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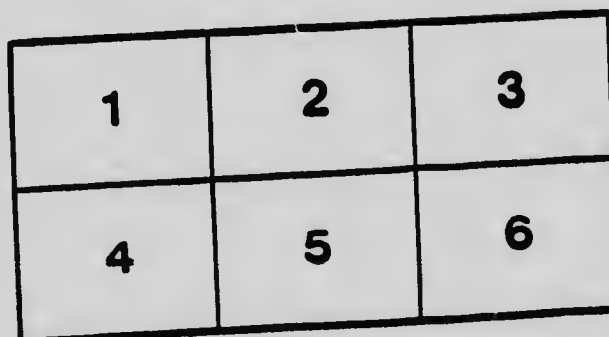
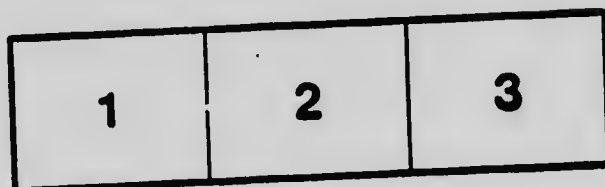
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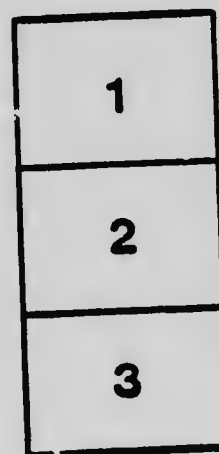
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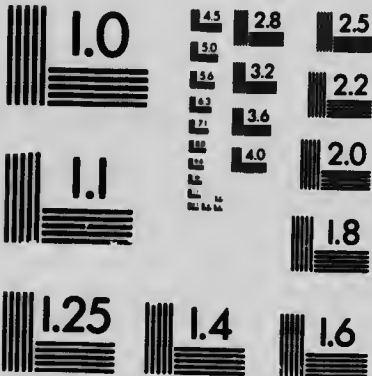
