

fulfilment of the predictions made in his presence."

How much of truth is there in all this? We cannot say. But at any rate Fräulein Louise Menken, the friend of the young Prince, married Lieutenant von Bismarck-Schönhausen, and this officer's third son—not his first, as the gipsy had foretold—was Otto von Bismarck, until recently Chancellor of the German Empire.

Before entering upon our subject, we think it desirable to say a few words about the character and disposition of the great Chancellor.

His character, which is eminently Prussian, is incomprehensible to us. There is in it a mixture of the rollicking student, the cadet, the lieutenant in the Guards, the diplomatist, the revolutionist, and the despot; the whole being seasoned with a kind of ironic imagination which constitutes an artist, and almost a poet.

Mons. G. Valbert, in an article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, said: "He is an

STUDIES OF BISMARCK.

CHAPTER I.

BISMARCK AS A STUDENT.

THE grave ex-Chancellor, the man whose frown has made the whole of Europe tremble, had a rather stormy youth. It is curious, too, that through all his escapades there runs an endless vein of his domineering temperament. It must be said, also, that in later life he has not disdained to hoax and mystify those around him; when he was a student, however, it was he himself who had to pay the cost.

We are going to tell a few of these tales, well known in Germany; and from them the reader will be able to see that the man's character has changed but very little, if at all, during the last fifty years.

ARE HERR VON BISMARCK'S BOOTS DONE?

Being invited to a soirée in high-class society, Bismarck ordered a pair of patent-leather boots for the occasion from a bootmaker in Berlin. He was not quite satisfied as to the punctuality of this son of Crispin, and, besides, he was teased by his companions, who, having heard of the order, chaffed him continually, saying,—

"You won't get your boots!"

Bismarck's answer was: "You will see that I *will* get them."

The day previous to the one fixed for the soirée he called upon the bootmaker.

"Are my boots ready?"

"Alas! no, sir."

"Very well! I give you notice that if they are not ready by the stipulated time to-morrow my dog shall devour you."

And he walked out majestically from the shop, followed by his huge mastiff.

Next day, commencing as early as six o'clock in the morning, the poor cobbler was

visited every quarter of an hour by a commissioner, who asked him each time in a warning voice,—

"Are Herr von Bismarck's boots done?"

This was kept up the whole day through, until the bootmaker, almost driven out of his wits, managed to finish the boots in time. On getting them Herr von Bismarck danced about like a maniac.

From that day forward this impatient customer had not the slightest complaint to make on the score of his bootmaker's punctuality. His boots were always delivered before the appointed time.

Bismarck the student enjoyed a certain reputation among his fellows at Göttingen, not only on account of his robust physique, his tall stature, and his great bodily strength, but also for his numerous duels; and the students at Jena, having heard of his fame, invited him to pass a few days in their midst.

He no sooner received the invitation than he started off, accompanied by his inseparable

comrade Von Trotha. The "Thuringia" students turned out to meet him with a great show of ceremony, and fêtes followed fêtes, and feasting and drinking went on at an enormous rate.

The two friends enjoyed themselves in this way for several days, "casting all care aside," until, one fine morning, when Bismarck was sleeping the sleep of the untroubled, and dreaming the rosiest of dreams, the beadle of the Jena University appeared in his room. This functionary had been charged to announce to Bismarck "that he had to quit the precincts of the University within two hours in the custody of the beadle of the University of Göttingen, the two students being accused of depraving the academical youths of Jena."

The news of this spread through the town like wildfire, and the "Thuringia," as well as a large proportion of the other students, concerted measures for conducting the two expelled ones out of the place with great pomp and ceremony.

The two young gentlemen—Von Bismarck and Von Trotha—accordingly left Jena in a coach and six, accompanied by their friends, singing along the road in stentorian voices: "*Gaudeamus igitur, juvenes dum sumus.*"

In his capacity of student at Göttingen, Bismarck was a member of the "Georgia Augusta" Club. He was assiduous in his attendance at the dinners, and was oftener seen in the fencing-rooms than in the lecture-hall. At Göttingen alone, it is said, he had as many as twenty-seven duels, out of all of which he came safe and sound. He was an astonishingly free drinker too, absorbing enormous quantities of liquor, whether beer or wine.

