomous governments of the adjacent Ottoman principalities of Serbia and Montenegro. In September, an abortive insurrection occurred in Macedonia among a people who were described as Bulgarians but about whom Europe at large knew little—as yet. In October the Sultan announced that he could pay only half of the interest due his foreign creditors. In November Disraeli purchased from the Sultan's vassal, the khedive of Egypt, a controlling share of stock in the Suez Canal. At the end of December, the Austrian foreign minister Andrássy, fearful of the effects of a general Slavic upheaval upon his beloved Hungary, came forward with the familiar prescription of "reforms" for the Ottoman Empire. The prescription was innocuous enough to be swallowed by the Sultan and to produce no change in his condition. The rebels in Herzegovina (and by this time in Bosnia too) would accept no homeopathic "reforms"; they were out for liberty and loot.

In May 1876 the crisis reached an acute stage. To the Bosnian rebellion, flaming fiercely, was added an uprising throughout the Bulgarian provinces, accompanied by the murder of Ottoman officials and impelling the Turks to fanatical frenzy and mad retaliation. Turks massacred Bulgarians and demonstrated against foreigners. At Salonica a mob killed the French and German consuls. At Constantinople another mob deposed the Sultan Abdul-Aziz and put Murad V in his place.

Excitement over these events was quickly enhanced by sensational stories about Turkish "atrocities" in Bulgaria. According to Eugene Schuyler, American minister at Constantinople, and to Edwin Pears, correspondent of the London *Daily News*—both of whom were strongly influenced by the propaganda of General Ignatiev—dozens of Bulgarian villages had been wiped out and tens of thousands of Bulgarian men, women, and children had been slain, tortured, or sold into slavery. In England Gladstone, already the Grand Old Man of the Liberal party, penned a pamphlet on *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*, depicting the atrocities in lurid colors and castigating the pro-Turkish policy of the Conservative Disraeli. By the time the pamphlet issued from the press, the Ottoman government had suspended all payments

on its foreign debt, which to numerous investors in England and France was another and more tangible "atrocity" of the "unspeakable" Turk.

At the end of June 1876 the principalities of Serbia and Montenegro went to war with their nominal suzerain, the Sultan, in behalf of the rebels in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and a Russian Pan-Slavist was made commander-in-chief of the Serbian army. Russia was only too ready to profit from the inflamed state of public opinion all over Europe against the Turks and to utilize the Serbian War as a preliminary to the complete dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. With this general purpose Bismarck sympathized, and to achieve it he favored an early negotiated agreement among the great powers. He hoped that by settling the estate of the "sick man" in advance of his demise the danger of later litigation and conflict among prospective heirs would be lessened. He was particularly anxious to forestall conflict between Russia and Austria, Germany's associates in the Three Emperors' League.

Neither the Austrian nor the British government was eager to co-operate. Both were very suspicious of Russian designs in southeastern Europe and inclined to believe that instead of encouraging them effort should be centered on prolonging artificially the life of Turkey. The official British view was pithily expressed by Queen Victoria: "It is not a question of upholding Turkey; it is a question of Russian or British supremacy in the world."[19] As for Austria, there was a good deal of wavering between the willingness of the army staff and the reluctance of the foreign minister to negotiate a limited partition, in which the Hapsburg as well as the Russian Empire would participate. Andrássy, however, was gradually swayed by pressure from the Emperor Francis Joseph and by anxiety not to alienate Bismarck. He responded amicably enough to overtures from St. Petersburg, and in July 1876 consented to a military convention with Russia, whereby, if Serbia and Montenegro were defeated, the territorial *status quo* would be maintained and Turkey obliged to execute the Andrássy "reforms"; if the principalities were victorious, they would share Bosnia and Herzegovina with Austria, and Russia would take Bessarabia; if Turkey

[19] Monypenny and Buckle, VI, 132-133.

collapsed altogether, Bulgaria and Rumelia would be established as autonomous states (under Russian tutelage), Constantinople would become a free city, and Epirus, Thessaly, and Crete would be added to Greece. That Turkey would collapse was then generally believed. The very next month another "revolution" at the capital was reported as the death throe of the Ottoman Empire; the briefly reigning Murad V was deposed, and the reign of his brother and successor, Abdul-Hamid II, bade fair to be even briefer.

From the outset Abdul-Hamid II had a knack of belying the gloomy prognosis of his attending physicians and disconcerting them with signs of convalescence. He was shrewd and crafty, utterly without scruples about terrorizing his subjects into obedience and with a positive genius for sowing dissension among the great powers. Fortunately, too, he had an excellent and loyal general in Osman Pasha, as well as an able naval organizer and commander in Hobart Pasha.