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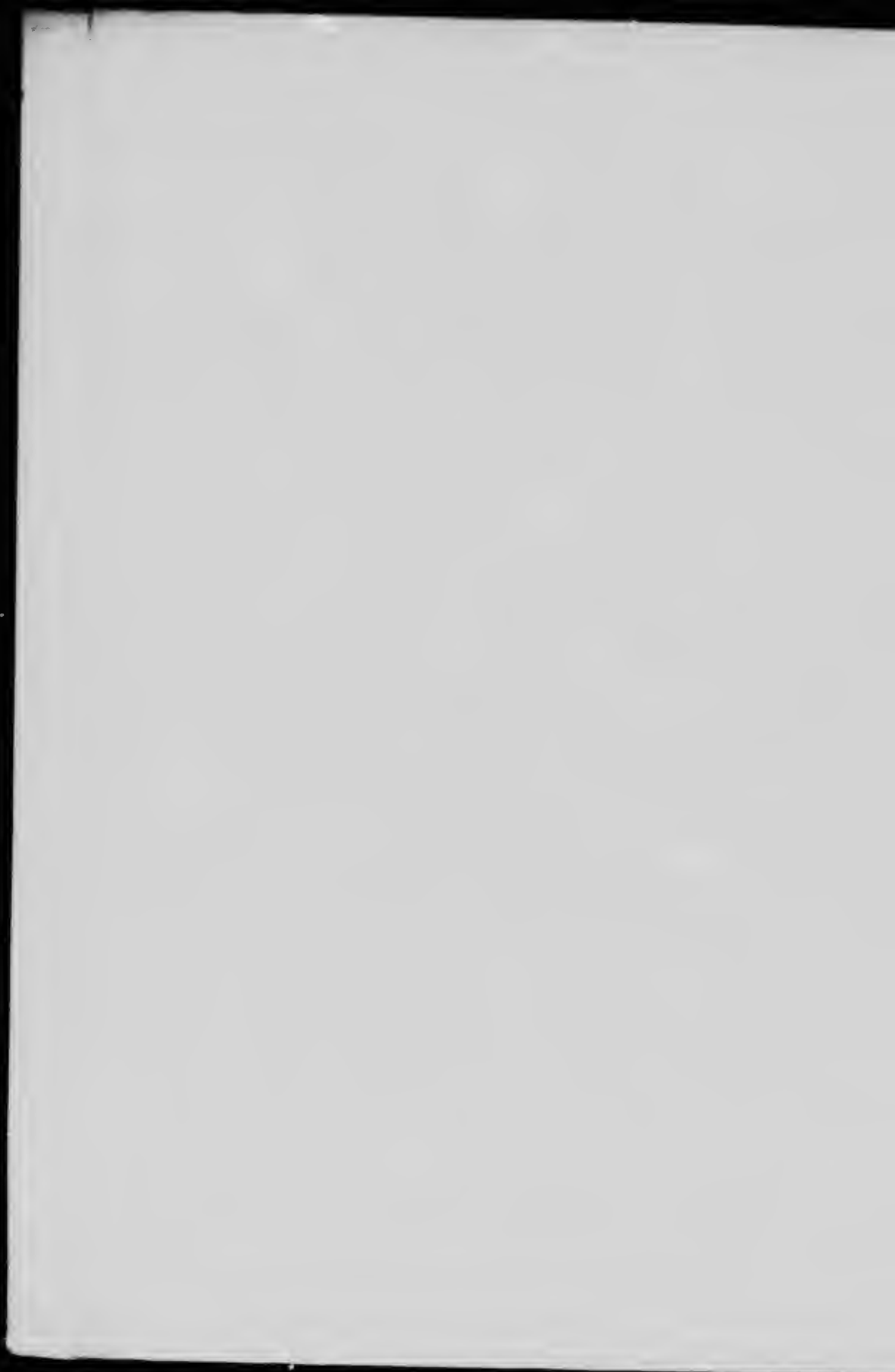
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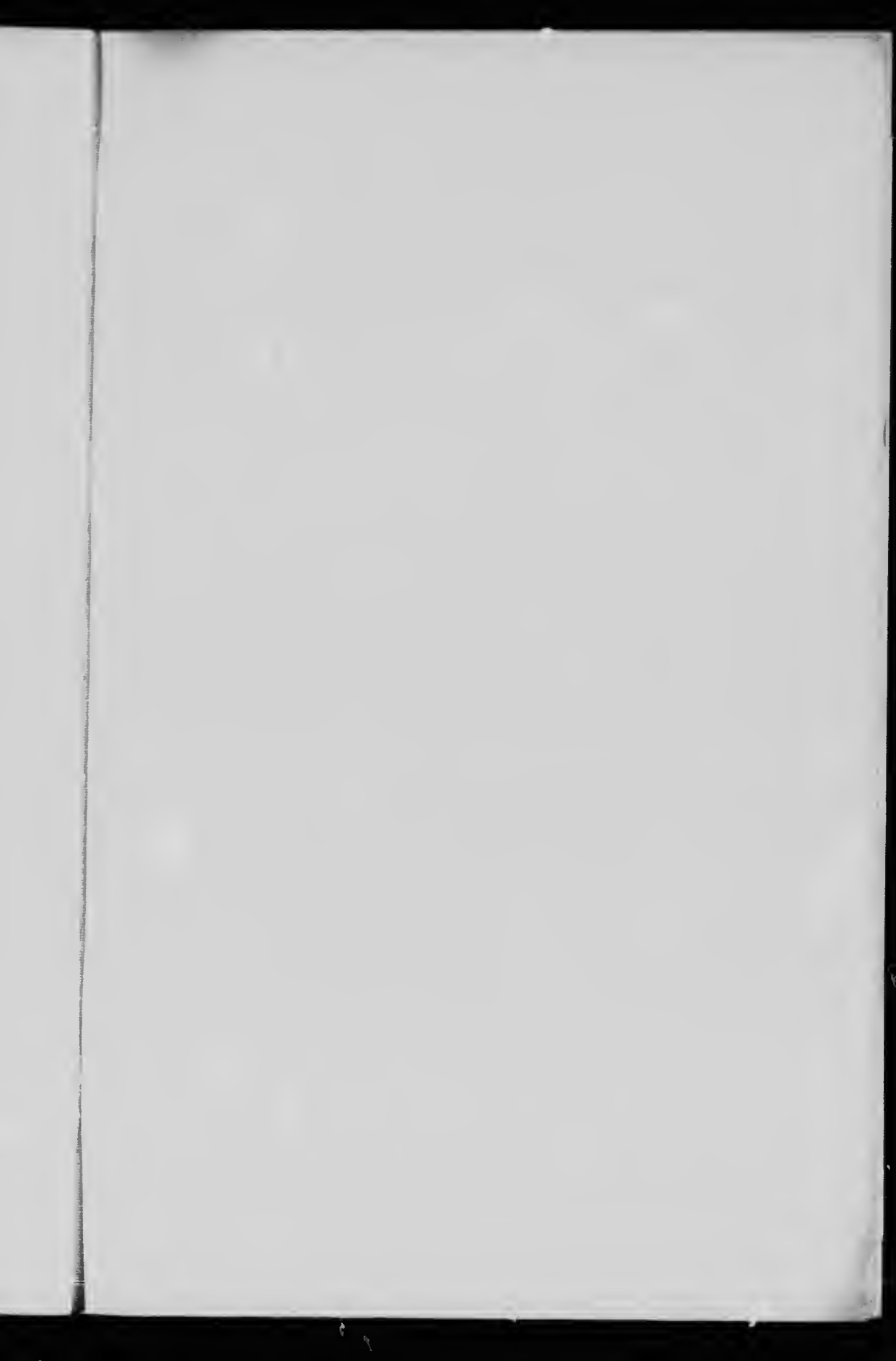
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# THE PROBLEM OF DANISH SLESVIG

