

# Revolutions: Political and Social

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## Article Eighteen.

THE development of the machine had one very marked consequence, which, aside from every other consideration, had a prodigious effect upon society. We saw in the last issue how the Thuringian peasants were thrust into industrial life. The peasant, we hardly need reminding, is a solitary worker for most of the year, and, generally, almost a hermit; scattered over a broad expanse of country, having no auxiliary aids against the impositions of the seasons, such as saloons, concert halls, cement streets, public lights. A considerable part of the year is spent practically with a dozen or so fellow creatures. These he knows intimately, and within this small circle, he lives, marries and dies. Napoleon could march from one end of Europe to the other, and providing his army did not enter his little valley, the peasant would not know it. Crops might fail, dynasties come and go within fifty miles of his straw thatch, without furnishing him with sufficient cause to raise his head. His nearest neighbors he knew better perhaps, and at least as well, as the members of his own household. Take him ten miles from his hut, and he was among strangers, if not enemies. Not one in a hundred had an idea beyond his simple tasks, or any interest beyond them, except perhaps a tentative glance at heaven. For a few years after the advent of the steam locomotive, the German people comprised almost eighty per cent of these peasants. Before the child in the cradle had reached the age of twenty-five the rural population was barely sixty per cent, and ere that child had seen another twenty-five winters over one half of the people lived in towns, while at the last census, 1910, the rural population was only forty per cent of the people.

These towns-people were in almost every respect different from their rural grandparents. They might very well live for years within twenty feet of another fellow creature without exchanging a single word, or even knowing his name, while being most intimate with another living ten miles away. Their acquaintances were formed in industry, not in locality. Nor was his entire time occupied with his labor. The nature of his occupation called for a general knowledge no peasant was ever required to possess, which furnished his mind with the means at least, for preoccupation, apart from his toil. And in many instances interested him more exclusively than his daily task.

The figures we give might indicate that the country was being deserted, so we remark that the rural population remained stationary, and the increase in population, enormous as it was, appeared in the towns: not only did the people of Germany present in these figures the appearance of a rush to the towns, but side by side with this phase we have a great emigration movement.

In this matter the development of Germany took place in a much briefer space of time than in the other great powers of Europe.

It might assist our imaginations if not our apprehensions, to estimate this advance by a few figures. In 1871 the output of coal in metric million tons was:

Britain .....	118
Germany .....	38
France and Belgium.....	27

While in 1913 the output was:

Britain .....	292
Germany .....	280
France and Belgium.....	63

Iron and steel give like results, Germany far behind Britain, France and Belgium had an amazing development following the Franco-Prussian war, so that by 1880 she was equal to France and Belgium and less than a third of Britain. In 1910 the figures stood in metric million tons:

Britain .....	17,172,000
Germany .....	17,943,000
France and Belgium.....	8,599,000

In shipping we find an unparalleled development. When in 1870 Napoleon III. took the field against Germany he had a very respectable fleet: Germany had none, and had the smallest mercantile fleet of any power in Europe, much smaller than Spain. In 1880 the other nations had added materially to their steam equipment, while Germany had scarcely more than doubled her tonnage; before the end of the century she was second to Britain, and by 1910 assumed the proportion of a dangerous rival, both in naval and mercantile tonnage, while in respect to efficiency Britain was behind. Such tremendous development in the three basic industries of modern life could not be achieved by the Germany of 1848, a country of petty states, each jealous of the other, each regarding any gain by the other as so much loss to itself. Ready to combine, whenever one threatened any degree of superiority, and by whatever means the situation required, to drag it back to their level, and each one always willing to call in reactionary Austria to maintain their subjection.

