

CHAPTER XVII

THE PERIOD OF REACTION

REFERENCES: FYFFE, *Modern Europe* (popular edition), Chapters XIII.-XV.; PHILLIPS, *Modern Europe* (1815-1900), Chapters I., II., pp. 14-22; III.-VII.; SEIGNOBOS, *Political History of Europe Since 1814*, Chapter X., pp. 286-305; Chapter XI., pp. 326-33; Chapter XXI., pp. 648-57; Chapter XXV.; ANDREWS, *Modern Europe*, Vol. I., Chapters III., V.; PHILLIPS, *The War of Greek Independence* (1821-33); THAYER, *Dawn of Italian Independence* (1814-49), Vol. I., Books 1-2; BOLTON KING, *History of Italian Unity* (1814-71), Vol. I., Part I.

SOURCE READINGS: TRANSLATIONS AND REPRINTS, University of Pennsylvania, Vol. I., No. 3 (text of Holy Alliance, German *Bund*, etc.); ROBINSON, *Readings*, Vol. II., Chapter XXXIX. (Talleyrand, Metternich, etc.); OLD SOUTH LEAFLETS, No. 56 (the Monroe Doctrine).

The Congress of Vienna.

THE Congress of Vienna, which met to arrange the affairs of Europe after the unparalleled storms of the past generation, embodied the agreements reached among the powers in a so-called Final Act. Taken in connection with the Peace of Paris, this document traces the political geography of reconstructed Europe. It also conveys an idea of the principles of the victors. These principles have been vehemently condemned, but were, after all, the natural outgrowth of the conservative triumph. It was felt that the general unrest produced by Napoleon's having erased

boundaries, toppled over old dynasties, and called new ones into being, should be replaced by certainty and permanence, and the surest method to achieve this end seemed to be to reestablish as far as possible all the states, great and small, in existence before the late disturbances. These states were said to be "legitimate," as against the illegitimate creations of Napoleon. The desirability of sifting the sheep from the goats, on the score of this distinction of "legitimacy," was first championed by the supple Frenchman Talleyrand, and gradually imposed itself as a piece of divine wisdom upon the congress. But while "legitimacy" made for the restoration of the old dynasties, the great powers did not forget to compensate themselves territorially for their past losses and labors. Their hunger for land modified the plan of a restoration pure and simple, and that plan was further affected by the desire to check all possible future aggressions on the part of the disturbing element, France. Legitimacy, territorial compensation, and hostility to France are the main forces out of the interaction of which grew the new map of Europe.

The greatest interest at the congress gathered around central Europe, as the region which had been subjected to the most sweeping changes by the Revolution. In Italy the old governments were restored with the exception of the republic of Genoa, which was given to Sardinia to strengthen it against France, and the republic of Venice, which was given to Austria to compensate it for Belgium. This accommodation caused little trouble compared with the negotiations over Germany. As no one wanted to have the Holy Roman Empire back again, it was agreed, in spite of the clamor of the German patriots, who favored a strong united state, that the German princes should be considered sovereign and bound together in a loose federation. Serious trouble came when Prussia asked, as her compensation, the

Its principle legitimacy, territorial compensation, and hostility to France.

Changes in Italy and Germany.

The trouble over Saxon.

whole of Saxony. The right of Prussia to indemnity was admitted in principle, because she had lost her Polish provinces, and Saxony was considered in some quarters as reasonable payment, on the ground that her king, having clung to Napoleon to the last, had forfeited whatever claim he might have had under the theory of legitimacy. In fact, Prussia and Russia had come to a private agreement, by which Russia, in return for the Prussian Polish spoils, agreed to support Prussia in her effort to gain Saxony. But Austria, England, and France firmly declared themselves against this arrangement, and the conflict was not adjusted by a compromise until both sides had begun to make preparations for war. By the final agreement, Prussia got half of Saxony, the remainder being returned to the "legitimate" sovereign. For the part she gave up she received in exchange a solid block of territory on the lower Rhine, while Alexander acquired the grand-duchy of Warsaw—with the exception of the province of Posen, given to Prussia—and converted his acquisition into the kingdom of Poland, with himself as king.

