THE PRUSSIAN PREMIER.

Count Von Bismarck.

The Man of "Iron and Blood."

The Master-Mind of Germany.

His Wonderful Career.

William I, as King of Prussia, is the nominal head of the North German Confederation, and the personal antagonist of Napoleon in the struggle now going on in Europe. But behind the throne of King William stands Count Otto Edward Leopold von Bismarck, the Chancellor of the Bund, its creator, the master-mind of Germany and the moving spirit of Prussia's present greatness. Without him King William might get along at present, might possibly conduct the present war to a successful issue. But without him King William could never have wrested Schleswig-Holstein from Denmark, humiliated Austria at Sadowa, annexed to Prussia a dozen of the surrounding kingdoms and principalities, and on the ruins of the old Germanic Confederation built up the new Confederation of North Germany with Prussia at its head, and holding the position of the most formidable power on the Continent. He is reported to have said recently—probably at the time of the Luxembourg imbroglio in 1867, as that would make the dates tally:—

"Sixteen years ago I was living as a country gentleman, when the King appointed me Envoy of Prussia at the Frankfort Diet. I had been brought up in the admiration, I might almost say the worship, of the Austrian policy. Much time, however, was not needed to dispel my youthful illusions. The humiliation of my country, Germany, sacrificed to the interests of a foreign nation, a crafty and perfidious line of policy, these were not things calculated to give me satisfaction. I conceived the idea of snatching Germany from Austrian oppression—at least that part of Germany whose tone of thought, religion, manners and interests, identify her destinies with Prussia—Northern Germany."

To this gigantic task he inspired King William, and through his cunning statecraft and indomitable will, even more than to the needle-gun at Sadowa, its consummation was indebted. Now that Napoleon, alarmed at the gigantic strides made by Prussia under his inspiration, has taken upon himself the task of undoing his great work, the life of this man of "Iron and Blood" becomes a vital portion of the history of the pending struggle.

Otto von Bismarck was born on the family estate of Schoenhausen, in the province of Brandenburg, on the 1st of April, 1815.

The Bismarck Family.

He came of a family which belongs to the ancient gentry of the country, and has furnished many officers and servants to the Electors and Kings of Prussia. On the banks of a small stream known as the Biese, in Alt Mark, lies a quaint old town of picturesque appearance, which was once of considerable importance within itself, but is now chiefly interesting from its associations with the traditions of this illustrious Bismarck family. By some antiquarians the origin of the name is traced to its situation on the Biese; by others to the Bismarck family, whose early seat it was; but the more generally received opinion is that, having been a possession of the Bishops of Havelberg, who erected there a strong fort or castle for the protection of their territory or Mark, the town was originally called Biscopesmarck (Bishopsmark). In process of time the name became shortened to Bismarck. Anciently the town had an ecclesiastical importance, from the presence of a holy cross, which was said to have fallen from heaven.

Little is definitely known respecting the origin of the Bismarcks. One tradition asserts that they were a noble family of Bohemia, settled by Charlemagne in the Alt Mark, and the founders of the town that bears their name; but they are now generally believed to be, like most of the families of knightly rank in the Alt Mark, the descendants of German warriors who, under the Guelph, the Ascanian, or other princes, had conquered the Slavic lands on both sides of the Elbe for Christianity and German civilization, and had then settled themselves on those lands as fiefholders. The Bismarcks, according to this view, belonged to the warrior family that held Biscopesmarck; and, when surnames came into use, called themselves after their dwelling-place, and thenceforth were known in German annals as Von Bismarck, retaining the name after the loss or cession of their original seat. Like many other knightly families of the Alt Mark, the Bismarcks gradually spread towards the east, conquering larger territory for German Christian culture, and subduing the Wends, or driving them back towards the Oder. Then, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Bismarcks appear as warrior knights in Priegnitz and the region of Ruppin. On the other hand, the German historian Riedel traces the family of the great Prussian statesman to a plebeian origin. It appears to him credible and plausible that the chivalric race of Bismarck found at the commencement of the fourteenth century in Priegnitz should have descended from the castellans at Bismarck, who were provided with territorial fiefs on the downfall of the episcopal castle; while he holds it for a certainty that the Von Bismarcks of Prussia arose from a citizen family, and attained their rank as a reward for distinguished military services. Herr Riedel lays great stress on the fact that in the fourteenth century Claus von Bismarck appears as Freeman of the Guild of Tailors in Stendal, the circle or county to which the town of Bismarck belongs; but this proves nothing by itself. It is well known that in early times many knightly families settled in towns and took part in municipal government, which at first was always more or less patrician in character; and the noblest families were frequently associated with citizen guilds, as patrons or honorary members—as in modern times, for example, the Worshipful Company of Merchant Tailors in London made the Duke of Wellington free of their guild.