Osman Pasha, at the head of a Turkish army, administered to the Serbians on September 1, 1876 a reverse so severe as to elicit from their prince, Milan, an appeal to the powers for intervention, and while Abdul-Hamid staved off compliance with the powers' request for an armistice, Osman at the end of October inflicted another and crushing defeat upon the Serbians. Whereupon, faced with a Russian ultimatum, the Sultan consented to the holding of an international conference at Constantinople to arrange terms of peace. The conference opened in December, and, thanks to German mediation between Russia and Austria, a nominal accord among the great powers was soon reached. Serbia, despite her defeats, was to be restored as she was before the war. Montenegro, which had held her own in the struggle, was to get a strip of Herzegovina. The remainder of Herzegovina was to be merged with Bosnia in a single autonomous province. Bulgaria was to be divided into two autonomous provinces—an eastern and a western.[20]

The British government, while sharing in the conference and formally endorsing its proposals, was encouraging the Sultan to defy it. In this curiously crooked course Disraeli had the earnestly

[20] The Bulgarian scheme was the work of the American minister, Eugene Schuyler, patronized and supported by the Russian minister, General Ignatiev.

moral backing of a large section of public opinion in England, which was enormously edified by Abdul-Hamid's dramatic promulgation, on the very day of the opening of the international conference, of a liberal Turkish constitution, with bill of rights, parliamentary government, and responsible ministry, all in the best English tradition. As the Sultan aptly asked, what was left for foreign powers to do since the Ottoman Empire could and would reform itself in the glorious light of modern freedom and progress? In January 1877 the Turkish government rejected the powers' proposals, and the international conference adjourned *sine die*.

Already, however, Russia was planning to accomplish by force of her own arms what the international peace conference failed to achieve. She could count upon the benevolent neutrality of both Germany and France; and by buying off Austria she might isolate Great Britain and deter her from intervening in a Russo-Turkish war. To this end Russia obtained from Austria in January 1877 promise of a free hand in Rumania and Bulgaria in return for a pledge that she would respect the *status quo* in Serbia and Montenegro and give Austria a free hand in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Accordingly, in March, through the good offices of Austria, peace was concluded between Serbia and the Ottoman Empire; and in April Russia prevailed upon Rumania to permit Russian troops to cross the principality for an attack upon Turkey.

Eight days later—on April 24, 1877—Russia abruptly declared war on the Ottoman Empire. The war itself was no brilliant performance. Prevented from utilizing the sea route from Odessa to Constantinople by Hobart Pasha's masterful handling of a superior Turkish war fleet, Russia had to content herself with a land campaign through Rumania and over the Balkan mountains. This she was barely able to conduct. Her troops were mobilized and supplied with difficulty, and the commander-in-chief, the Grand Duke Nicholas, was incompetent. Russia would have met with almost certain disaster if she had not had invaluable support from Rumanians, Bulgarians, and Serbs,[21] and if the Turkish defense had not been handicapped by bad generalship and much bungling.

[21] Rumania proclaimed her independence and as an ally of Russia went formally to war with the Ottoman Empire in May 1877. Serbia resumed hostilities against the empire in December 1877. Moreover, Montenegro had been continuously at war with

As it was, the Russians traversed Rumania and crossed the Danube without meeting serious opposition. In July they occupied Shipka Pass and were proceeding through the Balkan range when Osman Pasha, arriving from Serbia with his veteran army, entrenched himself at Plevna on the right flank of the Russian line of communications. Thrice the Russians vainly sought to dislodge him. In the three assaults they lost 30,000 men. They had to halt their advance and lay siege to Plevna. Eventually in December, Osman, threatened by starvation, attempted a sortie; he was severely wounded and forced to capitulate.

In January 1878 the Russians entered Sofia and overcame the last Turkish resistance at Philippopolis. They then swept on toward Constantinople. At the end of the month the Turks sued for an armistice, and on March 3 was signed the treaty of San Stefano, the terms of which were dictated by the Russian plenipotentiary, General Ignatiev. The Ottoman Empire was to cede to Russia the Asiatic towns of Ardahan, Kars, and Batum outright, and in Europe the Dobrudja (south of the Danube delta) for exchange with Rumania for the portion of Bessarabia lost by Russia in 1856; to raze all fortifications along the Danube; to pay a war indemnity; to recognize the independence of Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro; to enlarge the latter two; to accord full autonomy to an extensive Bulgaria, including Rumelia and Macedonia; and to effect sweeping administrative reforms in Bosnia and likewise in the empire's remaining Greek and Armenian provinces.

There was immediate and widespread criticism of the treaty of San Stefano. Rumanians, and Serbs and Greeks also, felt that they were ill requited and grievously discriminated against in favor of the Bulgarians. Austria-Hungary was alarmed and angered by Russian dictation in the western as well as in the eastern Balkans. Great Britain perceived in the projected Bulgaria a Russian vassal state dangerously close to Constantinople, and in the extension of Russia's Transcaucasian territory a sinister menace to British imperial predominance in the East. Already in February 1878, before

the empire since June 1876, and by the beginning of 1878 Greece was preparing to join Russia. Many Bulgarian irregulars, as well as the regular Rumanian army, cooperated with the Russian forces.

the signing of the treaty, a British fleet sailed through the Dardanelles and anchored off Constantinople. It was an ostentatious reminder to Russia that Britain had interests in the Ottoman Empire and meant to safeguard them. Then, immediately afterward, Count Andrássy on behalf of Austria proposed that the treaty be submitted to a congress of the great powers for reconsideration and revision. In vain Russia objected to being haled before an international tribunal and presumably obliged to sacrifice fruits of her hard-earned victory. As the only alternative appeared to be another and far worse war, this time with Britain and Austria, Russia finally acquiesced in the proposed congress.

