fact, that he keeps his word; that he is a still, strong man, who cannot lie; his noblest fortune being the happy chance which called on him to lead his country's battles, instead of leaving him free to contend against, and perhaps, for the time, to crush, his country's aspirations for domestic freedom.

"Kind Heaven has allowed him to become the champion and the representative of German unity, — that unity which is Germany's immediate and supreme need, calling for the postponement of every other claim and desire. And this part he has played like a man, a soldier, and a king.

"But one can hardly be expected to forget all the past, — to forget what Humboldt and Varnhagen von Ense wrote; what Jacobi and Waldeck spoke; what King William did in 1848, and what he said in 1861. And unless we forget all this, and a great deal more to the same effect, we can hardly help acknowledging, that, but for the fortunate conditions which allowed him to prove himself the best friend of German unity, he would probably have proved himself the worst enemy of German liberty."

CHAPTER X.

THE CHIEF SUPPORTERS OF THE CROWN.

THE Crown Prince, Frederick William, the son of the king, is not considered a man of much ability, or of any marked integrity of character. He is now (1870) thirty-nine years of age; having been born in 1831. He has command of the central wing of the Prussian army invading France. Having seen considerable service, and not being wanting in energy or courage, he occupies a respectable rank as a military commander. Having married the eldest daughter of Queen Victoria, — who will thus, probably, soon become Queen of Prussia, — it is difficult for the British court to adopt any efficient measures to thwart the ambitious designs of the Prussian monarchy.

The most prominent military man is Prince Frederick Charles. He is forty-two years of age, and is commander-in-chief of the Prussian forces. Frederick Charles is the nephew of the king; being the son of the king's brother Frederick. At ten years of age, Frederick Charles entered the army. It was deemed essential that every prince of the House of Hohenzollern should be thoroughly instructed in military service, that, in

case of necessity, he might be able efficiently to draw his sword in defence of his country.

Even in those early years, it is said that he was a passionate admirer of the heroic deeds of Frederick the Great. With great enthusiasm he studied the history of the Seven-Years' War, thoroughly familiarizing himself with all the strategic and tactical movements of that renowned struggle. His innate love of military affairs enabled him to make rapid progress in his studies; and his military genius soon became conspicuous to his teachers and his companions.

When but twenty years of age, in 1848, he was assigned to the staff of the commander-in-chief of the Prussian army, Gen. von Wrangel, in the first invasion of Schleswig-Holstein. His reckless courage greatly inspirited the troops, and contributed much to his renown.

When, in 1849, his uncle, now King William I., was sent to Baden to crush out with his dragoons a popular uprising there, Prince Frederick Charles accompanied him, and rendered signal service in the sanguinary conflicts which ensued. During the fifteen years of peace which followed, Prince Charles devoted himself with renewed assiduity to his military studies; making himself familiar with every branch of the service, and paying special attention to the organization and movements of large armies.

In the second invasion of Schleswig-Holstein, in 1863, — to which we shall hereafter refer, — Frederick Charles was intrusted with the command of the Prussian division. In the attack upon Düppel, one of the most formidable of the Danish strongholds, Frederick Charles, after two repulses, which were accompanied by terrible

slaughter, grasped the flag of the Royal Guards, and personally led to a third attack, which was successful.

At the commencement of the war between Prussia and Austria, in 1866, Frederick Charles had command of the first division of the Prussian army. On the 23d of June he crossed the frontier, and, in ordering the attack of his troops upon the Austrians, addressed them in these singular words, characteristic of the blunt, uncultivated soldier: —

"May your hearts beat towards God, and your fists upon the enemy!" A series of almost unparalleled victories ensued. Triumphant as was this campaign, which was terminated by the utter defeat of the Austrians at Sadowa, it revealed to the eagle-eye of Prince Frederick Charles some serious defects in the organization of the Prussian army. He subsequently published a pamphlet upon the subject, which attracted great attention throughout all Germany.

Baron von Moltke is another Prussian whom the agitation of the times has brought prominently before the world. The baron was born in Mecklenburg on the 26th of October, 1800. In early life, he served in the Danish army. In the year 1822, he entered the Prussian army as second lieutenant. His superior military abilities soon rendered him conspicuous, and secured him rapid promotion.

