"What advantages, aside from national weight and importance, will attend the knitting-together of the German States into one empire, cannot yet be estimated. At present, the prospect looks unfavorable to the development of free institutions. The empire will be too powerful to be resisted by any of the small States which have been merged in it. None of the local governments will be any further respected than suits the convenience of the central authority for purposes of local administration. The present rulers of Germany are the last men in Europe to make any voluntary concessions to popular rights; and their power of repression is manifestly strengthened by the new ascendency which this war has given them over the national mind. But the Emperor William, who will complete his seventy-fourth year on the 22d of March must, in the course of nature, give place ere long to the Crown Prince, who may not inherit his father's narrow and bigoted notions and arrogant temper. His education has been more liberal; and his English marriage would naturally have brought him into contact with some people who might give his mind, if it is at all open and receptive, some tincture of British politics. But, if the haughty and unscrupulous Bismarck should continue to be prime-minister, his stronger character and astuter intellect would be likely to mould the government."

CHAPTER XXVII.

PEACE.

THE establishment of the great Germanic Empire, which is now *un fait accompli*, has cost three sanguinary wars. First, there was the war with Denmark for the possession of Schleswig and Holstein. Next came the war with Austria, terminating in the terrible slaughter of Sadowa, by which Prussia doubled her territory and population, and more than doubled her military power. Then ensued the war with France, by which Prussia consolidated her new possessions, obtained both banks of the Rhine from Belgium to Switzerland, and, by depriving France of any natural frontier, left France entirely at the mercy of any Germanic invasion; while Germany, with the broad Rhine and its impregnable fortresses in her possession, was effectually guarded against any approach from France. It is very seldom that any earthly plans advance so triumphantly from the commencement to the conclusion as have these measures of Count Bismarck for the establishment of the German Empire. True, the expense has been awful beyond all human estimation. The number of lives sacrificed in the carnage of the battle-field and in the wards of the hospital is to be

counted by hundreds of thousands. Other multitudes, which cannot be numbered, must pass through life with mutilated bodies, consigning them to hopeless impoverishment. Germany and France have been literally filled with widows and with orphans; and their silent woe, unheeded by men, will, through long years of suffering, ascend to the ear of God. The destruction of property in the bombardment and conflagration of cities, in the villages and cottages laid in ashes, the trampling of harvests, and all the waste and ruin which accompany the march of hostile armies, it is scarcely in the power of human arithmetic to compute. The blessings which the Germanic Empire shall confer upon humanity ought to be very great indeed to compensate for the misery into which millions have been plunged. It is said, that when some one, in conversation with Count Bismarck, alluded to these woes which the establishment of the empire had cost, he replied, "Yes; but, unfortunately, you cannot have an omelette without breaking the eggs."

It is now obvious to every reflecting mind, that the overthrow of the French Empire after the disaster at Sedan, and the substitution of the irresponsible Committee of National Defence, was an irreparable calamity for France. The Imperial Government, which had been established and sustained by the votes of the overwhelming majority of the people, had conferred upon France twenty years of prosperity, and was recognized and respected by all the governments of Europe, Asia, and America.

When such men as Favre, Gambetta, and Rochefort, taking advantage of an hour of terrible disaster and dismay, summoned the mob of Paris to their aid, and with dictatorial hands seized the sceptre of power,

France was bewildered, stunned, paralyzed. Catholic France would not listen to the voice of those whose cry was "Down with the church!" as well as "Down with the throne!" Eugénie, as regent, might have summoned all France to rise *en masse* to repel the invader. The pope would have contributed his powerful sympathy; and every ecclesiastic in France would have echoed the appeal. Thus, in an hour, seven millions of fighting men might have sprung to arms. The vast fleet of France, in perfect command of the seas, could have supplied them with weapons. There was thus a *probability* of the calamity being mitigated; and a *possibility*, even, that it might be repaired. But the pope, the cardinals, and the bishops all felt that they had no foes more to be dreaded than the democracy of Paris, Lyons, and Marseilles. Thus, when Gambetta and Rochefort frantically shouted for all France to spring to arms, the priests were silent, and the peasants shook their heads. The energies of France were paralyzed, and her doom was sealed.

