

NORTH SLESWICK UNDER PRUSSIAN RULE

1864-1914

AN Englishman who had seen the war of 1864, in which Denmark was attacked by the powerful States of Austria and Prussia and compelled to surrender the Duchies of Sleswick, Lauenburg, and Holstein, commented on the Treaty of Vienna (October 30, 1864), by which Denmark acknowledged her defeat, in the following prophetic words :—

This is the result and the reward of Austro-Prussian policy : it is unjust to the weaker side, grossly inconsistent with the obligations of the stronger. When time shall have brought about a state of things more favourable to Denmark than has existed through 1864, when perchance the oppressed Danish nationality of Sleswick shall be rescued from alien tyrants, then, if this Treaty of Vienna should be used as evidence against the Danes, let Englishmen remember what it is, and how it was obtained.

Under the treaty Denmark had to cede not only the German Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg, which were members of the German Confederation, but also the ancient Danish borderland of Sleswick, or South Jutland, to give it the name preferred by the Danes. The Holsteiners had expected that, as a result of the treaty, they would be formed into an independent German State of 'Schleswig-Holstein'. But these hopes were not fulfilled either in 1864, or when Austria and