Berlin was the obvious place for holding the congress. Germany was the greatest and most disinterested of the great powers; and Bismarck, eager to keep peace among them, volunteered to serve as "honest broker." On the eve of the assembling of the congress, Great Britain took the precaution to arrange a working agreement with Austria, and to extort from Turkey a secret convention providing that if Russia extended her Transcaucasian frontier Britain might occupy and administer the island of Cyprus.

The congress met at Berlin in June 1878, a much be-ribboned array of statesmen and diplomatists. Bismarck presided with wit and energy. The British delegation was headed by the mercurial Disraeli, the Austrian by the picturesque Andrássy, the French and the Italian by their respective foreign ministers, the dignified Waddington and the decorous Corti. The doddering Gorchakov (whom Bismarck had not forgiven for the "Affair of 1875") was chief of the Russian representatives, and an Ottoman Greek, Karatheodory Pasha, of the Turkish. The habitual politeness of these distinguished gentlemen hardly masked their mutual suspicions and divergent strivings. Only Bismarck's personal prestige and driving force prevented a breakup of the congress and brought to conclusion, in a month's time, a general peace settlement.

The settlement arrived at in the hot days of July 1878, like many earlier and later settlements of the "Eastern Question," was proclaimed "final." The Ottoman Empire was once more "saved," and the "integrity" of its territories—what remained of them—was "guaranteed." Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro were recognized

as independent sovereign states. Rumania gained the Dobrudja; Serbia, the district of Nish; Montenegro, the Adriatic port of Antivari. Greece was promised an expansion northward.[22] Of the "big Bulgaria" of the treaty of San Stefano, only the northern third was erected into an autonomous principality; Rumelia was made an Ottoman province under a Christian governor, and Macedonia was returned unconditionally to Turkish rule. Russia was allowed to take Ardahan, Kars, and Batum from Turkey, and Bessarabia from Rumania. At the same time Austria was given a mandate to occupy and administer Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Novi-Bazar; and possible French opposition to Great Britain's appropriation of Cyprus was removed through assurances given to France that she might appropriate Tunis whenever she pleased.[23] Germany and Italy were the only great powers which got nothing for themselves from the Russo-Turkish War. But the Italian delegate, Count Corti, when he boasted that he returned from Berlin with "clean hands," was mobbed by his compatriots and thrown out of office.

Disregard of the principle of nationality has often been cited as the most serious flaw in the Vienna peace settlement of 1815, following the Napoleonic Wars. But it was even more egregious in the Berlin settlement of 1878. National aspirations of all the Balkan countries were flouted. Rumania, by being deprived of Bessarabia, contained fewer Rumanians after the settlement than before, and her pride was piqued by the stipulation that her numerous Jewish residents should possess all the rights of Rumanian citizens. Serbia, which already aspired to be the Piedmont of a united Yugoslavia, was confronted with a new and almost insuperable obstacle in Austria's enlarged dominion over Serbs. Greece was denied Epirus and Crete and had to sit idly by while Britain seized Cyprus. Worst of all fared the Bulgarians, whose national state was dismembered as soon as it was born. Nationalism in the Balkans, instead of being assuaged, was raised to fever pitch. If before 1878 the "Eastern Question" concerned one "sick man," after 1878 it involved a half-dozen maniacs. For the Congress of Berlin drove the Balkan peoples mad.

[22] Through subsequent negotiations, Greece obtained Thessaly in 1881.
[23] France pleased to occupy Tunis in 1881.