But, whether noble or plebeian, the first ancestor of the Bismarck family of whom we find any certain mention in German annals was not a man to be ashamed of. This was Rulo or Rudolf von Bismarck, whose name appears in the records from 1309 to 1338. This personage was a respected member of the Guild of Tailors, often its presiding officer, as well as a municipal magistrate. He was held in high esteem for his prudence and wealth; but, by founding a system of common schools in Stendal, aroused the opposition of the clergy and gave rise to a dispute which was not settled until long after his death. As a reward for important services rendered by Claus von Bismarck, his eldest son, to the Margrave Ludwig, the latter, in the year 1345, granted the castle of Burgstall, one of the strongholds of the country, protecting the southern frontier of the Alt Mark towards Madgeburg, to Claus von Bismarck and his descendants as a fief. Thus the Bismarcks entered the first rank of the nobility of the Alt Mark as castellans.

The family of Bismarck remained in undisturbed possession of Burgstall until the year 1558, when the hunt-loving Electoral Prince, the Margrave John George, in order to obtain wider preserves, attacked their ancient privileges and forest rights, and ten years later compelled them to exchange their ancestral seat for Crevese and Schoenhausen. To the branch of the family settled at the latter place belongs Count von Bismarck, the Chancellor of the North German Confederation.

His Early Life.

Born at Schoenhausen, as already stated, on the 1st of April, 1815, he was christened Otto Edward Leopold. His father was a captain of horse, who died in 1845; his mother, a daughter of the Cabinet Secretary of King Frederick William III, Menken by name, is said to have been a remarkably clever and ambitious woman, who always wished that her son might enter the diplomatic service, but died long before his brilliant public career began. His parents had removed to Pomerania in 1816, and it was here that the first six years of his life were passed, on the knightly estate of Kniephof, to which, together with Jarchelin and Kulz, in the circle of Naugard, the family had succeeded through the death of a cousin of young Bismarck. To Kniephof also he always returned in his holidays from Berlin, where he received his early education. At the age of seventeen, in 1832, he was transferred to the University of Gottingen. Before this event he had already fought his first duel. His opponent was a brave lad named Wolf. Both were rather unscientific in the use of weapons, and Bismarck retired from the contest with a wounded leg, while his antagonist only lost his spectacles. Having acquired a taste for the wild student life which prevails at the University of Heidelberg, he had been anxious to enter that institution, while his mother, fearful that he might there acquire the to her detestful habit of beer drinking, desired him to enter the University of Berlin. But young Bismarck was anxious to be emancipated from the social and academic restrictions that make student life in that city so tame in comparison with that of other university towns in Germany, and Gottingen was fixed upon as a compromise.

His Wild University Career.

At Gottingen he soon became famous, not for application to his studies, but for the wildest extravagance and frequent participation in duels. According to his own account, he attended lectures but twice before passing his examination and led a wild and reckless career generally. The following story is told of this portion of his life:—

For some aggravated offense he was one day cited to the presence of the Dean. With a careless bravado very characteristic of him he appeared before that awful functionary wearing a tall hat, a gay dressing-gown, with riding-boots that reached above his knees, and accompanied by an enormous blood-hound. Startled out of his senses by this unexpected apparition, the poor Dean sought refuge behind a chair, and only left his hiding-place after the audacious student had sent the dog out of the room. On leaving the Dean, who had fined him for having the dog in his possession, young Bismarck encountered a party of four students belonging to the Hanoverian Corps, who amused themselves by making sarcastic remarks on his extraordinary costume. High words ensued, followed by a challenge from each of the four Hanoverians.

Indeed, during the first three terms of his university life, he was engaged in over twenty duels. He was wounded in one instance only, and that by the breaking of his adversary's sword-blade, the scar being visible on his cheek to this day.

His Entrance upon the World.

After leaving the university he was employed as a subordinate functionary in various government offices; but, growing weary of this dull routine, soon retired to his estates at Kniephof, which he successfully tried to relieve from the embarrassed condition into which they had fallen through neglect and mismanagement. He was then about twenty-three years of age, and had already entered the Jager Guard, to fulfil the military duties incumbent upon every Prussian. When, through his excellent management, the estates began to rise in value, and he was able to rely upon his subordinates, he grew dissatisfied with the contracted life around him, and plunged anew into the wild excesses that had marked his student's career. In his youthful fancy he had formed a certain ideal of a country Junker, or squire. He owned no carriage, and performed all his journeys on horseback, astonishing the neighborhood by riding twenty or thirty miles to evening assemblies. Despite his wild life and actions, he felt a continually increasing sense of loneliness; and the same Bismarck who gave himself to jolly carousals among the officers of neighboring garrisons, sank, when alone, into the bitterest and most desolate state of reflection. Throughout the surrounding country he received the title of "mad Bismarck," and strange stories were told about his riding, hunting, and drinking huge bumpers of porter and champagne. In the very midst of these carousals he would sometimes retire from his jovial companions and remain shut up in his library for days and nights, reading hard metaphysics, history, and politics; then sallying out on long rambles accompanied only by a huge mastiff, and afterwards boring his friends with long political dissertations.