In 1835 he went to Constantinople to organize the Turkish army. In the campaign which ensued against the Viceroy of Egypt, he greatly distinguished himself, and returned to Prussia crowned with new honors. In 1858 he was appointed chief of staff, and in 1864 took a very distinguished part in the war which wrested Schleswig-Holstein from Denmark. Soon after, he pub-

lished several works on military science, which have been widely translated, and which have given him great celebrity in military circles.

"But the greatest field for the practical application of his genius was offered him during the campaign of 1866. It is said that not only was he in constant possession of information about every movement of the army, but that he never was at a loss, one single moment, how to counteract all his adversary's operations, and turn them to his own advantage.

"His character is as firm as a rock; and, when once engaged in the planning of a military movement, nothing can detain him from carrying it out, as long as he feels morally convinced that he is in the right, and that there is a chance of success. In spite of his advanced years (for he has reached his threescore years and ten), he is said to be still very robust; and has no fear of the fatigues of a campaign."[1]

But by far the most remarkable man whom these modern agitations have brought prominently to view is Count Otto Edward Leopold von Bismarck. He was born at Schönhausen on the 1st of April, 1815. His parents were opulent, and of an ancient family. Otto was the youngest of six children. When he was but a year old, his father removed to Pomerania, where he inherited some knightly estates at Kniephof, about five miles to the east of Naugard. Here Otto remained with his parents until he was six years of age.

The rural mansion at Kniephof was plain, but capacious. It was pleasantly situated. Its beautiful garden and surrounding woods and meadows gave it no inconsiderable celebrity. In 1821, when Otto was six years of age, he was sent to Berlin, and placed in the renowned school of Prof. Plamann. Here he remained for six years, until 1827; when he entered the Frederick William Gymnasium. His elder brother was in the class above him. Their parents were in the habit of spending their winter-months in Berlin. Thus the boys enjoyed much of home-life, as they resided with their parents.

[1] The Great European Conflict, by G. W. Bible, p. 55.

The two boys were placed under the best of tutors; and Otto, in addition to becoming a good classical scholar, attained so familiar an acquaintance with English and French as to speak both languages with correctness and fluency. No expense was spared in the education of these children. Their mother was an accomplished lady, alike distinguished for her personal beauty and her mental endowments. She seems early to have appreciated the remarkable character and abilities of Otto; and she expressed a particular desire that he should devote himself to a diplomatic career. The father of Otto was a witty, kind-hearted, good-humored man, who took the world easily, and who was not remarkable for information or intellect.

In the year 1830, when Otto had attained his sixteenth birthday, he was confirmed in the Trinity Church at Berlin. Two years later, in 1832, he graduated at the gymnasium, and entered upon the study of the law. Dr. Bonnell, director of the gymnasium, speaks in the following terms of Otto when under his care:—

"My attention was drawn to Bismarck on the very day of his entry; on which occasion the new boys sat in the schoolroom on rows of benches, in order that the masters could overlook the new-comers with attention during the inauguration. Otto von Bismarck sat, as I

still distinctly remember, with visible eagerness, a clear and pleasant boyish face and bright eyes, in a gay and lightsome mood, among his comrades: so that it caused me to think, 'That's a nice boy. I'll keep my eye on him.'

"He became an inmate of my house in 1831, where he behaved himself, in my modest household, in a friendly and confiding manner. In every respect, he was charming. He seldom quitted us of an evening. If I were sometimes absent, he conversed in a friendly and innocent manner with my wife, and evinced a strong inclination for domestic life. He won our hearts; and we met his advances with affection and care: so that his father, when he quitted us, declared that his son had never been so happy as with us." [1]

He is represented at this time as being quiet, retiring, formal, and quite punctilious in observing and exacting that courtesy which etiquette required. An admirable memory aided him in the study of languages. He was very fond of dogs and horses. Though not fond of athletic sports, he was a good fencer, an accomplished swimmer, and danced gracefully. He had grown rapidly; was tall, thin, with a pale face, though enjoying good health. At the university he became acquainted with Lothrop Motley, who has since become so distinguished.