A QUESTION FOR THE  
BRITISH EMPIRE

BY

H. ROSENDAL

TRANSLATED BY

REV. A. TROENSEGAARD-HANSEN

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS  
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*A. TROENSEGAARD-HANSEN.*

## FOREWORD

IF there is one part of the Continent of Europe which ought more than another to have a special interest for the Anglo-Saxon race, it is the province of Slesvig. From there, according to their own traditions, came the three peoples whose conquest of the Britons laid the foundations of the future England and of the British Empire. There, too, on the west coast and on the adjacent islands, still lives a section of that Frisian race which, of all the Germanic peoples, has the best right to claim near kinship with the English. A much larger part of the province, again, is inhabited by Danes, descendants of a race which gave to England one of its most famous kings and helped by admixture of blood to mould the character and speech of the English people for all time.

Centuries have passed since these links between England and Slesvig were of real moment, and few in this country know that they ever existed, or realize the more important fact that even now the fortunes of the province may directly concern them. In that long interval of separation much has happened which makes indifference no longer advisable or even possible. From about the middle of the fifteenth century a series

of events took place which ended in producing what is known as the 'Slesvig-Holstein Question', one of the most vexed problems of political history. Few, even among professed historians, have thoroughly mastered all its details, and still fewer have gone deeply into it with minds completely free from bias or prejudice. It is difficult to state the chief points clearly, even in outline, and those who desire to become familiar with the question as a whole must be prepared to make extensive studies in the numerous works which have been written both on the Danish and the German side.

However important the older history of the Slesvig-Holstein Question may be, it is now overshadowed by the course of events during the past century, of which an account is given in the present pamphlet. The result of these events is that for fifty years the Danish population of northern Slesvig has lived under a steadily increasing pressure directed towards the crushing out of its language and nationality. This pressure has not merely been that naturally exercised by a large nation upon a smaller people within its borders; it has been deliberately designed and relentlessly applied, as the instances given here will amply prove. Even in times of peace the situation has been full of difficulty for the Danes of North Slesvig, and it is unnecessary to dwell upon the bitter nature of the trial brought upon them by their enforced participation in the present war. Their one hope is that this may be the darkest hour before the dawn, and that out of their greatest need their deliverance may yet arise. It is the purpose

## FOREWORD

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of the following pages to bring home to the free communities of the British Empire how great that need is, and to suggest that for Britain, as well as for the great Continental Powers, the question is one of vital importance. It is not a matter of indifference to this country which of two conflicting national ideals dominates part of the area between the North Sea and the Baltic, and it will be a heavy blow to the cause of humanity if it is the nobler ideal of the two which goes under now, and so perhaps for ever.

W. A. CRAIGIE.

OXFORD,

*August, 1916.*

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

WILL any of those who like myself have lived within these hospitable shores for many years ever forget the fateful night August 3rd-4th, 1914, when the telegraph flashed forth England's declaration of war against Germany, with all its possible consequences for the future for all of us? With alternating sensations of hope and fear we met the coming day. And if we, living in a great and powerful country, felt this, how can we measure the feelings of the peoples of small countries like Denmark, whose borders run with those of Germany and who knew that leading German officials had often declared that in a great European war Germany ought to occupy Jutland first of all? I am glad indeed that our fears on that point were not warranted.

During these hours of anxiety and unrest the strain was hardly less than in 1863-4, when the brave Danes, so few and so patriotic, met the armed might of Prussia and Austria in a conflict which could have only one end, and which resulted in the loss of Slesvig-Holstein and Lauenburg, and the aggrandizement of Prussia, and consequently led to the construction of the Kiel Canal and to the present war.