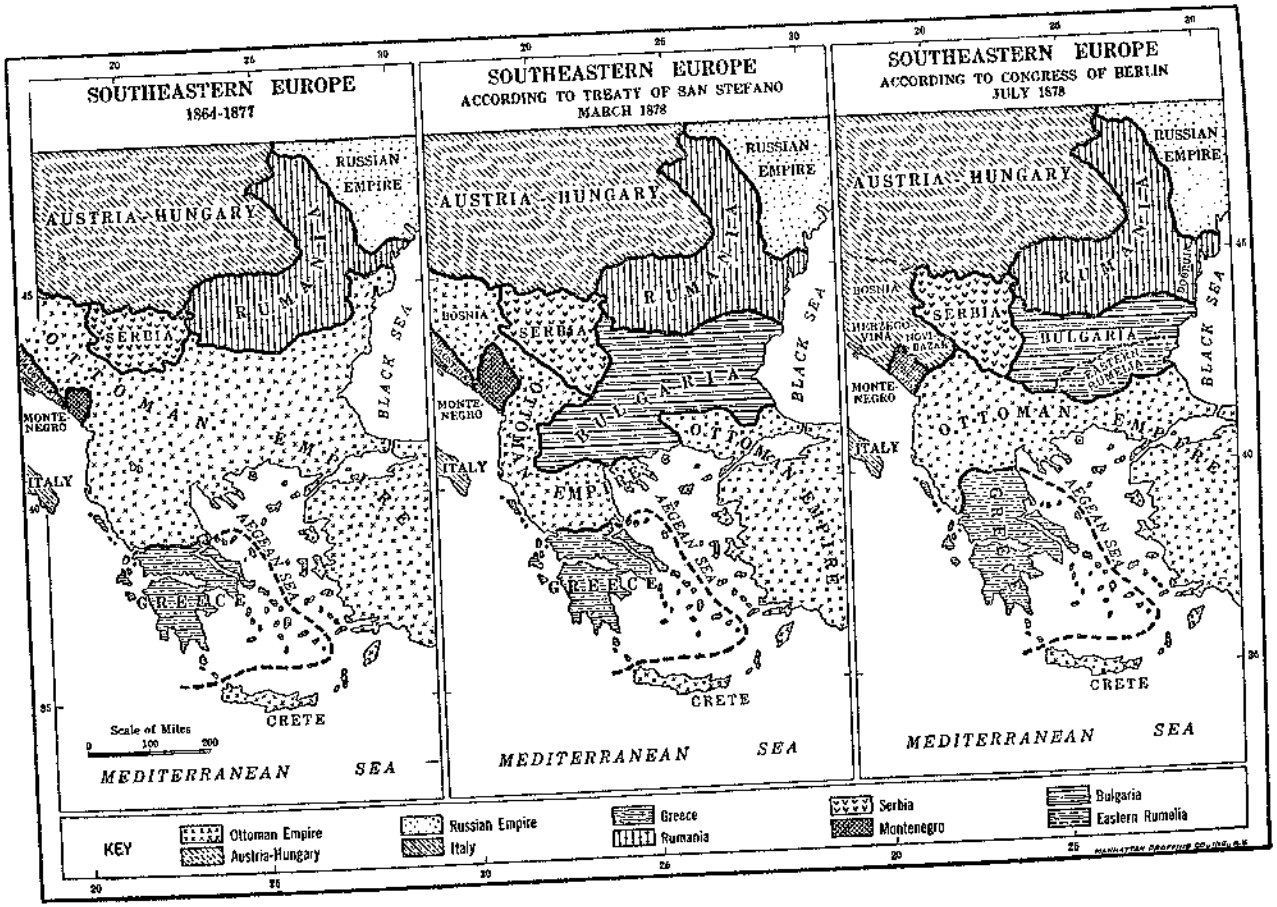
It is one of the ironies of the Berlin peace settlement that the powers most vocal in championing the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire should have despoiled it more than did Russia, the frank advocate of partition. To Russia the Turks lost only Bessarabia (which as a part of Rumania was already practically lost to them) and a few towns in the Caucasus. On the other hand, to their "protectors" the Turks lost Bosnia, Herzegovina, Novi-Bazar, Cyprus, and Tunis. If mutilated Bulgaria was a Russian gain (as was fallaciously assumed at the time), it was counterbalanced by what Britain and Austria secured from Turkey for their supposed protégés, Greece and Serbia.

Whatever satisfaction is afforded by the reflection that at any rate the Congress of Berlin preserved peace among the great powers in a time of severe crisis, must be qualified by the further reflection that the Ottoman Empire was made to pay—and to pay dearly—for the peace. Altogether, to maintain a "balance of power" between "hostile" Russia and "friendly" Austria and Britain, the empire was shorn of more than half of its European area and population and left in a desperate condition. In the circumstances it is not surprising, or out of keeping with the age, that Abdul-Hamid II promptly cast aside the liberal Turkish constitution of 1876 and sent for German military advisers to reorganize the Turkish army in the latest mode. Iron was to be the tonic for weakness, as well as the hall mark of material progress.

VII. ALLIANCES *à Trois:* PEACE BY MIGHT

As "honest broker," Bismarck perhaps overworked at the Congress of Berlin. At any rate he was haunted after it closed by terrifying nightmares. Russia, he knew, was profoundly chagrined and disposed to accuse him of favoritism to Austria and Britain and ingratitude to herself. Had not Russia stood aside while he plucked the fruits of victory from the Franco-Prussian War? Why should not he have behaved similarly in respect of the Russo-Turkish War? Instead, the Congress of Berlin had been, in the words of the Tsar, "a European coalition against Russia under the leadership of Prince Bismarck."[24]

[24] *Die Grosse Politik*, III (1922), 3.


SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE
1864-1877
SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE
ACCORDING TO TREATY OF SAN STEFANO
MARCH 1878
SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE
ACCORDING TO CONGRESS OF BERLIN
JULY 1878
AUSTRIA-HUNGARY
RUSSIAN EMPIRE
RUMANIA
SERBIA
BULGARIA
EASTERN RUMELIA
BOSNIA
HERZEGOVINA
NOVI BAZAR
MONTE-NEGRO
ITALY
GREECE
CRETE
BLACK SEA
AEGEAN SEA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
OTTOMAN EMPIRE
Scale of Miles
0 100 200
KEY
Ottoman Empire
Austria-Hungary
Russian Empire
Italy
Greece
Rumania
Serbia
Montenegro
Bulgaria
Eastern Rumelia

What would be the consequences to Germany? Here was food for Bismarck's nightmares. Russia, as another "unsatisfied" power, might well ally herself with France; and France, whom Bismarck did not fear so long as she was isolated, would become dangerous in combination with Russia. France, to be sure, he had just sought to divert from Continental undertakings to colonial enterprise in Tunis; but it was too much to expect that France would forget Alsace-Lorraine or scorn a Russian alliance. On the other hand, if he should now woo Russia and make public amends to her, he would almost certainly alienate both Austria and Britain and might push them into an even more imperiling union with France. In any event, the Three Emperors' League of the early 1870's seemed to be irreparably broken, and Germany must choose between her late allies.

Bismarck thought Austria the better bet. Her army was more efficient, if less numerically impressive, than Russia's; her largely German officialdom was more *sympathique*, in a period of quickening nationalism, than Russia's Slavic regime; and her Hungarian foreign minister, Andrássy, already pro-German, was now eager for German guarantees of Austria's newly privileged position in the Balkans. Andrássy welcomed advances from Bismarck, as Gorchakov could hardly have done; and at Vienna in September 1879 an alliance was negotiated between Germany and Austria. If either were attacked by Russia, the other would come to its assistance, and neither would conclude a separate peace. If either were attacked by any other power (that is, by France), its ally would observe at least a benevolent neutrality, though if Russia should join that power, both allies would fight. The alliance would run for five years and be kept secret.

In negotiating the Austro-German alliance, Bismarck had to overcome stubborn opposition of the Emperor William I, who was an uncle of the Tsar and eager to preserve the dynastic solidarity which had obtained between Prussia and Russia since the days of Frederick the Great and Catherine the Great. When, in October 1879, William finally consented to the signing and ratification of the treaty of alliance with Austria, he stipulated that its terms should be immediately communicated in secret to the Tsar, together with

a letter stressing its purely defensive character. As an offset to this German gesture to Russia, Austria despatched a like communication to her "friend," Great Britain.

The Austrian alliance, Bismarck believed, would help to insure Germany, but a still bigger German army would help too. Accordingly, early in 1880—a whole year before the expiration of the septennate of 1874—he put through the Reichstag another military bill, providing for an increase of the standing German army from 401,000 to 427,000 men for the period from 1881 to 1888.

That Bismarck had suffered from nightmares was soon apparent. The Tsar, troubled by the spread of revolutionary agitation within Russia in the wake of the war of 1878, was quite averse from any special understanding with France, the traditional seat of revolution and now in process of reoccupation by republican radicals. On the other hand he feared lest, if Russia remained isolated, Austria would be enabled, with German backing, to forward her own Balkan projects and to frustrate Russia's. The situation, in his opinion, called for a Russo-German *rapprochement.*

Russia therefore made overtures to Germany for an alliance in 1880. They were cordially received by William I, and Bismarck's favorable response was expedited by the fact that Prince Gorchakov (whom he despised) was supplanted at the Russian foreign office, in fact if not yet in name, by Nicholas de Giers, a Protestant bureaucrat of German extraction and a consistent admirer of Hohenzollern Germany. Bismarck stipulated, of course, that any Russo-German alliance should be supplementary to, and compatible with, the existing Austro-German alliance, and Giers was so anxious to forge a bond between St. Petersburg and Berlin that he interposed no objection to the inclusion of Vienna. The Austrian government, however, was less willing. It was already protected against Russian hostility by alliance with Germany and friendly co-operation with Britain. If it should enter into an alliance with Russia, it would gain nothing and might lose not only British friendship but any chance of pursuing an aggressive policy in the Balkans.

A major factor in changing opinion at Vienna was a change of ministry in Great Britain in April 1880. Despite the "peace with

honor" which he had brought his country from the Congress of Berlin, the Conservative Disraeli, pro-Turk and pro-Austrian, failed to command the necessary parliamentary majority and was succeeded by the Liberal Gladstone, notoriously anti-Turk and bombastically anti-Austrian. On the eve of his elevation to the British premiership, the latter publicly assailed Austria as "the unflinching foe of freedom of every country of Europe. . . . There is not an instance,—there is not a spot upon the whole map,—where you can lay your finger and say: 'There Austria did good.'"[25] Such words were calculated rather to confirm the prejudices of English Liberals than to express sound judgment or to inspire confidence at Vienna in a continuing Anglo-Austrian entente. So long as Britain was dominated by a "crazy professor"[26] who talked like that, Austria might well accept Bismarck's advice and join Germany and Russia in a triple alliance.