He also diversified his country life by several journeys to England and France, and in 1847 he married Fraulein von Puttkammer. The parents of the lady on whom he had bestowed his affections were quiet, pious people, and therefore considerably alarmed when he, a man as yet only famous for his eccentricities, proposed to their daughter, but were thunderstruck when the maiden firmly though bashfully declared that she loved him. They, however, consented, and never had reason to repent it, for in all the vicissitudes of his political life. Bismarck has proved a model husband and father. He is now the father of three children, and his married life is said to have been extremely happy from the first, as his wife enters enthusiastically into all his plans, and acts as his secretary and amanuensis. Having settled down as a country squire at Schoenhausen, he was not destined to remain long in that quiet character. He became Dyke Captain there, and afterwards Knight's Deputy in the circle of Jorichow in the Saxon Provincial Diet at Merseburg. In that capacity he attended the first meeting of the United Diets in 1847, on which occasion he first attracted the notice of the public to himself in more extended circles.

His Early Political Career.

King Frederic William III had died without fulfilling the solemn promise, made in the crisis of 1815, of granting to his people a national representation. His successor felt that things could not go on as before, and was willing to admit representatives of the people to a certain share in the Government. So Frederic William IV, after long and fatal hesitation, issued on February 3, 1847, the letters patent granting a representation, composed of delegates of the provincial Diets, but this royal grant caused general disappointment. The first step of the new Assembly was to declare that the Convocation of the United Estates (Vereinigter Landtag) could not be considered as a fulfilment of the royal promise of 1815. This declaration was strongly opposed by Bismarck, who had taken his seat as a delegate of his provincial Diet. The wars of 1813-15, he said, had not given to the Prussian people any right to demand a constitution; their object was to shake off the foreign yoke. The Prussian kings held their throne not by the grace of the people, but by divine right; their power was *de facto* unlimited, and every concession they made was a free gift. In the same spirit he opposed a bill for removing the civil disabilities of the Jews. In short, Bismarck spoke in that Assembly as a member of the extreme right, or feudal party. When shortly afterwards the storm of 1848 swept away the United Estates, and the King, in spite of his former declarations, granted a paper constitution, Bismarck in the last sitting of the Estates protested in a manful and dignified way, and then retired to his country-seat, deeply regretting the weakness of the Government, whose adventurous flight he was unable to follow. But he lost neither heart nor hope; and when soon afterwards the Socialist follies of the democratic party drove even the Liberals into opposition, he became the nucleus of a new conservative party, and one of the most trusted advisers of Frederic William IV, whose personal acquaintance he had made in Venice on his wedding tour.

The courage and energy which Bismarck showed in those stormy times deserve to be acknowledged. He never bowed to the revolution even in the most critical days, and took a chivalrous pleasure in defying the menaces of the demagogues; but at the same time he expressed a withering contempt of popular rights and public opinion, and identified the Liberal leaders with the heroes of the barricades. He was at that time also a most ardent adversary of all projects of German unity, and denied that the nation at large really desired it.

He Represents Russia at the Diet.

In 1851, Bismarck was sent as Plenipotentiary to Frankfort, where he remained for eight years. It was during this period that his political ideas underwent a great change. He arrived in Frankfort in the full fervor of a partisan of the Holy Alliance, and a champion of the reaction.

But if he was ready to act a faithful ally of Austria, he remained nevertheless a Prussian, and claimed from his country a co-ordinate position in the Germanic Diet.

His Conversion from the Austrian Policy.

The working of the German Federal Constitution before 1848 had in fact only become possible by a tacit agreement between Austria and Prussia, Prince Metternich taking the lead in all European questions, but leaving Prussia a certain liberty of action in North Germany, and particularly in all questions of material interest, like the Zollverein. Bismarck had, as he himself says in the passage already quoted, grown up in admiration, nay, even adoration, of Austrian statesmanship, and on his arrival at Frankfort he immediately started on a pilgrimage to Johannisberg to pay his respects to the Nestor of European politics. He returned from this visit with the hope that Austria would acknowledge it to be just and wise to give Prussia, after the reconciliation which had taken place, such a position in the Confederation as would induce the Berlin Cabinet to exert its whole strength for the common interests of the allied German Powers. But under Prince Schwarzenberg's premiership things began to wear a very different aspect. That haughty Minister was resolved to use his victory in the most relentless manner, and to realize the idea of an empire of seventy-seven millions by making Austria enter into the Confederation with all the countries subject to her sceptre. Bismarck was not the man to submit to such a policy. "Soon after my arrival at Frankfort," he afterwards wrote, "the scales fell from my eyes. I saw that many of the qualities with which I had hitherto counted did not exist; that the Austria which was before my mind did not exist in reality; and that therefore it was impossible to go along with her."