One day there was a great dinner given at the "Golden Crown," and the formidable number of empty bottles lying about showed to what extent they were all enjoying themselves. In fact their enjoyment was so great that at a given moment an empty bottle flew through the window without its being apparent from whose hand it came. A

policeman happened to be passing in the street at the time, and, without apprising the jolly dogs of what he was going to do, went and reported the circumstance.

Next morning, Herr von Bismarck was quietly smoking his pipe at the window—perhaps dreaming of his future fame, but certainly not thinking in the least of the bottle the day before sent flying through the window—when some one tapped at the door.

“Come in!”

It was the University beadle, holding in his hand a bit of paper so well known to German students—“*Dominus de Bismarck citatus est.*” It must be mentioned that Bismarck was in his dressing-gown and slippers.

“All right!” he said to the beadle; “I’ll follow you.” And he actually went after the man dressed just as he was, and with his dog at his heels, the latter never leaving his master for a moment.

The Rector was awaiting the culprit in

his study. What was his astonishment at seeing an enormous dog bound into the room, with an air which inspired but little confidence! His first care was to ensconce himself behind a barricade of chairs, after which, trying to assume a demeanour suited to the occasion, he asked Bismarck what he wanted.

“Me! I want nothing,” was the reply. “It is you, it appears, who have something to say to me, seeing that you have sent me this ‘*Dominus de Bismarck citatus est.*’”

The Rector, whose bearing had been anything but dignified since the entry of the mastiff, now began to recover his self-possession.

“Sir,” he said, “in the first place I condemn you to pay a fine of five thalers for having brought that animal here; and, secondly, will you be good enough to explain how it was that bottle came to be thrown through the window of the ‘Golden Crown’ Hotel last evening, of which I have the pieces here?”

"Mein Gott, sir! The bottle probably flew out of the window of itself."

"You know very well that a bottle cannot fly of itself, and that some one must have thrown it."

"Perhaps so, sir."

"There is no perhaps about it. Please to be more explicit."

"Well, then; it probably happened somewhat in this way." And seizing a bulky inkstand standing on the desk, Bismarck made as if he would hurl it at the poor Rector's head.

The latter, however, fearing to see the projectile fly from the young man's hand, hastened to dismiss him, and the fine, it would appear, was never paid.

During his second half-year at Göttingen University, Bismarck was summoned to appear before the Academical Tribunal, accused of having compromised himself in the matter of a duel with pistols, and he gave the following evidence:—

"I entered, quite by accident, into the Gurkenkrug Brewery, and I found there some fellow-students who were in a bit of a quandary. A duel with pistols had been arranged, and the person chosen for umpire had not arrived. My comrades urged me to take his place, and I consented. I did all I could to induce the young men to make it up, but in vain; so I insisted on the condition that the two adversaries should fire at ten paces, and not over a handkerchief as had at first been agreed upon. My proposal having been accepted, I measured the distance, counting twelve paces. And when you consider the length of my legs, you will see, gentlemen, that my intention was to render the duel less dangerous. But this was not all: I stipulated that only just enough powder should be put into the pistols to force out the bullets. I think, then, I have some reason to believe that all the merits of the harmless issue of this duel belong to me."

According to the University archives,

however, this pleading does not seem to have met with all the success which it deserved; for it therein is written that the student Bismarck was condemned to three days' confinement in the black hole.

CHAPTER II.

BISMARCK AS A YOUNG MAN.

ON leaving the University, young Bismarck went to reside on the estate of Kniephof, which his father had just given him, and here he passed the first years of his early manhood. The story goes that the young squire led a life there which was not exactly that of a hermit, and which gained for him, from the country bumpkins around him, the nickname of the "young rake."

* In the seclusion of the chimney-corners of the country round, tales were told of the young squire's extravagant goings on, and the nameless orgies of which Kniephof was the scene. His neighbours said his consumption of champagne was phenomenal,

and the way in which he raced about on horseback during the night made the country-people think that the "Demon Hunter" was at his tricks again.

At other times the whole neighbourhood was roused up in the middle of the night by numberless shots fired in quick succession. Was it brigands? or a revolution? or what was it? It was simply the young squire of Kniephof amusing himself by firing pistol-shots.