Otto had wished to enter the University at Heidelberg. His mother objected, lest he should "contract the habit, detestable to her, of drinking beer." He therefore entered the University of Göttingen. Here he plunged into dissipation with great recklessness. His

[1] Life of Bismarck, by John George Louis Hesekiel, p. 115.

vigorous constitution enabled him to endure excesses under which others would have broken down. He fought a duel, in which he was slightly wounded. Soon after, he had four challenges at the same time upon his hands. In his "jolly life at Göttingen, he had no leisure to attend the classes." [1]

Upon going home in vacation, his dress and altered manners greatly grieved his mother. The months of so-called pleasure rolled on; and Bismarck became nominally a lawyer, opening his office in Berlin. He was a good-looking man, of majestic stature and courtly bearing.

During the winter succeeding the summer of 1835, young Bismarck attended a court-ball. Here he met, for the first time, Prince William, son of King Frederick William III. As Bismarck, with another lawyer of equally majestic stature, was introduced to the immediate heir to the throne, William, scrutinizing the two stately forms before him, said, "Well, Justice seeks her young advocates according to the standard of the guards." This was the first interview between the future monarch and his future illustrious prime-minister.

In the year 1836, Bismarck was sent as an *attaché* to the legation to the court at Aix la Chapelle. Here again he plunged into all the fashionable dissipation of the imperial city. He was thrown into convivial association with Englishmen and Frenchmen. Speaking fluently the two languages, he became a great favorite, and made several excursions to Belgium, France, and the Rhine province.

In the year 1837, he was transferred to the crown

[1] Life of Bismarck, by John George Louis Hesekiel, p. 127.

office at Potsdam. The next year, he entered the Jäger Guard to fulfil his military duties. He was a wild fellow. His improvident father had so managed the estate, that the family was threatened with pecuniary ruin.

The sons begged their father to grant them the administration of the Pomeranian property. The request was acceded to; and the parents retired to Schönhausen to spend the evening of their days. The mother, who was in feeble health, soon died, in November, 1839. It was in the summer of this year that Bismarck entered on the administration of the Pomeranian estates. He was then twenty-three years of age. He had been accustomed to extravagant expenditure. Now bitter want oppressed him. Thus impelled by necessity, he devoted himself, for a time, to the care of the wasted estates, with diligence and with wisdom.

But the change in his mode of life depressed him: he became subject to deep despondency. With returning prosperity came returning recklessness. His eulogistic biographer says of him, —

"Despite his wild life and actions, he felt a continually increasing sense of loneliness; and the same Bismarck who gave himself to jolly carouses among the officers of the neighboring garrisons, sank, when alone, into the bitterest and most desolate state of reflection. He suffered from that disgust of life common to the boldest officers at times, and which has been called 'first lieutenant's melancholy.' The less real pleasure he had in his wild career, the madder it became; and he earned himself a fearful reputation among the elder ladies and gentlemen, who predicted the moral and pecuniary ruin of 'Mad Bismarck.'" [1]

[1] Life of Bismarck, by John George Louis Hesekiel, p. 133.

The two brothers divided the estates in Pomerania, so that Kniephof and its surroundings fell to the share of Otto. "Strange scenes occurred at Kniephof when the youthful owner, tortured by dark thoughts, dashed recklessly, to kill time, through the fields, — sometimes in solitude, and sometimes in the company of gay companions and guests: so that Kniephof became renowned far and wide in the land.

"Strange stories were current about their nocturnal carouses, at which none could equal 'Mad Bismarck' in emptying the great beaker filled with porter and champagne. Tales of a wild character were whispered in the circles of shuddering ladies. At each mad adventure, each wild burst of humor, a dozen myths started up, sometimes of comical, sometimes of a terrible character, until the little mansion of Kniephof was looked upon as haunted. But the ghosts must have had tolerably strong nerves; for the guests, slumbering with nightcaps of porter or champagne, were often roused by pistol-shots, the bullets whistling over their heads, and the lime from the ceilings tumbling into their faces." [1]

Bismarck was of course, in his many hours of solitude, restless and unhappy. In vain he sought repose for his troubled spirit in reading. He tried travels, and visited France and England. His father died in 1845; and Bismarck received, as an addition to his property, the estate of Schönhausen. Here he took up his future residence. Some local offices of trivial importance were conferred upon him.