The treaty for this alliance was almost ready for signature when the Tsar Alexander II was assassinated in March 1881. For a moment there was doubt whether his son and successor would conclude the negotiations, for Alexander III was reputed to be very unfriendly to Germany and correspondingly inimical to Austria. Nevertheless the circumstances surrounding his accession filled him with a special horror of revolution and impelled him to favor a foreign policy which would emphasize the solidarity of the conservatively monarchical powers. The treaty of alliance was finally signed at Berlin on June 18, 1881. Each of the three powers promised to observe a benevolent neutrality if either of the others were engaged in war with a fourth power, except Turkey. If one of the three should engage in war with Turkey, it would consult the others in advance, and no modification of the territorial *status quo* in southeastern Europe would be made without agreement among the three. In an accompanying protocol, the three powers agreed that Austria, whenever she liked, might annex outright the Turkish provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina which she already "occupied," and that similarly Russia might incorporate with her "vassal

[25] Election speech at Edinburgh, March 17, 1880.

[26] The expression was Bismarck's. The German chancellor grouped Gladstone with Gorchakov, Gambetta, and Garibaldi as "the revolutionary quartet on the G string." Conversations with Dr. Cohen, in Bismarck, *Gesammelte Werke*, VIII (1926), 379, 381.

state" of Bulgaria the Turkish province of Rumelia. The alliance, essentially a revival of the Three Emperors' League, and hence of the old Holy Alliance, was to be secret and in force for three years. In 1884 it was renewed for another three-year term. It thus endured until 1887 and served to keep peace between Austria and Russia and also to insure Germany against any joint disturbance of the peace by France and Russia.

Back of this triple alliance of 1881 was anxiety of each of the contracting powers to safeguard recent conquests: Alsace-Lorraine, by Germany; Bosnia-Herzegovina, by Austria; Bessarabia (and presumably Bulgaria), by Russia. But Italy felt the same sort of anxiety about safeguarding the Papal State which she had seized; and in the early '80's Italy's anxiety verged on panic. In the preceding decade France had been the only great power on really good terms with the Papacy and the only one minded to assist it in recovering its temporal rule, but although there had been tension in Franco-Italian relations, Italy had had no reason for alarm. France had been too weak to proceed alone, and both Germany and Austria had had internal conflicts with the Catholic Church which rendered them potential allies of Italy rather than of the Papacy. Now, conditions were changing. Although the French Republic was passing from clerical to anti-clerical control and hence becoming less favorable to interference in Italy, both Germany and Austria were quieting anti-Catholic agitation at home and displaying a new deference to the Pope. Might not these powers be susceptible to Catholic influence and Papal pleas? Might they not intervene in Italy? If they did so, Italian national unity would be disrupted and the royal government discredited and perhaps replaced by a revolutionary regime of wild Garibaldians. Italian statesmen, thoroughly frightened, strove frantically to extract pledges from Bismarck, who would give none without Austrian collaboration.

Austro-Italian collaboration was difficult to envisage. Memories of recent war still rankled. Austria still retained a sizable Italian population in Trentino and Istria which Italy coveted. Yet Bismarck was adamant in refusing an Italo-German alliance unless Austria were included.

Italy's reluctance to enter into an alliance with Austria was finally dissipated, curiously enough, by French action in Tunis. This African country, a nominal dependency of the Ottoman Empire, had for some time been alluring to Italy: it was directly across the narrowest part of the Mediterranean from Sicily; it was the site of ancient Carthage (what modern Italian patriot was ignorant of Punic implications?); and in it Italian settlers outnumbered all other Europeans. Yet while Italian imperialists dreamed about Tunis—and slept—Germany and Great Britain, for reasons of their own, were assuring France at the Congress of Berlin that she might take Tunis. There was no popular enthusiasm in France about the matter, but Tunis was adjacent to French Algeria, some Frenchmen had financial interests in Tunis, and the leading French statesman at the moment, Jules Ferry, was ardently imperialist. In the spring of 1881 Ferry despatched a French expeditionary force across the Algerian frontier into Tunis, allegedly to repress tribal disorders, and on May 12 the native bey capitulated and accepted a French protectorate. Italy appealed to Britain, to Germany, to Austria, to the Ottoman Empire, to rebuke such high-handed action of France and to dislodge her from Tunis. The appeals were in vain. Italy learned with dismay how utterly isolated she was. Even Bismarck was pro-French!