A short time afterwards he was sent on a special mission to Vienna, and there tried to persuade the Emperor to take a more friendly position towards Prussia, but he failed in this attempt. He was most courteously received, but obtained nothing. Thenceforth Bismarck became a decided adversary of Austria, and his whole activity at the Diet was a protracted struggle against the paramount influence of the Vienna Cabinet. In this struggle he was not much supported by his Government. The King was deeply discouraged, even broken, by the late events, and consented to Austria's entering the Confederation with her whole empire, which was only prevented by the protest of England and France. When, soon afterwards, the Eastern difficulties began which led to the Crimean war, Bismarck was with heart and soul on Russia's side, and contributed powerfully to estrange Prussia from the allied powers, and to keep her in that one-sided neutrality which proved so useful to Russia.

His influence at that time was great; he was frequently summoned to Berlin, and more than once his name was put forward for the Premiership. In 1857 the King was taken ill, and a year later the Prince Regent, on his accession, dismissed Baron Manteuffel's ministry. The event was unexpected by Bismarck. Some of his friends advised that he should forthwith resign; but he preferred waiting till the new ministers showed their colors.

Made Minister to Russia.

Towards the end of the year he was recalled from his post, and sent as Minister to St. Petersburg. He expressed his disappointment to the Prince Regent, because he thought he might have done good service to Prussia in Frankfort under the new state of affairs; but he accepted his new destination, which was honorable in itself, and allowed him to keep aloof from party struggles. He left Frankfort with the conviction that the existing federal institutions were unprofitable, and in critical times most dangerous for Prussia, without offering those equivalent advantages which Austria derived from them.

His Grand Prussian Policy Announced.

He therefore advised his government to profit by the opportunity offered by the Italian war in order to obtain a revision of the Federal League, which would ameliorate the position of Prussia in Germany. When the Cabinet of Vienna, after the ominous words of the Emperor Napoleon to Baron Hubner on New Year's Day, 1859, began to prepare for the contest; when all the minor courts and the German press, guided by Austria, were raging for war; when in regard to Prussia it was said at Vienna, "If the Emperor commands, the Margraves must obey," Bismarck pressed his government to assume an independent position, and to consult only Prussian interests for her future policy.

But the weak and indolent Minister who then directed Prussia's policy could not muster courage for an energetic course of action. He declared, it is true, that Prussia, willing as she was to defend every German interest, would not allow the Diet to dispose of her army; but he lost time in fruitless attempts at mediation, before and during the campaign, till the world was astonished by the news of the armistice of Villafranca. Austria had preferred to sacrifice the province of Lombardy to making any concession to her hated rival in Germany, whom after the peace the Emperor accused openly as the chief cause of his defeat.

Long before these events Bismarck had retired to his new post at St. Petersburg, and, disappointed in his expectations from the new ministry, was glad to be removed from party strife to a position where he could observe the march of political events from a distance. But he always kept up his connection with Berlin; strengthened his relations with the Prince Regent, now King William I, by frequent personal intercourse; and his political ideas became more and more ripened. His letters from St. Petersburg show at that time he was already considerably estranged from his old convictions.

The liberal ministry that went into power in 1859 was a weak and vacillating one. The only reform that the King insisted upon or would listen to was a reform in the army, which the Italian war convinced him was unequal to maintaining the standing of Prussia as a great power. Trouble with the House of deputies ensued, precipitated by the haste of the King in carrying forward his project for the increase of the army before the budget had been definitely acted upon. The House, in March, 1861, passed a resolution requiring a more specific budget, whereupon it was dissolved and the resignation of the Cabinet ensued, followed by the election of an overwhelming opposition majority to the House of Deputies. The new ministry proved as weak as the one which had preceded it, and the eyes of the King were turned upon Bismarck as the man of all men upon whom he could rely to assist in the execution of his plans, in the teeth of the people and their representatives.

Made Minister to Paris.

In May, 1862, he had been transferred from St. Petersburg to Paris. Soon after his arrival at the latter place, he made a visit to England and endeavored in vain to win Lord Palmerston over to his anti-Austrian policy, and immediately after sought the presence of the Emperor Napoleon at Biarritz.

He is Appointed Premier.

On his way home, at Avignon, he was met by a telegram which summoned him to Berlin. The long-expected crisis had at last arrived. The House of Deputies had finally refused to vote the increased military budget. Baron von der Heydt declined to spend the money against this vote, and resigned, together with Count Bernstorff, and Bismarck was appointed Premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs in September, 1862.

His position was one of extreme difficulty. The majority in the House of Deputies was largely against him and the policy which he represented. His tone was therefore one of conciliation, and on the 29th of September he announced the withdrawal of the obnoxious budget, "because the Government considered it their duty not to allow the obstacles towards a settlement to increase in volume."

The Man of "Iron and Blood."