The empire, under the regency, could have looked to the surrounding kingdoms with some hope, at least, of securing an alliance. These kingdoms all feared the enormous growth and military power of Prussia; and none of them wished to see France trampled in the dust. They all maintained friendly relations with the empire. The pope wielded a moral power stronger than bayonets or batteries; and the pope had ever found in the emperor a firm friend. Victor Emanuel owed his crown to the emperor; and united Italy was one of the creations of the empire. The daughter of Victor Emanuel, the Princess Clotilde, had married the emperor's cousin, Prince Bonaparte; and she was one

of the most lovely and beloved of the inmates of the Tuileries. This rendered it not impossible that an alliance with Italy might soon have been formed.

Spain had, with singular unanimity, voted against a republic, and had established a monarchy. Prince Amodeus, a son of Victor Emanuel and a brother of Princess Clotilde, was soon chosen King of Spain. This family alliance tended to unite Spain with Italy in strong sympathy with France. Hence it was by no means improbable that Spain might have been induced to send her armies across the Pyrenees to assist the French Empire in its deadly struggle with its foreign foes. Family alliance, religious faith, and harmonious institutions, would all have lent their aid.

Austria, smarting beneath her terrible defeats, exasperated by the loss of immense territory, trembling in view of the gigantic power which was overshadowing her, and grateful to Napoleon for having, after the disaster of Sadowa, prohibited the further encroachments of Prussia, — thus saving Austria from annihilation, — must have been in a position to listen to overtures which would enable her to strike back some revengeful blows, and perhaps to regain a portion of that which she had lost.

The British Government was in far more cordial sympathy with the French Empire than with any other government upon the continent. The alliance in the Crimean War had cemented the friendship of the governments and the armies of England and France. By friendly co-operation, the commerce of the two nations had been vastly increased; and constant intercourse was fast uniting the two nations in sympathetic bonds.

In April, 1855, the emperor, with Eugénie, visited

the Queen of England. The palaces of Victoria blazed with regal *fêtes* in their honor. Their reception was alike enthusiastic by the court and by the populace. The Lord Mayor of Windsor, in welcoming the royal guests to Windsor Castle, said, —

"We are sensible, sire, that to the wisdom and vigor of your imperial majesty's counsels, and to your unceasing endeavors to promote the true interests of the powerful and generous nation which Providence has committed to your care, may be attributed that prosperity and happiness which your country now enjoys."

"The London Times" of that date speaks as follows of the reception which England gave to her distinguished guests: —

"They were the associations connected with Napoleon III. — the remembrance of his deeds and the knowledge of his worth — which pressed along his progress the millions who this week have given to the world an imperishable testimony of their appreciation of fortitude in troubles, energy in action, courage amidst dangers, and clemency amid triumphs.

"They honored the wisdom and probity which occupied a mighty throne, and honored the thousand princely qualities which had won it. They honored the great man who had retrieved the prosperity and the power of France. They honored the good sovereign whose chief care is the welfare of his people. And, in the greeting offered to Napoleon, we may truly add, there was love for the nation which he had restored to its legitimate place amongst the powers of the earth at a moment most critical to its destinies, and to which he had given back, with the suddenness of enchantment, all its internal prosperity, after convulsions which made the most

sanguine despair of its future. Given back! — he has opened for it a new career of unprecedented success."

Addresses breathing the above spirit were showered upon the emperor from all quarters. On the 17th of April, the city of London offered a banquet to their Majesties. In the response of the emperor to the very complimentary address of the lord mayor, he said, —

"As for me, I have preserved on the throne, for the people of England, the sentiments of esteem and sympathy which I professed in exile, when I enjoyed here the hospitality of the queen; and, if I have conformed my conduct to my convictions, it is because the interest of the nation which elected me, as well as those of general civilization, constrain me to do so."