The consequence of these various excesses was that the neighbours re-named the place "Kneiphof" instead of Kniephof.*

Prince Bismarck has never made any secret of his having led this unsteady life, but, on the other hand, he has never boasted of it. Even when he had arrived at almost a mature age, he seems never to have forgotten his escapades as a student, and was as fond of playing his pranks as of old. There are abundant examples of

* "Kniephof" means nothing in German; but "Kneiphof" means something like "Rollicker's Farm."

this, and annexed is one picked out from numerous others at hazard.

Just after Bismarck had joined the cavalry, and at the time of his appointment as officer in the Landwehr, he was staying for a few months with the 4th regiment of Pomeranian Uhlans, in garrison at Treptow.

The Colonel of the regiment, who was a strict disciplinarian, was very particular that the officers' conduct and deportment should be irreproachable. This, naturally, did not very well suit the tastes of the younger officers, who, always and in all countries, are very apt to break through the bonds of strict discipline.

At this date smoking in the streets was prohibited, both for officers and men, and this prohibition went very much against the grain of the smokers. Most of them, therefore, broke the rule whenever it was possible to do so without running too great a risk of being discovered.

One day the Burgomaster of Treptow,

thinking to ingratiate himself with the Colonel, went and informed him that a great many of his officers set this regulation boldly at defiance, and that they were not averse to smoking in the public thoroughfares like common labourers. The Colonel boiled over with rage on hearing this, and called his officers together to remind them of the regulation prohibiting smoking. He wound up his harangue with the following words: "I forbid you to walk in the streets with a lighted cigar," and while he was saying the words he fixed his eyes in a significant way upon Lieutenant von Bismarck, whom he knew to be an inveterate smoker.

Next day this young Lieutenant, accompanied by several other officers who were in the plot, went and seated themselves on a wooden bench placed just underneath the Burgomaster's windows. As soon as they had taken up their position there, they all lighted up enormous cigars, the smoke from which was carried through the windows into the apartments of their

denouncer; and thus they passed the greater part of the afternoon. On several succeeding days this conduct was repeated, until the Burgomaster, nearly smoked out, went again with his complaint to the Colonel.

It may be easily guessed what was the defence of the culprits when they were again summoned to the bar to answer for their fresh infraction of the rule. The Colonel laughed at the joke; but from that day forward it was forbidden to the officers not only to walk, but also to *seat themselves* in the street and smoke.

It may not be generally known how Bismarck went to work to compel his landlord to fix up bells at his lodgings, when he was Prussian delegate to the Federal Diet at Frankfort.

He had taken apartments in the house of a patrician of this Free City, who held the Prussians in great repugnance; and when Bismarck applied to him to have a bell fixed up in his servant's room, he answered

that that was not in the agreement, and that if Bismarck wanted a bell he must get it fixed himself, and at his own expense.

A few days later, the whole house was turned topsy-turvy. A loud report of fire-arms was heard to proceed from the delegate's room. The landlord, frightened to death, rushed up to his lodger's apartments, and bursting, all out of breath, into Bismark's study, found him seated at his desk before a great pile of documents and calmly smoking his big pipe. There was a pistol lying on the table, still smoking at the barrel.

"For the love of heaven, what has happened?" asked the frightened landlord, more dead than alive.

"Nothing, nothing," answered Bismarck quietly. "Don't disturb yourself; I was only calling my servant. It is a very harmless signal, to which you will have to accustom yourself, for no doubt I shall want oftentimes to use it again."

The bell was fixed up next day.

CHAPTER III.

BISMARCK HAS ALWAYS HAD AN EXALTED IDEA OF HIS OWN ABILITIES.

WHEN he quitted the University, young Bismarck occupied himself with managing his father's property. One of his favourite recreations was hunting, for which he had quite a passion. Towards the end of 1840, he was invited to join a great hunting expedition in the south of Sweden, on the estate of a lieutenant with whom he was very intimate, and who was afterwards Grand Marshal at the Swedish Court—Rodolph Tornerhjelm.

Having returned from one of these hunts, and after having partaken of an excellent dinner, the two friends passed into the smoking-room. Their conversation, at first, was gay and familiar, but suddenly