His policy was then announced, in as plain language as he dared use:—

"The conflict has been too tragically understood, and too tragically represented by the press. The Government sought no contest. If the crisis could be honorably surmounted, the Government would gladly lend a hand. It was owing to the great obstinacy of individuals that it was difficult to govern with the constitution in Prussia. A constitutional crisis was no disgrace: it was an honor. We are, perhaps, too civilized to endorse a constitution: we are too critical. Public opinion changed: the press was not public opinion; it was well known how the press was upheld. The Deputies had the task of determining its opinions, and to stand above it. Germany does not contemplate the liberalism of Prussia, but her power. Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and Baden might indulge liberalism; but they are not therefore called upon to play the part of Prussia. Prussia must hold her power together for the favorable opportunity which has already been sometimes neglected; the frontiers of Prussia were not favorable to a good State constitution. *The great questions of the day were not to be decided by speeches and majorities—this had been the error of 1848 and 1849—but by iron and blood!*"

He went to work at once, and the House of Deputies having, on October 7, declared all expenditures not sanctioned by it unconstitutional, that body was dissolved on the 13th, and to meet the crisis which he had thus provoked, he promulgated the theory, apparently sustained by the peculiar constitution of Prussia, that the last budget voted would remain in force until harmony was restored between the two branches of the Legislature and a new budget voted by the Deputies and fully concurred in by the Upper House.

He therefore undertook the task of governing without a new budget, and in absolute defiance of popular clamor.

Troubles with Austria Arise.

Previous to this time Austria had been conceded the leading position in the Germanic Confederation but Bismarck at once decided that Prussia must be accorded her proper place as an equal. He asserted the right of the latter country to form a closer political union within the bounds of the Confederation, a pretension to which Austria and the middle States, which were subject to her influence, objected. The Bismarck ministry thereupon revenged itself by recognizing the kingdom of Italy, and signing a commercial treaty with France which interfered with many of the advantages which Austrian commerce with the Zollverein had enjoyed. The influence of the Austrian Government was sufficient with the middle States to induce them to decline the treaty, and to press through the Frankfort Diet a project—against which Prussia protested—providing for a popular representation by delegates of the local legislatures. Austria was then given to understand that, if she continued to insist upon her policy at Frankfort, Prussia would withdraw from the Confederacy, and in this critical situation the question was left for the time.

He Defies the Representatives of the People.

The year 1863 was a stormy one. The convention with Russia into which Prussia entered for the suppression of the Polish insurrection not only aroused great indignation throughout Europe, but provoked the bitter opposition of the House of Deputies, which, in its reply to the King's address, accused the Government of violating the Constitution and governing without a budget. This address the King refused to receive in person, rebuking the Chambers for their audacity in presenting it, and Bismarck himself declared that "constitutional conflicts may be decided in other countries by a change of ministry, but this is not the custom in Prussia. With us," he continued, with characteristic arrogance, "if two political bodies which cannot go to law are unable to agree, circumstances decide which of the two is the strongest!" Thus he became, for a time, the most unpopular statesman in Germany. But

The War with Denmark,

which was terminated by the treaty of Vienna, October 30, 1864, and the releasing of the Danish hold upon Schleswig-Holstein and Lauenburg, aroused the national spirit and tended greatly to restore his popularity. As a tribute to his services in the conduct of this, the King bestowed upon him the Order of the Black Eagle—the highest mark of honor in his gift—and in 1865 further testified his acknowledgments by creating him a Count, his patent of nobility being dated September 16.

He Precipitates the Quarrel with Austria.

Having rid his hands for the time being of the vexatious Schleswig-Holstein question, he again turned his attention ty Austria, and by every means in his power precipitated the conflict of 1866. He determined upon the annexation to Prussia of the Elbe Duchies, with or without the consent of Austria, did all that he could to maintain the estrangement between the sovereigns of the two disputing countries, and labored earnestly to detach from the Austrian interest the minor German States.

An Attempt Upon His Life.

About this time the attention of the people was still more pointedly directed to him by an attempt which was made upon his life on the 7th of May, 1866. On the afternoon of this day, as he was returning on foot from an interview with the King, he was twice fired upon by a misguided enthusiast by the name of Blind. With great presence of mind Bismarck turned and seized his assailant by the throat. Blind contrived to fire two more shots, one of which took effect, but without inflicting a serious wound. The assassin was handed over to the military authorities, and Bismarck walked home as if nothing had occurred. The news of the event spread like wild-fire through the city. The King, the royal princes, many of the civil and military authorities, as well as private citizens, went to his house to congratulate him on his escape. Blind committed suicide before he could be given a trial, and it was never known whether his crime was that of a misguided enthusiast alone or the result of a conspiracy. Popular belief connected the attempt with Austrian intrigue, without the slightest ground, and ascribed the minister's escape to the direct interposition of Providence.

The War with Austria.

Meanwhile the trouble with Austria grew apace, the situation being rendered more critical every day by the short-sighted policy of that country. A conference of the great powers was held at Paris, but it failed to accomplish anything. Austria then appealed to the other States represented in the Diet of the Confederation at Frankfort, to assist her in maintaining her rights, to which Bismarck replied by announcing that favorable action would be the signal for war. The warning was unheeded, and on the 15th of June, 1866, orders were sent by telegraph for the Prussian columns to move. The King's last scruples were removed, and he entered zealously into all the schemes of his Prime Minister, reassured by the intense enthusiasm with which this decisive action was received by the people. On the 29th the first tidings of victory reached Berlin, which was thrown into the wildest excitement and enthusiasm over them.