The development of Hamburg on the Elbe was out of the question as it lay in Holstein. Bremen on the Weser was in Hanover, and not yet in the Customs Union, and closely allied to Britain in historical and commercial kindred, could hardly interest Saxony through which the Weser flowed. Stettin on the Oder, lay in Pomerania closely allied to Prussia, but in no way interesting to Brandenburg or Silesia, which it watered almost their entire length. Yet these three ports became the centre of the greatest ship-building and mercantile development the world has ever seen. Nor could the canal which placed all Germany on the North Sea, in direct contact with the ocean, have been conceived by these petty and contending states, as the site was not yet within the national boundary of the German people. The Kiel Canal lies in Schleswig, and beyond all this lay the great Southern provinces, Bavaria, Baden, Wurtemberg, on the banks of the lordly Danube, with a market and more than an economic interest in Austria. Mannheim in the Palatinate, more northerly than Paris, was farthest south on the Rhine for navigation. Today, Basle sends her commodities from the boundaries of Switzerland, down the Rhine to Rotterdam and the sea. And had the Great War not intervened perhaps Lake Constance would have docked the boats which entered the Dutch port. Agreements and plans were already drawn for the canalization which would have made this connection practicable. We realize in its fullness this economic development and transportative energy in the fact that commodities are shipped from the Danube basin down the Rhine to Rotterdam, through the Mediterranean sea, the Dardanelles, the Bosphorus, the Black sea, and up the Danube delta to Roumania. Quite evidently pious wishes and patron saints are not sufficient to develop economic and geographical resources.

We have already seen that a desire coincident with the need for a united Germany existed, and an extraordinary amount of energy and much blood had been spent toward its accomplishment. How that effort grew out of a swelter of ignorance, and was crushed because contending factions could still see, at the feast their imaginations had conjured forth, across the table, the faces of their traditional enemies. The delicate nostril of a Prussian became offended at the presence of a Bavarian, a German could not abide a Magyar, nor a Magyar a Slav, for historical reasons. The marvel of this stupidity is abated for use when we view the imbecile grimaces that Socialists, Communists and Syndicalists cast upon each other today. God help us and give us grace to laugh at our own folly, we are a daft lot!

But we are to see this jealous and contending

multitude welded together for a common end and a national benefit. May we yet see these latter day saints, so pure in their own righteousness, drop their self-pity long enough to realize self-interest. We, too, in case some Hottentot should chance to overlook the fact.

At the risk of being charged with advocating the great man theory we must now take a survey of a few men.

The first of these is not very often met with. John Dreyse, a locksmith's son, born in Saxony, was taught his father's trade. As some men are born with an intense desire and appropriate mental gifts to master music, this boy applied himself to his trade with what amounted to an artist's passion. Arriving in Paris at a time when the greatest soldier of modern times was conducting the greatest war, he found ample opportunity for his genius to expand in the munitions plants of Napoleon the Great. When this warrior was finally ensconced in St. Helena, our young friend returned to Saxony where he opened a small arms plant. At this time the old musket was being subjected to some criticism, and was faithfully defended by all the great soldiers of the day. Several improvements had been made, and but one even considered. This was the substitution of the percussion cap for the flint lock.

Dreyse had an order to make a number of these. And when engaged upon the problem of the mechanism by which this might be best effected he conceived the idea of uniting the charge and percussion cap, and igniting by a small steel rod, struck by the gun hammer. The cartridge was still charged at the muzzle. Not content with this, he continued to labor for nine more years, until in 1836 he produced a breach loader, the famous "needle gun."

It was this weapon which played such havoc during the South German revolution in 1851, where a few Prussian regiments were armed with it, but it was yet a mighty task in the then state of metallurgy to equip an army with them. This was effected by 1860.

Next we have Von Bismarck, a man of tremendous energy and courage, who could apply himself to a task with a devotion which excluded every other consideration, and who lacked every inconvenient moral interrogation which a conscience is likely to inspire. No complex, awry and distraught, disturbed the even flow of his libido. He was another Swartzenburg, minus the solid personal greed and cruelty.

Challenged to a duel to death at a distant spot and date, he calmly remarks that tonight and the palace grounds would be accommodation enough, and proceeds to set all his business in order without a sign of emotion, and with the utmost speed and exactitude.

He had met, measured, and mastered every diplomat and official on the continent, and was at length after the most thorough-going training possible called to the Head of Prussia. Carlyle says he had intellect, will and force beyond all other men.

Next comes Von Moltke, a genius of strategy. The disposition of armies was his life's work, and little else interested him. We are not strategists, and the full extent of his powers are best realized by the wars he conducted. Not a single factor appeared to have been overlooked, and almost from the declaration of war to the end, his plans went through on time.

The third member of this trinity, was a soldier who had made a name as a geographer, and possessed an extraordinary intellectual activity. His work as lecturer and author on all matters of military character soon attracted attention. He had functioned in every branch of army life, and his extraordinary mental activity had noted all its deficiencies, and made practical proposals for their remedies, so that when he became War Minister in 1860, he was

(Continued on page 8)