

continuous war with one another, while between the principal states, Austria and Prussia, there was a never ending struggle for supremacy. These quarrelsome governments have finally been harmonized and combined into a mighty and enlightened nation, mainly through the efforts of one man, Prince Bismarck.

A little less than thirty years ago, when this remarkable man was placed at the head of the Prussian government, all Germany was under the dominant influence of Austria. But he immediately laid his plans for the unification of these separate principalities into a strong national government which should have Prussia for its head. His idea was to carry out his plans by military force, and he boldly declared that German affairs were not to be settled by speeches or majorities, but by "blood and iron." With this end in view the already overburdened people were called upon to furnish money for the reorganization of the army. When the Prussian assembly refused to grant his requests or sanction his loans he told them plainly that he would take the money when and where he could get it. This shows at once the ruling purpose of the man to carry out his plans in spite of all opposition.

He took the money and prepared for war with Austria, for he plainly foresaw that Austrian power must be humbled before the other states would consent to unite under the leadership of Prussia. When that war came it lasted but seven weeks. But in this short time the Austrian armies were almost annihilated and her power and influence completely broken.

Prussia having thus disposed of her rival took the first step towards the unification of Germany by the formation of a league of the North German states, which, however, excluded Austria and her southern allies.

This remarkable development of Prussia as a military power startled the nations of Europe, but especially did it hurt the vanity and excite the jealousy of France. That she should have her military glory eclipsed and be compelled to oc-

cupy a subordinate position was something not to be calmly endured. So in 1870 France declared war on the North German League with only a mere pretext for a cause; and witness the result. The long smouldering fire of German patriotism flashed up into a brilliant light. The entire German people north and south rose in arms and for the first time we behold Germany a compact national power. It was only a few months before proud France was humbled almost as completely as Austria had been, and the old German provinces won by Louis XIV had to be given up. In the Imperial palace at Versailles, where the old French Kings had so often plotted their invasions of the German states, the North German League was enlarged to include all Germany, and we have at last a compact indivisible German nation.

Bismarck's plans had been carried to a successful termination. Blood and iron had been used unsparingly, but Germany was united and his own Fatherland, Prussia, was at the head of the government. In this respect Bismarck's policy has been a magnificent success. But has he been careful to guard the future security of the nation he has built up? In his seizure of the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine he has secured a permanent enemy in France, who is liable to make war at any time. In his treatment of Russia he has made that tremendous military power hostile, and by his brutal attitude towards the Empress Augusta he has made England justly indignant. Among these mighty nations he has placed his country in a very insecure position.

While, in the main, successful in his foreign policy, in his treatment of internal questions he has met with most signal defeat. His domestic policy has always been one of most rigid repression. He has no faith whatever in majorities or popular movements, and has considered that he could govern much better than the people themselves. Whatever was opposed to his ideas he endeavored to crush out of existence by brute force. When he became Imperial Chancellor he found two