On the following day Bismarck left the capital, in company with the King, for the scene of the conflict, and during the few days of the memorable campaign, terminating on the 3d of July in the decisive victory of Sadowa, which utterly prostrated Austria, the two fearlessly sought the front in every battle in company.

The result of the grand system of intrigue by which this triumphant conflict on the battle-field was brought about was the formation of

The North German Confederation,

practically as it at present exists. The claims of Austria upon Schleswig-Holstein were yielded up to Prussia, which annexed also the Kingdom of Hanover, the Electorate of Hesse-Cassel, the Duchy of Nassau, the Free City of Frankfort, and portions of Bavaria and Hesse-Darmstadt. Austria renounced all connection with the Germanic Confederation, and a new confederation was formed, under the leadership of Prussia, consisting of all the States north of the river Main, including the Kingdom of Saxony and twenty other duchies, principalities, and free cities, Prussia, however, comprising more than four-fifths of the population of the confederation. In the negotiations which followed the war and brought about this consolidation, Bismarck was the master spirit, combining boldness and energy with foresight and prudence, displaying moderation towards such of his adversaries only as he had not decided to crush. In a confederation made up of the North German States he could be, as he had long desired to be, the supreme controlling spirit. The annexation of the Southern States would endanger his supremacy, by creating a possible counterpoise to the authority and influence of Prussia.

In the "Role" of a Peacemaker.

But the decisive struggle with Austria was scarcely over before he was confronted by the question of the neutralization of the stronghold of Luxembourg. Concerning the pretensions of France, Bismarck said at this point:—

"Ere a fortnight is past we shall have war on the Rhine if France insists on her territorial demands. She asks of us what we neither can nor will give. Prussia will not cede an inch of German soil—we cannot do so without raising the whole of Germany against us, and if it be necessary let it rise against France rather than ourselves."

War with France was, indeed, imminent, but Bismarck sought as earnestly to avert it as he had sought to precipitate the conflict with Austria, and his diplomatic skill was again crowned with success.

In fact, after the battle of Sadowa, his policy was most emphatically a policy of peace, and he was not content with consolidating the newly-acquired power of Prussia by maintaining friendly relations with all the world, but extended his good offices all over Europe, averting a conflict on the Danube in 1868, by requiring the dismissal by Prince Charles of Roumania of his unruly minister, Bratiano, and afterwards taking the initiative of proposing the Conference of the Great Powers at Paris which prevented a war between Turkey and Greece.

His Enforced Retirement to Private Life.

After a visit with the King to Paris, in June, 1867, Bismarck retired for a few weeks to Varzin, an estate in Farther Pomerania which he had purchased, returning to Berlin, however, in November, and remaining until the spring of 1868, in attendance upon the Diet of the Confederation. His health again gave way, and the greater part of this year was passed in complete seclusion at Varzin. Emerging again from his retirement about the close of the year, his time was occupied during 1869 in attending to his duties as Chancellor of the Confederation and Prime Minister of Prussia, and in the arduous task of thoroughly consolidating the power of Prussia and maintaining intact his own paramount influence in the Confederation, until failing health again drove him back to the seclusion of Varzin.

For several months previous to the present agitation in Europe, Bismarck was living almost entirely in retirement on his Pomeranian estate, and for some weeks last spring his health was in such a precarious condition that his life was despaired of.

The Candidacy of Prince Leopold

for the throne of Spain, however, appears to have inspired him with all his old vigor, and for some weeks past he has been figuring as actively and prominently as ever in the diplomatic manœuvres of the Continent. The precise part he took in the candidacy of Prince Leopold it is impossible at present to define. It was on the 11th of June that General Prim gave the first intimation of having made any overtures to the Prince of Hohenzollern, but his words were so purposely ambiguous as to mystify, if not mislead, all Europe. General Prim at this time intimated that his nameless candidate could not be brought to accept the offer, but the acquiescence of Prince Leopold was finally made public on the 5th of July, and the war cloud at once began to gather and lower over Europe. That the preliminary negotiations were carried on between Prim and Bismarck there can be no doubt. It has been asserted that scores of telegrams passed between them before the secret negotiation leaked out. Whether this be true or not, it is unquestionable that Bismarck entered into Prim's project earnestly and willingly, although the intimation on June 11 that the at that time nameless candidate was unwilling to contest the crown of Spain may possibly afford a clue to the fact that Bismarck entered into the scheme with extreme caution and some misgivings. It is, of course, a waste of time and space to indulge in speculation at present as to whether he foresaw the objections of Napoleon and anticipated the struggle upon which France and Prussia have entered. Since the Treaty of Prague which terminated the conflict with Austria in 1866, he had pursued an ostensible policy of peace; but his management of the trouble between Prussia and France, at the time of and previous to the Luxembourg imbroglio, was so adroit and successful as to render an appeal to arms not less inexpedient than it would have been unjustifiable. When the candidature of Prince Leopold was finally withdrawn, in response to the protests of Napoleon, the dignified stand taken by King William in refusing to make further concessions and guarantees was doubtless inspired by him, and probably with the full belief that France was merely seeking a pretext for war, and would find a pretext of some sort, unless Prussia consented to such self-abasement as would practically and morally undo the work of the past five years.