At the house of a friend Bismarck met a young lady, Johanna von Putkammer, and fell deeply in love with

[1] Life of Bismarck, p. 134.

her; but his reputation was such, that the friends of the young lady were horror-struck at the thought of her union with such a debauchee. Johanna, however, returned the affection of her ardent lover; and her parents, with great reluctance, at length gave their assent to the union. They were married in July, 1847. On his bridal tour, Bismarck visited Switzerland and Italy. At Venice he met King Frederick William IV., and was invited to dine with him. They conversed for a long time upon German politics. Bismarck had already imbibed a strong antipathy to democratic progress, and was strenuously in favor of preserving all the prerogatives of the crown. The views he expressed in this conversation were evidently very gratifying to the king. Here, probably, was laid the foundation of that royal favor with which the king ever after regarded his illustrious subject.

We are told by his eulogistic biographer that the first enemy Bismarck saw to the power of the throne was *liberalism;* and he showed a firm front to it. Then *democracy* ventured upon some of its utterances; and he met this foe with the most unhesitating conviction. "Liberalism, democracy, the inimical jealousy of Austria, the envy of foreign nations, — such are the enemies of the Prussian sovereignty; and Bismarck has, with equal courage and firmness, with as much insight as success, fought openly and honestly against these."

When, in 1847, Frederick William IV., constrained by the general popular uprising in his realms, consented to a constitution which granted many reforms, the old nobility were displeased. They adhered to the absolutism of their former sovereigns. In the debate upon this question, Bismarck, as deputy to the United Diet, first made his appearance as a public speaker. He entered

his protest against the constitution, and against any concession to the spirit of liberalism. His remarks were so little relished, that his voice was drowned with hisses and outcries.

The whole liberal press now came down upon Bismarck with the utmost ferocity. With singular coolness, he had avowed himself the friend of feudal absolutism and the enemy of "popular rights." "Thus," says his biographer, "he found himself in full battle-array against liberalism. He gave utterance to his opinions in conformity with his natural fearless nature."

In a long speech in 1847, he said, "With whom does the right reside to issue an authentic declaration? In my opinion, in the king alone. The Prussian sovereigns are in possession of a crown, not by the grace of the people, but by God's grace, — an actually unconditional crown, some of the rights of which they have voluntarily conceded to the people."

Thus Bismarck took his stand, with ever-increasing boldness and ability, in support of the sovereignty of the crown, and in antagonism to popular rights. The summer of 1848 was terrible in its menaces to the absolutism of the Prussian throne. Bismarck was recognized as the boldest and ablest of the advocates of royalty. His courage never faltered. Consequently he was hated by the advocates of reform as much as he was cherished by the court.

One evening, he was in a beer-saloon which was frequented by those in political sympathy with him.

"He had just taken his seat, when a particularly offensive expression was used at the next table concerning a member of the royal family. Bismarck immediately

rose to his full height, turned to the speaker, and thundered forth, —

"'Out of the house! If you are not off when I have drunk this beer, I will break this glass on your head!'

"At this there ensued a fierce commotion; and outcries resounded in all directions. Without the slightest notice, Bismarck finished his draught, and then brought down the mug upon the offender's pate with such effect, that the glass flew into fragments, and the man fell down howling with anguish. There was a deep silence, during which Bismarck's voice was heard to say in the quietest tone, as if nothing whatever had taken place, —

"'Waiter, what is to pay for this broken glass?'"[1]

In the spring of 1851, Bismarck was appointed by Frederick William IV. ambassador to the diet at Frankfort on the Main. The following anecdote is related of him, which, if not absolutely true, is certainly characteristic of the man: "He one day visited the presiding deputy, Count Thun. The count received him with a sort of brusque familiarity, and went on coolly smoking his cigar, without even asking him to take a chair. The latter simply took out his cigar-case, pulled out a cigar, and said in an easy tone, 'May I beg a light, Excellency?' Excellency, astonished to the greatest degree, supplied the desired light. Bismarck got a good blaze up, and then took the unoffered seat in the coolest way in the world, and led the way to a conversation."