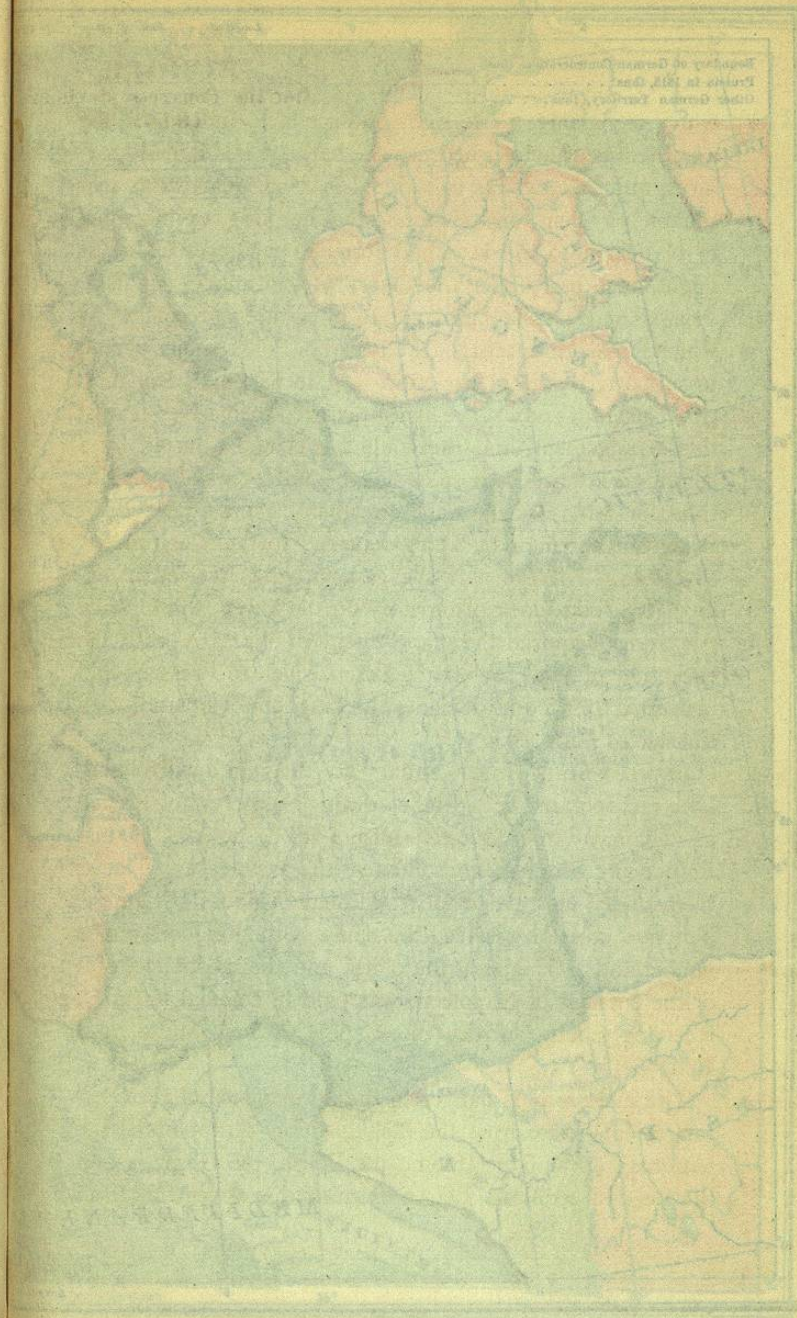
Belgium and
Holland
united.

Compensa-
tions of
England.