And now that war has been inaugurated, and the hostile armies are facing each other on the Rhine, Bismarck is in his place as Chancellor of the Confederation and the moving spirit of the Prussian cause. To the herculean task now before the nation which he has built up, he will bring all the audacity and unscrupulousness, as well as all the zeal, energy, and patriotism which nerved him throughout the struggle with Austria; and aside from the struggle in the field, Napoleon will find him, as he has found him in the past, more than a match in the wiles and tricks and intrigues of diplomacy.

His Character.

In the winter of 1849, Bismarck had removed with his family to Berlin, and since then his attention has been almost wholly absorbed by politics. With his entrance upon married life in 1847, he abandoned the wild and reckless manner of life to which he had been wedded at Gottingen and Kniephof, and became thereafter a man of unexceptionable character in his personal relations. He is described as being, in private life, unusually attractive, of genial and friendly disposition, sparkling in conversation, sharp at repartee, and remarkably good at telling a story.

But in his public character, as will be seen from the sketch of his life which we have given, he is reckless, obstinate, self-possessed, imperious, and unscrupulous, brooking no restraint and hesitating at no device to secure the accomplishment of his ends. Ambitious to an inordinate degree, his patriotism is nevertheless unimpeachable, and his own personal aggrandizement happily is never brought into conflict with the best interests of his country as a whole. His moving spirit is emphatically one of personal repression; all his inclinations and associations are aristocratic; his sympathies are never enlisted in the cause of popular rights or individual freedom; the King, to him, rules by divine right, and not by the consent or approval of his subjects. The grand aim of his life has been to render Prussia the controlling power in Germany, and to make himself the most consequential person in Prussia. If to succeed for the time in both these tasks constitutes him a statesman, he is entitled to a place in the very front rank. In person, Bismarck is tall and well-formed, of great bodily vigor originally, and with the fair hair and light blue eyes that are typical of his pure North-German extraction.

Bismarck and the United States.

In this connection, the following extracts from a letter published in the New York *Tribune* in 1866, detailing an afternoon's conversation with Bismarck, will be found interesting. The conversation touched briefly upon American topics, when Bismarck said:—

"In our relations with the United States, I never had a doubt. The Tory party in Prussia, to which I am supposed to belong, at the outbreak of your war, besought the King to recognize the South. I opposed it inflexibly. To me it was clear that the North only could be the true ally of Prussia; with the South we had nothing in common. The Government of Prussia never wavered in its friendship for yours. [The sentence was uttered proudly, and the burning eyes flashed brighter than ever.] It is a traditional policy with us. Frederick the Great was, I think, the first European sovereign to recognize your independence. I am heartily glad to know that America understands and reciprocates the friendly feeling we have steadily maintained."

"And here," continues the correspondent, "follows a curious statement, a fact not known to me before, and I think unpublished in America."

"At the beginning of our war," said Count Bismarck, "Austria was stronger than we on the water, and Italy was not sure to us. It was proposed to me that the leading Southern naval officers should join us with 5000 men and suitable vessels. They were not to come at all as the Confederate navy, but as individuals, and the most eminent officers among them were included in the offer. I consulted your Minister to know whether an acceptance of this offer would be offensive to the American Government. Mr. Wright was in doubt, and wrote to Washington. He received instructions to oppose the scheme, and I at once declined having anything to do with it. Semmes made the proposal."

FINE STATIONERY,
ARMS, MONOGRAMS, ILLUMINATING, ETC.
DREKA, 1033 CHESNUT Street.
Card Engraver and Stationer 6 21 tuths

CITY ITEMS.

ALPACA SACKS.
Drap d'Ete Sacks.
Linen Dusters.
White Duck Pants.
Fancy Linen Pants.
White Duck Vests.
White Marseilles Vests.
All kinds of Summer Clothing sold at prices GUARANTEED LOWER THAN ANY OTHER.
Half way between Fifth and Sixth streets. | BENNETT & CO., TOWER HALL, 518 MARKET STREET.

MR. WILLIAM W. CASSIDY, the jeweller at No. 23 South Second street, has one of the largest and most attractive stocks of all kinds of Jewelry and Silverware in the city. He has also on hand a fine assortment of fine American Western Watches. Those who purchase at this store at the present time are certain to get the worth of their money.

THE MOTHER'S TREASURE.—Mrs. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP is the prescription of one of the best female physicians and nurses in the United States, and has been used for thirty years, with never-failing safety and success, by millions of mothers for their children. It cures wind colic, regulates the bowels, corrects the acidity, and gives rest and health to the child.

