

that it was due only to the inexperience of the writer that more has not been told of the consolidation of that kingdom whose greatest Minister baffled the genius of both Talleyrand and Napoleon, and had Beust but believed that the disclosures of some of the conversations, and the preservation of some of the interviews which he must have had just before and just succeeding Sadowa, and subsequently Sedan, would be as interesting to other generations as the tales he tells of the debating unions of his boyhood, that he would have devoted more space to the records of international negotiations than to the unimportant and uninteresting details of trifles which history is kind enough to forget. But it is not by his memoirs that Beust will be remembered. They will be read a little longer by those who hope to see between the lines what was never there concealed, and then they will pass out of memory to be buried in that oblivion which kindly hides both the folly and the errors of many generations of statesmen, while his deeds of political greatness, his life, his creations, his diplomatic measures and his subtle negotiations will live on in the glory of history, and ensure for him, in ages yet unseen, an immortality with the greatest of the diplomatists of his continent or of his time.

Frederick Ferdinand, Count von Beust, was born in Dresden on the 13th of January, 1809, a year that is memorable as the birth year of his only great European contemporary, with whom, during his widely influential and active life, he was involved in no great measure of diplomatic relations—the English Parliamentary statesman, Gladstone. Beust, in his memoirs, traces the lineage of his ancestors backward for many centuries in Austrian history, until it is lost in the universal splendour of the many brilliant families that circled around beautiful Vienna in the stormy commencement of the middle ages. The great-grandfather, who was once a Danish Minister, had been ennobled, during his period of power at the Court of Denmark, and through him the title, which was thus acquired, descended to the illustrious founder of the dual sovereignty of Austria-Hungary.

The early years of the future king-maker and rival of the greatest throne-creator of his own age—the great Prussian Prince Bismarck—are not distinguished by many deeds which were indicative that the young peer, before another generation had passed away, should have successfully opposed, for many years, the iron will and unconquerable determination of the greatest of all diplomatists; that he should have mingled and intermingled with great statesmen in the courts of many monarchs, that he should have created out of the wreck and ruin of the proudest of past empires a kingdom which is destined yet for many ages to endure; that he should have left the results of his weakest works deeply and permanently engraven in the history of modern European diplomacy; that he should by determination, sagacity, courage and ability, have subverted the personal desires of the mightiest as well as the most unscrupulous of Ministers; and that after a life of successes deeply interwoven with failures, he should have ceased to exist in an hour when his fame had departed, leaving behind him his name and his deeds to descend to the latest generation as one of the most useful of statesmen who have ever exercised a sovereignty in the council chambers of the greatest kings. Beust's boyhood was uneventful. It was, however, his happy fortune to spend some years of the impressionable portion of his youth in intercourse with minds which, after the elapse of two generations, are numbered among the foremost of the century, and which in all probability exercised over the young student an influence which he felt through his troubled lifetime, and even down until his latest day. At the age of seventeen he entered the renowned University of Gottingen, where for many months he listened to the lectures of the great Hereen, Eichhorn, Hugo, Sartorius and Saalfeld. It was the lectures of the last of these eminent political philosophers, Beust re- members in his memoirs, which determined his future vocation. The remainder of his years of college training were unimportant, or at least were of an unimportant interest to history. At times, no doubt, the manifestations of his intelligence were inferior to those of the least of his companions, but there, too, must have been hours when he saw before him and the printed page, which dreamily faded before his raptured eyes, the dim visions of the great wide darkness far beyond—the days of failure and of fame, of trials and of triumphs, of glory and of greatness, which lay along the pathway of his coming, and perhaps too the young mind,

inspired for a moment by a prophetic wisdom, discerned amid the troubled disturbance of events which were to be, the chaos of empires, the falling of thrones, the red wars, the dark deeds, the victories over striving rivals, the rewards, the throne and the crown; and then, perhaps, calm and clear across the face of the future he beheld the outline of a kingdom whose foundations had been laid for generations in the hearts of its inhabitants, whose pillars had been reared by the judgments of fate, and whose advent to the European system was destined to mean to rejoicing posterity the morning dawn of continental peace.

At the age of twenty two Beust began his diplomatic career in the service of the State of Saxony. This was at the time when the fall of the Bourbon family in France had shaken the civilized world to the depths of its deepest foundations. And well might Europe tremble, for the rapidly conflicting events, familiar to eyes which had seen the Bastille go down, were repeating themselves with extraordinary violence around France's tottering throne. Many feared another reign of terror, and began to think of voluntary exile from the land whose troubled history could be written only with blood. But the wiser saw that the tumult in society would be of but short duration. The grievance this time was merely superficial. And France was not foolish enough to punish all her citizens because of wrongs which might be atoned for by the small sacrifice of a king. During seventeen years Beust represented the sovereign of Saxony at the Courts of various European Powers—at the Courts of Germany, of France, and of England. In the latter country he had much to observe, and much to learn, after years of residence upon the noisy continent. He saw that the gay frivolity which was common to society in Paris was the single distinguishing feature of the aristocracy of London; while to the humble peasant and the digger in the ditch were reserved the enthusiasm which in France pervades the entire populace, and becomes so uncontrollable during revolutions. In England the poor masses may cheer, but when the voice of aristocracy—the repository of authority—is heard, the toiling many are at once driven back into their retreats of obscurity. In France the lowly are emancipated as often as they can banish a monarch, but in England the weak must suffer until the voice of reason has penetrated the walls of the most isolated castles, and the occupants of high places acknowledge that they have been persuaded at last. He saw this, and he saw, too, how public opinion is created in England, and learned how folly fanned by simplicity is as useful an expedient as that thought which is born of brains and made of minds. He saw that England had formed a map of Europe's future, and then for the first time he began to learn the extent of the power which reposed behind the will of Germany's greatest mind.

These years of diplomacy were vast and tremendous years. Their history is not to be read in memoirs—much less in memoirs like the present. They were of great importance, not so much as years of immediate results, and not so much as years of wide achievements, as they were as years of mighty preparations. In Germany Bismarck was planning the course which events should take which were not yet to occur for decades, but which his keen and unflinching eye discerned could not be prevented by any act of skill or statesmanship. And Europe itself was preparing for the last great struggle with the forces of a tyranny which had bound the entire continent in its chains. During these years Beust was not taking any active measures towards the establishment of his own State upon firm foundations which should endure the shaking of the coming revolution. Bismarck had the advantage of Beust by all these years of careful preparation. And if there is indicated, in Beust's negligence during these strong years, an inferiority in the political genius of the Saxon Minister, when he was unable to discern the signs of the age from the condition and the necessities of the people, this much is to be said by history on his behalf. When the hour of vital action came and Bismarck, with his long preparation, met Beust unprepared, the latter was enabled, with the aid of his own great capacity for acting in the most difficult emergencies, to offer a successful resistance to the designs of the Prussian Minister and to limit his plans of conquest and aggrandizement by the boundaries which Beust measured as his own.

The French revolution was too sudden, too violent, and of too impractical a result to satisfy the desires of the revolutionists who abounded throughout all the States of