THE EVENING NEWS.

Monday, - - - January 6 1873.

BISMARCK AND THIERS.

Two statesmen attract at this time the attention of the civilized world, Mr. Thiers and Mr. De Bismarck. They both hold almost dictatorial power, Mr. Thiers in France, Mr. De Bismarck in Germany; the former in a republic, the latter in a military monarchy. In comparing these two men, a publicist is enabled to write the history of two societies and almost to map the future of these two nations.

At first let us sketch Mr. De Bismarck's portrait. If there is in the world a complete Prussian, adorned with all the attributes of his race, it is Mr. Otto de Bismarck, a baron from his birth, then a count after Sadowa, prince and chancellor of the German empire after the defeats of France.

Physically he is tall and strong, as those grenadiers which were formerly taken over all Europe by William the First of Prussia, the great great-grandfather of the present German emperor, and which were sometimes carried away, as pretty girls are, to be enlisted in his regiment of guards. Morally he has exactly as many scruples as Frederick the Great, who robbed all his neighbors, that is, from Silesia to Austria, Posen to Poland, and Cleves to Bavaria. This has been fully demonstrated in the last three wars; with France, Austria, and Denmark.

As to diplomatic tricks, never was a man more conversant with the art of deceiving with fine promises, of cheating his allies, and of always finding new ones. The conquest of Sleswick-Holstein, in which all the German princes participated, was the first trial of his diplomatic cunning. After this disgraceful war, Austria and Bavaria vainly claimed their share of the spoil; the conquered provinces were exclusively annexed to Prussia. By this bold stroke, in which duplicity, greediness, dishonesty, decision, and a perfect knowledge of the weakness of the European powers, were equally mixed, Germany was compelled to confess that she had found her master.

She felt it still more when he declared war with Austria, after having previously offered to Louis Napoleon the left bank of the Rhine to Mayence. Against Denmark, he had secured Austria and Bavaria for his allies; against Austria, he had France, or rather her emperor, and Italy, which at least was not a dupe and got Venetia in this alliance.

Bismarck got every thing; for, since Sadowa, Germany belongs to him.

As to Napoleon the third, notice was given to him that he could, if such was his fancy, annex Belgium.

Four years after Sadowa, count Bismarck coveted the conquest of Alsace—Lorraine. But I do not wish to recall this painful occurrence. At this time Russia was an accomplice. She had for apology, I must confess it, the recollection of Sebastopol. But every thing shows that her turn is coming to be a dupe. It is a significant fact that professors teach every day in every school of Germany that Livonia, Courland, Carelia, Ingria, and Esthonia, are German provinces stolen by Russia.

Moreover, it is Prince Bismarck's invariable method at home as well as abroad, first to join the parties whom he intends to strip afterwards. To offer every thing before the battle, and to retain every thing after the victory, constitute the main tactics in the two houses of the German parliament.

Such is the great statesman of Germany; to deceive and to strike is his speciality. He is a Richelieu, if you please, but a Richelieu of Brandebourg; he will inflict a good deal of mischief on all Europe, without doing any good to his country. If he still lives and rules ten years, he will possibly leave Prussia more destitute, more miserable, and less populous, than he found her. In a word, he is skilful to destroy, but he is unable to establish anything.

Richelieu, the great French cardinal, was a statesman of another cast. Being unable to relate here the particulars of his wonderful diplomatic exploits, I will merely say that he was the founder of the European equilibrium. At home he was the warm promoter of national improvements in sciences, in arts, in commerce and industry. He delighted in encouraging and rewarding leading men of every description. When he died, Corneille, Descartes, Bossuet, Pascal, Fenelon, Rollin, Moliere, Lafontaine, Racine and twenty others, literary stars, were living or were illustrating what courtiers have styled Louis the Fourteenth's century, but what living Frenchmen must call *Richelieu's century*.

Prince Bismarck has been the dictator of Prussia these ten years, and he has ruled the whole of Germany these six years. Let him show his creations of every kind. Fortresses, guns, barracks and diplomatic trickeries, are his only works. How many of them will remain within twenty years?

Now let us glance at Mr. Thiers' doings. If Prince Bismarck is a perfect Prussian, seeking but success and using but force, who plunders and strikes his conquered foe, Mr. Thiers, without being less sagacious or less resolute than his antagonist, is endowed with all the charming delicacy, with the good nature and foresight of French statesmen of old. Never a mind was sharper or more fertile in expedients, never a tongue was quicker, never parliamentary elocution was clearer, more flexible and plainer, and if necessary, bolder, more courageous and lofty. If he is eloquent, it is only by dint of clearness and judgment. When he captivates his hearers, it is because he seems to partake of their own feelings and to express their own thoughts. When he flies into a passion, it is always in expatiating upon the interests of France (which by habit he calls "le pays"). But he ought to be excused. A man of such a capacity entrusted with the helm, as a pilot in a storm, by all his countrymen, being stung by a buzzing fly like the coarse Mr. Batbie, or by another monarchist, is as liable to become irritated as are other men. After all, the President of the French Republic is not made of marble nor of cotton.

But what an amount of good he has done to his country this eighteen months! If twenty departments have been evacuated by the Prussians, if three milliards of francs (six hundred millions of dollars) have been paid; if France after the dreadful attacks of the Commune, still lives, rises, works, relies on the future, to whom is she indebted for this boon, unless to this illustrious old man? If, in spite of Batbie, de Broglie, d'Audiffret-Pasquier and so many others, monarchy is not yet proclaimed at Versailles; if there is no fighting in the streets of Paris, of Lyons, Marseilles, Toulouse, Bordeaux, and Nantes, to whom are they indebted for peace, unless to Mr. Thiers, who at least preserves to them the name of Republic, and who leaves the door open to legal reforms of every kind?

He greatly deserves the thanks of his countrymen for the services he has rendered to France, and especially for having displayed so much skill and prudence in defeating the monarchial plots of the majority in the Assembly of Versailles. He deserves their thanks, above all, for governing by persuasion when so many men would govern by force. Europe, as well as France, is indebted to Mr. Thiers for his administration. In a few years the world will be able to measure the distance which separates France from Germany, a free people from a people shut in Prince Bismarck's barracks.

In conclusion I will remark this. Mr. de Bismarck became a premier, Prussia was in peace and almost free. In ten years he has made three wars, of which the last was several times near being unsuccessful; other wars may be expected. As to liberties, Prussia enjoys but one: the freedom of obeying.

On the contrary, Mr. Thiers, having taken France bleeding and sorely bruised, gives to her calmness, peace, liberty, labor and order. By this sign the world can appreciate the difference between these two men and their political systems. By its fruits all my readers can judge the tree.

Prince Bismarck will become the Louis Napoleon of Prussia, and Mr. Thiers the George Washington of France.

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