PHALON'S "VITALIA" for the Hair can be found everywhere. It is clear, and has no sediment. This wonderful preparation is PHALON'S VITALIA, OR SALVATION FOR THE HAIR. Poured on the hands, it leaves no stain. It is, nevertheless, the most effective article of its class ever advertised.
Sold by all druggists and fancy goods dealers.

SINGER'S FAMILY SEWING MACHINES, Ten dollars cash. Balance in monthly instalments.
O. F. DAVIS, No. 810 Chesnut street.

NEW STYLE PICTURE.—The German Chromos made A. K. P. Trask, No. 40 N. Eighth street. They must be seen to be admired.

MARRIED.

JACK—SHOEMAKER.—On the 20th instant, by the Rev. B. F. Barrett, Dr. LOUIS JACK and Miss CAROLINE SHOEMAKER, all of Philadelphia. *

DIED.

CALDWELL.—On the morning of the 19th instant, at Woodbury, N. J., ACSAH, wife of James B. Caldwell, of Davenport, Iowa.

The funeral will take place on Friday, the 22d instant, from Christ Church, Woodbury, N. J., at 10 o'clock A. M., to which the relatives and friends of the family are respectfully invited, without further notice. **

HOWELL.—Suddenly, on Wednesday evening, July 20, REBECCA L., wife of Zophar C. Howell.
Due notice of the funeral will be given. ***

SMITH.—On the 21st instant, EDGAR K., only son of Rebecca J. and the late Charles Shepard Smith.
The relatives and friends of the family are respectfully invited to attend the funeral, from his late residence, No. 838 N. Sixth street, on Second-day morning, the 25th instant, at 10 o'clock. ***

DRY GOODS.

LE MAISTRE & ROSS

HAVE A NEW LOT OF

HAMBURG EDGINGS

AND

INSERTINGS

Suitable for Pique Trimmings;

ALSO,

New French Muslins

VERY CHEAP.

No. 212 North EIGHTH St.,

1t PHILADELPHIA.

"AT THORNLEY'S."

ANOTHER SWEEPING REDUCTION.

GOODS MUST BE SOLD.

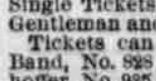
I am determined to clean out my SUMMER STOCK if the community need goods at HALF their usual price. I have went right through and marked prices down in some CASES FIFTY PER CENT., and in MANY CASES TWENTY-FIVE and THIRTY PER CENT.

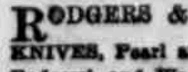
Lace Pointes from $4 to $55.
Lace Sacques from $10 to $25.
Thin Mixed Dress Goods.
Lawns, Percales and P. K's.
Black Hernanies and Grenadines.
Linens and Japanese Grass Cloths (for Suits).
Black Silks, Pongee Silks, Japanese Silks.
Kid Gloves, Parasols, Corsets, Skirts, etc. etc.

A full stock of STAPLE and DOMESTIC GOODS,
"AT THE OLD ESTABLISHED STAND,"
NORTHEAST CORNER
EIGHTH and SPRING GARDEN Sts.,
JOSEPH H. THORNLEY,
2 3 thstu§ PHILADELPHIA.

MRS. R. DILLON.
NOS. 323 AND 331 SOUTH STREET.
Ladies and Misses Crape, Gimp, Hair Pamela and Straw Round and Pyramid Hats; Ribbons, Satins, Silks, Velvets and Velveteens, Crapes, Feathers, Flowers, Frames, Sash Ribbons, Ornaments, Mourning Millinery Crape Veils, etc. 1 4

EXCURSIONS.


BECK'S PHILADELPHIA BAND, NO. 1.
SECOND GRAND EXCURSION
AROUND NEW YORK BAY AND STATEN ISLAND.
LANDING AT NEW YORK ONE HOUR.
Leave Philadelphia, from WALNUT ST. WHARF, THURSDAY, July 21, 1870, at 7½ o'clock A. M.
FARE FOR THE EXCURSION:
Single Tickets.................................$2·50
Gentleman and Lady.............................4 50
Tickets can be procured at the Office of Beck's Band, No. 828 Market street; of Charles Brintzinghoffer, No. 935 Market street; of Enos C. Renner, No. 501 Girard avenue; Ticket Office, No. 828 Chesnut street, and at the wharf on the morning of the Excursion. 7 18 3t


DAILY FIRST-CLASS EXCURSIONS to those cool, delightful, and shady GARDENS at GLOUCESTER POINT. Always a breeze blowing. Take or send the family. Steamers with every accommodation. (Ice water, etc.) Leave SOUTH Street every few minutes. 6 30 1m 4p

CUTLERY, ETC.

RODGERS & WOSTENHOLM'S POCKET KNIVES, Pearl and Stag handles, and beautiful finish; Rodgers', and Wade & Butcher's Razors, and the celebrated Lecoultre Razor; Ladies' Scissors, in cases, of the finest quality; Rodgers' Table Cutlery, Carvers and Forks; Razor Strops, Cork Screws, Etc. Ear instruments, to assist the hearing, of the most approved construction, at
P. MADEIRA'S,
No. 115 TENTH Street, below Chesnut.