England needed an ally upon the Continent. France was the only nation to which she could look for cordial alliance. Under these circumstances, the sympathies of England would have been with France, had the empire continued; and it is by no means impossible that England might have been induced to contribute more to the empire than her *moral* support.

But the suicidal act of the democracy in Paris in seizing upon the moment of overwhelming disaster to overthrow by mob-violence the constituted authorities, and to establish a dictatorship which they absurdly called a republic, which they dared not submit to popular suffrage, and which no government in Europe would recognize, left France, wounded and bleeding, at the mercy of her foes. There was no longer any hope of efficient aid from home or from abroad. Catholic France could not unite in measures which would place the sceptre in the hands of infidel communism and socialism; and neither the governments of England,

Austria, Italy, or Spain, could think of aiding to establish and consolidate the sway of the self-constituted democratic committees of Paris and Bordeaux. Indeed, were a republic, distinctively organized, to be established in France, it would not enjoy the sympathy and friendship of a single monarchy in Europe. It would be simply tolerated; while every neighboring power would strive to embarrass its operations, and would eagerly watch for its downfall. In this hostility, none would be more prominent than the majestic German Empire, which now, in possession of the most important avenues of entrance into France, holds France entirely at its mercy.

One of the most untoward yet inevitable results of this conflict is, that it has irreparably impaired, throughout Christendom, confidence in the French people. They know not what they want. They are never united. Revolution follows revolution in endless succession. The best friends of France have lost all hopefulness in her future, and are in despair. In a terrible revolution of blood and misery, less than one hundred years ago, the old Bourbon monarchy was overthrown. They tried a republic; it proved an utter failure: tried the consulate; abandoned it for the empire: shouted, "Down with the empire!" and took back the Bourbons; drove them ignominiously a second time from the kingdom, and reared the Orléans throne. After making Louis Philippe their "target-king" for about a score of years, they drove him in shame and disgrace out of the kingdom, and tried a republic again. After the lapse of two years, they repudiated the republic, and re-established the empire; and now the empire is in ruins, and the people of France are asking, "What next?"

There is no new form of government which human ingenuity can devise. Shall they return to the old Bourbon monarchy? Twice they have tried that, and twice rejected it furiously. Shall they re-establish the republic? Twice they have abandoned that in disgust. Shall they attempt to rear again the throne of the empire? The first and second empire have been trampled with maledictions beneath the feet of the mob in Paris. Shall they invite the House of Orléans back to the throne? Louis Philippe was, but a few years ago, literally pelted out of the kingdom, barely escaping with his life.

Whatever excuses may be made for any or all of these events, the facts remain unchanged; and they have created, universally, a profound sentiment of discouragement in reference to the future of France. Her best friends are in despair. They feel that it is of but little consequence what government the present Assembly may decide upon; for they have no confidence that the government will last longer than a few years. There are in France five very decided and hostile parties, — Bourbonists, Orléanists, Imperialists, Moderate Republicans, and very emphatically pronounced Radical Republicans. Whichever one of these five forms of government may be adopted, there will be four fierce assailants to fall upon it, obstructing its operations, and endeavoring by revolution to secure its overthrow. The world has lost faith in France.

The writer has ever been in favor of the empire, believing it to have been the choice of the majority of the French people, and, under the circumstances, the best government for France. He has thought, with nearly eight millions of French voters, that monarchical forms

would disarm the hostility of the surrounding monarchies; while a constitution under those forms, abolishing all hereditary privilege, establishing universal suffrage, and recognizing the principle of equal rights for all men, might gradually lead the nation in the path of liberty, without the horrors of revolution.

Very many of his fellow-republicans in America have been so far from agreeing with him in this opinion, that they have regarded its avowal as a crime demanding the severest denunciation. But the writer is constrained still to admit, that in his judgment, could the minority of the people of France have acquiesced in the decision of the majority, and accepted the empire, with its constitution purposely rendered so elastic that any reforms which the people might choose could be introduced by the peaceful operation of the ballot-box, the forty millions of the French people would be in a far happier condition and with brighter prospects than now.

