

Imperial Germany

steps towards the still distant goal, which, however, can be attained, if we do not tire of this troublesome struggle entailing so many sacrifices, and if transitory phases of practical politics do not again sweep the great and permanent demands of national policy into the background.

We must also not deceive ourselves on the point that the German, in a struggle between nationalities, does not yet always possess the desirable power of resistance, and that only too often he runs the risk in such a struggle of losing his nationality, if the State does not protect and support him. One of the chief difficulties of the problem in the Eastern Marches, and at the same time perhaps the strongest proof of the absolute necessity of a steadfast and strong policy there, lies in the need to strengthen the backbone of the German who, for reasons connected with our good and with our less good qualities, is so prone to be assimilated. So far as this is concerned, the Government must take things as they are. It is its duty to see that the Germans and their nationality do not succumb in the East.

However, the answer to the question as to what the state of affairs in the East of Germany would have been had nothing been done for the protection and strengthening of German nationality there, affords a far better means of judging what has been accomplished than does an enumeration of positive achievements. Before we can think of making national