In a letter from Bismarck to his wife, dated Frankfort, 3d July, 1851, we find the following sentiments: —

"I went, day before yesterday, to Wiesbaden, to ——; and, with a mixture of sadness and wisdom, we went to

[1] Life of Bismarck, p. 202.

see this scene of former folly. Would it might please God to fill this vessel with his clear and strong wine, in which formerly the champagne of twenty-one years of youth foamed uselessly, and left nothing but loathing behind! Where now are ——, and Miss ——? How many are buried with whom I then flirted, drank, and diced! How many transformations have taken place in my views of the world in these fourteen years! How little are some things to me now which then appeared to me great! How much is venerable to me which I then ridiculed!"

During the summer of 1855, Bismarck visited the Exposition at Paris. Here he was the guest of the Prussian ambassador, Count Hatzfeld; and was introduced, for the first time, to the Emperor of the French. Again, in the spring of 1857, he visited Paris, and had a special political conference with the emperor; after which he visited Denmark and Sweden. Sundry incidental remarks in his letters now begin to show how the idea of adding to the power of Prussia was daily more and more occupying his thoughts, and gaining strength in his mind. In an apparently official communication, dated May 12, 1859, we find the following expressions: —

"Perhaps I am going too far when I express it as my opinion, that we should seize every justifiable opportunity to obtain a revision, necessary to Prussia, of our relations to the smaller German States. I think that we should willingly take up the gauntlet, and regard it as no misfortune, but as real progress, if a majority at Frankfort should decide upon a vote which we could regard as an arbitrary change in the object of the confederation, a violation of its treaties. The more unmistakable this violation, the better. I see in our position in the diet a

defect of Prussia, which we shall have, sooner or later, to heal by fire and the sword."

The Italians were moving to escape from Austrian thraldom, and to establish Italian unity. Unaided, the divided States of Italy could by no means resist the powerful Austrian monarchy. France was the only nation to which the Italians could look for aid. Prussia had engaged to unite with Austria, should the French armies march to the aid of the Italians. In allusion to this subject, Bismarck wrote as follows, from St. Petersburg, on the 22d of August, 1860: —

"According to the journals, we have bound ourselves verbally to assist Austria, under all circumstances, should she be *attacked* by France in Italy. Should Austria find it necessary to act on the offensive, our consent would be requisite if our co-operation is to be anticipated. Austria having security that we should fight for Venice, she will know how to provoke the *attack* of France.

"Viennese politics, since the Garibaldian expedition, desire to make things in Italy as bad as they can be, in order that, if Napoleon himself should find it necessary to declare against the Italian revolution, movements should commence on all sides to restore the former state of things.

"Some kind of general rumors reach me that the press carries on a systematic war against me. I am said to have openly supported Russo-French pretensions respecting a session of the Rhine province, on condition of compensation nearer home. I will pay a thousand Frederick d'ors to the person who will prove to me that any such Russo-French propositions have ever been brought to my knowledge by any one." [1]

[1] Life of Bismarck, p. 292.

"The Edinburgh Review," in the following terms, expresses its estimate of the character of Bismarck: "His private life is pure. Nobody has accused him of having used his high position for his pecuniary advantage; but by the side of these virtues the darker shades are not wanting. He never forgets a slight, and persecutes people who have offended him with the most unworthy malice. His strong will degenerates frequently into absurd obstinacy. He is feared by his subordinates; but we never heard that anybody loved him. He can tell the very reverse of truth with an amazing coolness. He laughs at the fools who took his fine words for solid cash. His contempt of men is profound." [1]

Mr. Friedrich Kapp, in an article in "The New-York Nation" of October, 1870, upon the conversations of Count Bismarck, narrates the following incident: —

"To the Austrian minister, when this gentleman rather incredulously received one of Bismarck's assertions, he said, a few weeks before the outbreak of the war of 1866, 'I never make a false statement whenever I can avoid it. In your case it is not necessary. Therefore I have no earthly interest to deceive you, and you can believe my words.'"

[1] Edinburgh Review, vol. cxxx p. 457.