It is a remarkable fact, that the friends of human progress, at the present time, look rather to the empire of Germany with hope than to France. They cannot regard with approval many of the measures which have been adopted in the creation of this empire. They instinctively revolt from its absolutist political principles, from its hereditary legislators, and from its openly-avowed hostility to popular reform. Still the empire will probably prove a stable government. The Germans are a stable and reliable people. It will be for the interest of that strong government to promote the prosperity of the masses; and modern intelligence, which teaches that the wealth of one nation is not increased by the impoverishment of others, will lead the empire to seek, by commercial activity, to promote the industry and opulence of other States.

The writer regrets to see that there are some Germans in this country who are annoyed by the impartial statement of the facts involved in the creation of the new Germanic Empire. But it is of no avail to attempt to conceal these facts, or to ignore them. This thing has not been done in a corner. The eyes of the civilized world has been upon the movement. The successive steps by which this sublime creation has been accomplished are known to all attentive observers; and no one is ignorant of the fact, that neither Count Bismarck nor King William is the friend of democratic progress, and that this empire has been established as a check upon that progress.

To attempt to conceal these facts would only expose these pages to contempt. The narrative here given is an impartial recital of facts known by all intelligent men. If this record be not substantially true, then is it impossible to obtain any truth of history. Never did events take place under a broader blaze of day. The eyes of the civilized world have followed these movements.

At the present moment, such intense emotions and passions are excited by these tremendous events, that no one who attempts to record these scenes, no matter how candid, how impartial, can hope to escape obloquy. When forty millions of Germans upon one side, and forty millions of Frenchmen on the other, are arrayed against one another in the most deadly hostility, with all their passions roused to the highest pitch, he would betray a strange knowledge of human nature who should hope that he could give an impartial account of the conflict in terms which would be satisfactory to either party. Under these circumstances, the writer has been only anxious so to state the truth as to win the approval of

all impartial minds, and to secure the final verdict of the antagonists, whose passions, now so fearfully aroused, will ere long subside into a calm more favorable for the contemplation of truth. Fortunately for the writer, there are thousands of his countrymen, who have watched these events with the most intelligent and intense interest, who will be able, by their testimony, to substantiate the accuracy of this narrative.

March 2, 1871. — The great conflict is ended. France, beaten in every battle, and with her capital in the hands of the conqueror, has been compelled to submit to whatever terms were proposed, and to drain to its dregs the cup of humiliation presented to her lips. She surrenders all of Alsace, one-fifth of Lorraine, and all the strong fortresses which had been reared in those regions. Thus Prussia now holds both banks of the Rhine from Belgium to Switzerland, all the fortresses in the Rhine Valley, and commands all the passes of the Vosges Mountains. One million five hundred thousand Frenchmen, in the highest state of exasperation, are taken from France, and transferred to Prussia. Thus France lies entirely at the mercy of Germany, with no possibility of striking back any blows which may be received. In addition to this loss of territory, — which, in a strategic point of view, is of inestimable value, — France is compelled to pay the victor a thousand millions of dollars to remunerate him for the expenses he has incurred in making his magnificent conquest. This amounts to twenty-five dollars for every man, woman, and child in France. In addition to this, France has been compelled to submit to the humiliation of having the German army, with unfurled banners and jubilant trumpet-peals, traverse her

avenues into the very heart of Paris, and pitch their tents in the Garden of the Tuileries and in the Elysian Fields; and, hardest of all, there are but few voices to be heard, in England or America, speaking one word of sympathy for France in her utter desolation and woe. "The New-York Herald," which perhaps, as fully as any other paper, reflects popular sentiment, says, —

"Very few who have been students of this war from its commencement until now will be sorry that things are as they are to-day." [1]

A correspondent of "The Herald," writing from Paris under date of the evening of March 1, 1871, says, "The dreaded hour has arrived. The German troops, with the iron determination which has distinguished them during the war, are at this moment carrying out their resolution to enter the capital of France, conquered by them. Up to the last moment, it was hoped that the autocrat at the head of the German Empire would yield, and not be relentless in his purpose, but content himself with the dismemberment and beggary of France, without adding an apparently unnecessary and unprofitable humiliation to the already overwhelmed French."