In October 1881 King Humbert, his prime minister Depretis, and his foreign minister Mancini journeyed as humble pilgrims and suppliants to Vienna. They would dutifully comply with Bismarck's requirement for Austria's inclusion in any Italo-German alliance. It could scarcely undo what had been done in Tunis but it might avert future floutings of Italy. The Emperor Francis Joseph and his new foreign minister, Count Kalnóky,[27] rose gallantly to the situation and concealed in the showy mantle of affability the contempt they must have felt. Negotiations continued during the next winter and spring, and at length on May 20, 1882, was signed at Vienna the treaty for the Triple Alliance of Italy, Germany, and Austria. It stipulated that if Italy were attacked by France, both Germany and Austria would assist Italy with all their

[27] Kalnóky, another Hungarian statesman, succeeded Andrássy as Austrian minister of foreign affairs in 1881.

forces; if Germany were attacked by France, Italy would aid Germany in like manner; if one or two of the allies were attacked by two or more powers, the others would join the defense; if any of the allies should make war, the others would observe a benevolent neutrality; all would take counsel together and all conclude peace together. The alliance was to be secret and to last for five years.

The Triple Alliance of Germany and Austria with Italy proved more enduring than the alliance of Germany and Austria with Russia. While this expired in 1887, the other survived, through repeated renewals, until Italy's entry into the World War in 1915. The relatively long life of the alliance with Italy was no reliable gauge, however, of its solidity and strength. From the start neither Bismarck nor Kalnóky had any illusions on this score. There might be a truce but hardly a definitive peace in Austro-Italian rivalry. And Bismarck thoroughly distrusted the Italians. "They have such a large appetite," he said, "and such poor teeth."[28]

Nonetheless, Bismarck was glad to hold to the Triple Alliance with Italy. It seemed a convenient corollary—a second line of defense—to the triple alliance with Russia. Just as the Russian alliance contributed to keep Russia apart from France and to lessen the chances of conflict between Russia and Austria, so the Italian alliance served to emphasize Italy's aloofness from France and to lessen the chances of conflict between Italy and Austria. To prevent war among the European great powers, whether in the Balkans or in the Adriatic and Mediterranean, was a cardinal purpose, we should bear in mind, of the German statesman, not because he sentimentally loved peace for its own sake, but because he had a very real fear that war between great powers could not be localized and might be utilized by France or Russia to weaken and perhaps to dismember Germany.

Into the Austrian and German orbit soon moved the two lesser powers of Serbia and Rumania. Both were notably anti-Russian after the War of 1877-1878. They felt that Russia had been basely ungrateful for the assistance they had given her and they were filled with jealousy and fear of the Bulgaria which Russia spon-

[28] *Documents diplomatiques français*, II, Nos. 369, 440. W. L. Langer, "The European Powers and the French Occupation of Tunis," *American Historical Review*, Jan. 1926, p. 253

sored and tried to extend at their expense. Resentment against Russia affected them in the same way as Italy was affected by resentment against France: it caused them to overlook past hostility toward Austria and to seek future security through alliances with her. In the case of Serbia, Prince Milan had special need of foreign subsidies to cover the cost of his personal carousals and *galanteries*; and Viennese bankers were understanding and obliging.

On June 28, 1881, Prince Milan concluded with Baron Kalnóky a Serbo-Austrian alliance. Both pledged friendly neutrality if either was at war with a third power; Serbia promised not to tolerate intrigues against the Hapsburg Empire or against Austrian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and not to make any political treaty without Austrian consent; and for such abject dependence Serbia was assured that her expansion southward into Macedonia would not be opposed by Austria. The alliance would be secret and for ten years. Its first fruit was Austrian approval of Prince Milan's assumption, in 1882, of the title of King.

In the case of Rumania, the reigning Prince Charles, who took the title of King in 1881,[29] was a Hohenzollern, devotedly attached to his imperial cousin, the German Emperor. Under his leadership, Rumania negotiated an alliance with both Austria and Germany, which was finally signed on October 30, 1883. It provided that none of the three should enter an alliance against either of the others; that if Rumania were attacked, Austria would assist her; and that if Austria were attacked by a power adjoining Rumania (that is, by Russia or Bulgaria), Rumania would aid Austria. The alliance, strictly secret, was originally made for five years. It constituted a third triple alliance, elaborating the previous triple alliances of Germany and Austria with Russia and with Italy; and, like the second of these, it was renewed and continued (at least on paper) for a third of a century.

As the decade of the 1880's advanced, a severe strain developed in the complicated network of Bismarck's alliance system. It arose chiefly from Russia's dissatisfaction with the working out of the "Eastern Question." The Ottoman Empire was obviously growing

[29] He appropriately crowned himself with an iron crown made of cannon captured from the Turks at Plevna in 1877.

weaker and its dismemberment was proceeding apace. But while France took Tunis in 1881 and Britain effected a military occupation of Egypt in 1882, Russia was estopped by the veto of her Austrian ally from supplementing the slight profit she herself had reaped in 1878. Moreover, Russia was not holding her own with Austria in the race between them for domination of the succession states in the Balkans. While Austria was securing allies and satellites in Serbia and Rumania and obtaining, besides, the warm friendship of Greece, and while, incidentally, Germany was gaining favor at Constantinople as the trainer of a reformed Turkish army, Russia was discovering that her lone protégé, Bulgaria, was a most unruly child.