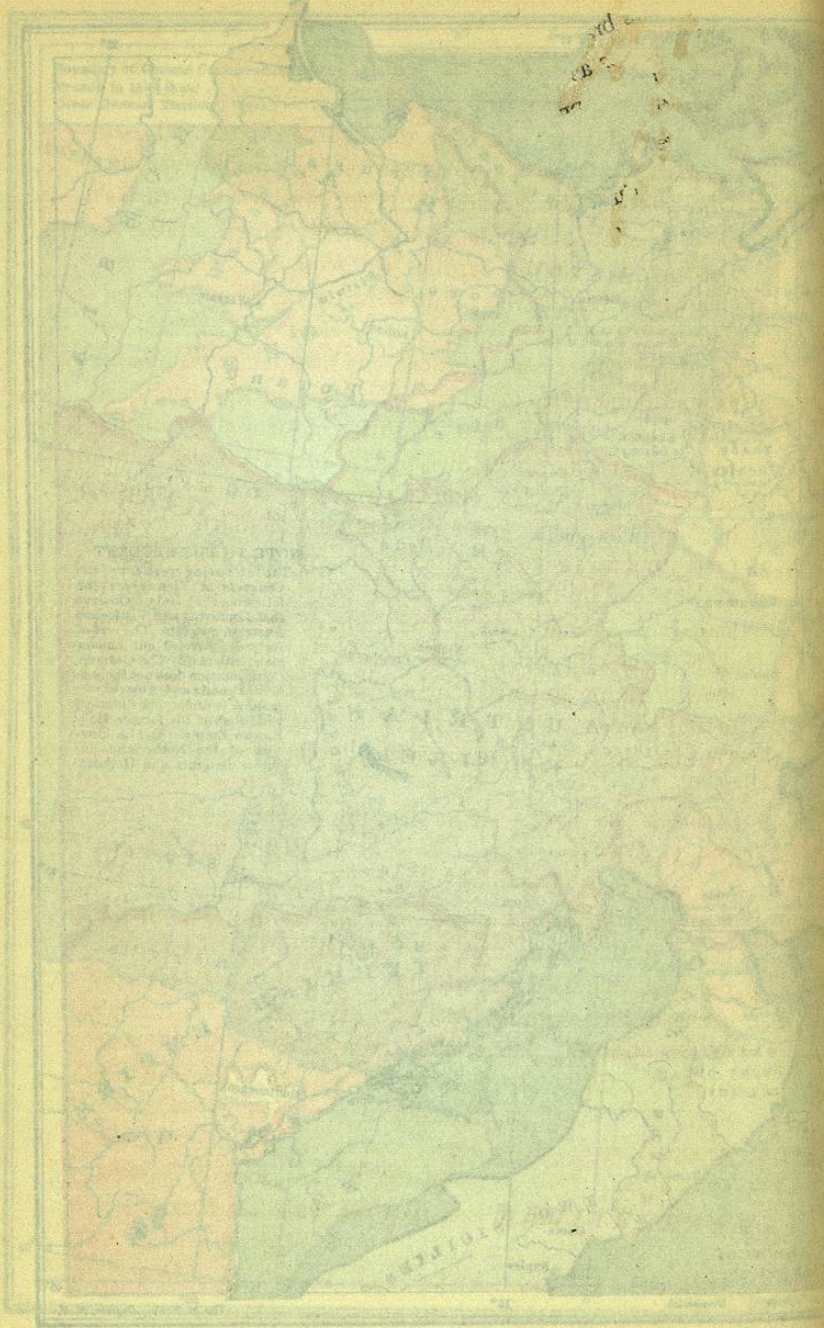
The rearrange-
ments of
Vienna dis-
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national hopes.

Between France and Germany lay Belgium and Holland, both incorporated with France during the period of French ascendancy. In order to establish a strong bulwark against France the congress consolidated these states and placed them under the rule of the "legitimate" House of Orange. The new creation received the name of the kingdom of the Netherlands. England, the oldest and the most successful of the enemies of Napoleon, was paid in colonial territory, receiving South Africa (the Cape), Ceylon, Malta, and Heligoland.

The most serious danger to the permanence of these arrangements arose from the fact that they disappointed the national hopes of the Italian, the Polish, the German, and the Belgian peoples. Let us examine the agreements from







this point of view. In Italy the Bourbon Ferdinand was recognized as king of Naples and Sicily, joined under the name of the Two Sicilies; the Pope was restored to the States of the Church; the House of Hapsburg-Lorraine to Tuscany; the king of Sardinia to Piedmont, increased by Genoa; and Austria was put in possession of Lombardy and Venetia. The lesser states, like Modena and Parma, we may leave out of consideration. As no attempt was made to bind these states together, and as the old jealousies hindered united counsels, Austria, a foreign power, by taking advantage of the inner divisions, acquired an easy paramountcy. The Poles, although treated not ungenerously by Alexander, being given a constitution of which we shall presently hear, were nevertheless deceived in their national expectations by the failure of the congress to restore their state in its ancient limits. The Catholic Belgians abhorred their Protestant masters, the Dutch, while in Germany, though no foreign sovereign was imposed, the conclusions of the congress deeply offended the patriotic party. The German situation, being complicated, requires further elucidation.

There can be no doubt that the passing of the Holy Roman Empire was an unmitigated blessing, but Napoleon did more than merely inter this august mummy. With his unrivalled genius for order, he abolished a great number of the small sovereignties, above all, those feudal survivals, the free knights, the free cities, and the prince-bishops, and with their territory fattened the lay princes. As a result of this cleansing process there were now, instead of some three hundred, only thirty-eight sovereign states. These may be divided, for the sake of convenience, into three groups: first, the two great powers, Austria and Prussia; second, the middle states, to wit, the kingdoms of Bavaria, Saxony, Wurtemberg, and Hanover, with the grand-duchy

The German situation.