The scenes of grief and despair witnessed on the part of the implusive French when their triumphant foes marched exultingly into the city, with their batteries so arranged, that, at the slightest exhibition of hostilities, the whole city could be laid in ashes, cannot be described.

Terribly severe as were these terms of the Germans, the French could not have resisted them even had they been more unendurable. France, bound hand and foot, was at the mercy of the conqueror. The terms of peace

[1] New-York Herald, March 2, 1871.

to which M. Thiers and M. Favre had assented, in their conference with the Prussian court at Versailles, was ratified by the General Assembly at Bordeaux by 546 yeas to 107 nays. These numbers, which have just been flashed over the wires, may not prove exact; but they show the general unanimity of the vote.

Thus the war terminates. This, however, may prove but the beginning of the end. German troops will hold portions of the French territory till the debt is paid. There may yet be many serious collisions. What government will France now establish? It matters not whether it be Legitimist, Orléanist, Imperialist, or Republican: France is at the mercy of Germany. Should France now establish a republic in her friendlessness and her poverty, even *could* she establish such on the best and most orderly of bases, she would incur the hostility of every monarchy in Europe, and the especial hostility of that gigantic empire of absolutism now frowning down upon her from the north.

Europe is bewildered by the suddenness of the change. The great northern empires of Prussia and Russia, now bound in closest alliance of governmental forms and political principles, hold Europe at their disposal. Prussia needs, for her full development, Belgium, Holland, and Denmark: she can now take them whenever it may please her to do so. Russia needs Sweden, and Turkey in Europe: she can have them both before the snows of another winter fall, if she think it worth while to be in haste, and to put her armies in motion.

The fall of France is the fall of England. She has no longer an ally upon the Continent. Sir Robert Peel, in an impassioned speech in the English House of Commons, has recently given expression to his alarm. He mourns

the downfall of France, whose independence he affirms to be essential to the tranquillity of Europe, — "a country," he says, "which, for the last twenty years at least, on twenty battle-fields, has, in unison with England, sacrificed her best blood and noblest sons;" and he declares that "the unification of Germany under a military despotism cannot be for the good of Europe."

There is the prospect of very serious trouble in Europe for years to come. The republican element in Germany will not long remain quiescent under the sway of hereditary princes. When we reflect upon the results of this conflict, it is difficult to conceive of any good which humanity has attained in the slightest degree commensurate with the misery which has been inflicted. The human family might live in almost perfect happiness upon this beautiful globe which God has allotted us; but the folly of wickedness has converted, and is still converting, our whole world into a field of blood and a vale of tears. The alike discordant shouts of the victors, and groans of the vanquished, are ever blending. Will the time ever come when kindly sympathies will reign in human hearts?

"O brother-man! fold to thy heart thy brother:
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there.
To worship rightly is to love each other, —
Each smile a hymn, each kindly word a prayer."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE COMMUNE.

AS Prussia refused to treat with or to recognize any one of the mob governments which had sprung up in Paris, Marseilles, Lyons, and Bordeaux, it became necessary to choose a National Assembly to confer with Prussia upon terms of peace. The Assembly was chosen for this specific object. It was not elected as a permanent government, but a temporary convention. It was chosen in great haste, under the protection of the Prussian armies. Many hundred thousand French voters were in captivity. Thousands of Frenchmen, chagrined at the ruin which blind and malignant insurrection had brought upon their country, refused to vote: they said, "You who have overthrown the empire, and have thus brought these woes upon us, may bear the responsibility of making a dishonorable peace."[1]

[1] An officer in the army of the Rhine, in a communication published in the *Journal de Débats* early in July, 1871, gives an interesting account of an interview with M. Bismarck.

"Prince Bismarck," the officer writes, "pronounced the following sentence with no little warmth: 'I cannot say what will befall France, or what is the future which awaits her; but I do know this, that it will redound to her shame, to her eternal shame, in all time, in all ages, in all tongues, to have abandoned