The Bulgarians, inspired by a nationalism of their own, were not minded to take orders from Russia; and their Prince, Alexander of Battenberg, though a favorite nephew of the Tsar Alexander II and selected for his post with the latter's approval, speedily displayed a most disconcerting sympathy with his subjects rather than with his patron. The result was a bitter and protracted feud between the Russian government and Prince Alexander of Bulgaria, which reached a crisis in 1885. In September of that year an *opéra bouffe* revolution at Philippopolis, the capital of the Turkish Bulgarian province of Rumelia, led to Alexander's annexation of the province to his own autonomous principality, amidst vociferous rejoicing of all Bulgarians, impotent protests of the Ottoman Sultan, and obvious displeasure of Russia. Russia, of course, wished an eventual union of Rumelia with Bulgaria—such a union she had championed at the Congress of Berlin—but she thoroughly disapproved of the revolutionary methods by which it was attained and she strenuously objected to its realization under Prince Alexander.

To add to Russia's discomfiture, Serbia, in quest of "compensation," went to war with Bulgaria in November 1885 and was promptly and soundly trounced by Alexander's Bulgarian army. Only Austria's intervention in behalf of her ally saved Serbia from punishment and restored peace in the Balkans. In April 1886 Russia felt obliged to recognize the *fait accompli* and to reach an agreement with the Sultan whereby the Prince of Bulgaria would

be "governor" of Rumelia. Russia then avenged herself on Prince Alexander by encouraging a group of disaffected Bulgarian army officers to depose and banish him in August 1886. But worse was yet to come. The Bulgarians would not permit Russia to choose Alexander's successor; and the prince whom they finally chose and installed, in July 1887, was Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, an officer in the Austrian army and alleged to be pro-German and anti-Russian!

For all these untoward events in Bulgaria, Russian public opinion blamed Austria and Germany. There was a marked recrudescence of Pan-Slavist propaganda in Russia, attended by many diatribes against everything Teutonic. One of the most influential Russian journalists of the time, the belligerently nationalistic Katkov, called upon Russia to ally herself with France. His call was splendid orchestration to French nationalists who at that very moment were chanting the praises of General Boulanger—the "man on horseback," the "apostle of revenge!"

Bismarck was gravely alarmed. The first, and to him most fundamental, of his triple alliances, the one including Russia, seemed doomed. His bête noire of a Franco-Russian alliance loomed in only too clear prospect. He must take extraordinary precautions. In November 1886 he begged the Reichstag to adopt an amendment to the septennate of 1881, increasing the German standing army from 427,000 to 468,000 men. When the Reichstag refused, he dissolved it and called for the election of a new one. So successfully did he communicate his alarms to the German people that they returned a Reichstag which in March 1887 accepted his proposals and enlarged the army without serious debate.

Already in February 1887 Bismarck secured a renewal of the Triple Alliance with Italy. This time Germany, rather than Italy, was the suitor and willing therefore to make additional pledges. Germany promised to aid Italy in an offensive war against France if the latter should move in Tripoli or Morocco; and Austria was induced to promise "compensation" to Italy if the *status quo* in the Balkans were changed.

Bismarck did not stop here. In March 1887 he patronized a "Mediterranean agreement" for "mutual support" among Italy,

Austria, and Great Britain[30] in every difference which might arise between one of them and a fourth power. Then, in May, Spain was prevailed upon to make similar engagements with Italy, Austria, and Germany.

Again fortune smiled on Bismarck. France dropped General Boulanger from office in May 1887, and on June 18 the Tsar Alexander III secretly agreed to a three-year "reinsurance" treaty between Russia and Germany, pledging each to maintain a benevolent neutrality if the other should be attacked by a third great power. Bismarck was so glad to be thus "reinsured" against a joint war with Russia and France that he paid for it, perhaps extravagantly, in a "very secret" protocol, promising particular German support of Russia in Bulgaria and also Germany's friendly neutrality in the event of Russia's seizure of the Straits and Constantinople. But, to deter Russia from acting on this last promise, Bismarck engineered in December 1887 still another triple agreement among Great Britain, Austria, and Italy for upholding the *status quo* in the Balkans and for concerting measures to be taken if it should be threatened by Russia. In other words, the German Chancellor took away from Russia with one hand what he extended to her with the other.

So peace was kept in Europe among the great powers throughout the chancellorship of the creator of the Hohenzollern German Empire. It was an achievement, only in part, of Bismarck's nimble ambidextrous diplomacy—his canny shuffling and reshuffling of three-card suits, with the aces always in his hands. The aces, after all, were armies, and the premier ace was the German military machine. This, by its might, had introduced the new era in 1871; fear of it was an abiding and basic feature of the entire era.

[30] Gladstone was out of office by this time and the more favorably disposed Conservatives were in.