

"Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation," and the long defunct empire was finally buried.

The shadow which remained of the empire of Charlemagne had vanished before the rise of a greater and more vital thing, the empire of France, brought into existence by the genius of Napoleon Bonaparte, the successor of Charles the Great as a mighty conqueror. For a few years it seemed as if the original empire might be restored. The power of Napoleon, indeed, extended farther than that of his great predecessor, all Europe west of Russia becoming virtually his. Some of the kings were replaced by monarchs of his creation. Others were left upon their thrones, but with their power shorn, their dignity being largely one of vassalage to France. Not content with an empire that stretched beyond the limits of that of Charlemagne or of the Roman Empire of the West, Napoleon ambitiously sought to subdue all Europe to his imperial will, and marched into Russia with nearly all the remaining nations of Europe as his forced allies.

His career as a conqueror ended in the snows of Muscovy and amid the flames of Moscow. The shattered fragment of the grand army of conquest that came back from that terrible expedition found crushed and dismayed Germany rising into hostile vitality in its rear. Russia pursued its vanquished invader, Prussia rose against him, Austria joined his foes, and at length, in October, 1813, united Germany was marshalled in arms against its mighty enemy before the city of Leipsic, the scene of the great