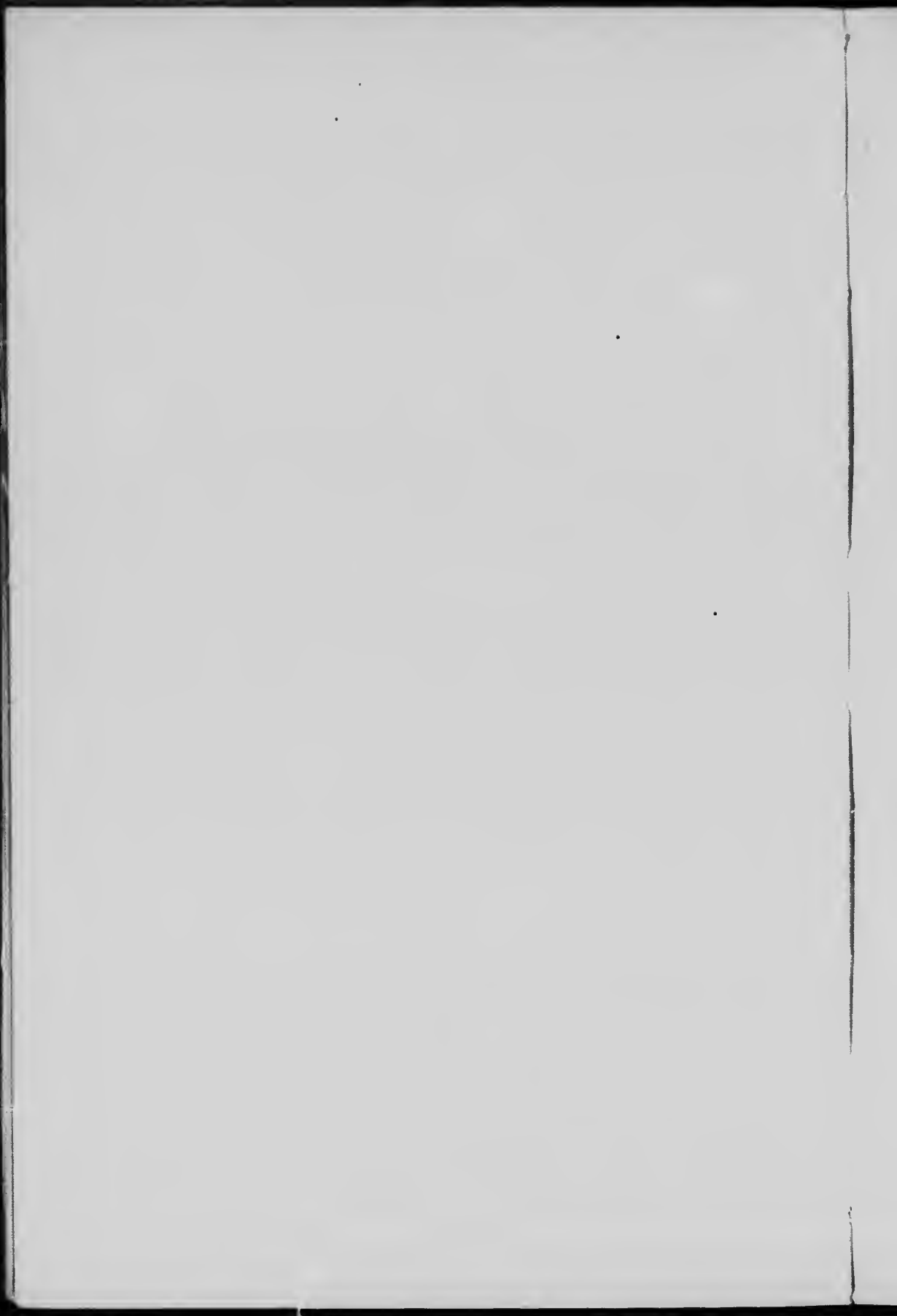
## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

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In the pamphlet which follows, translated from the Danish to the best of my ability, will be seen how deeply the question of the future of Slesvig—once Danish, now German—is affected by the present war.

A. T.-H.





## THE PROBLEM OF DANISH SLESVIG

DURING the wars of 1807-14 Denmark espoused the cause of France. Through her adherence to France she lost her fleet, and her capital at the same time was partially burned down as a result of the English bombardment. Denmark also lost Norway in the year 1814. Her economic state was terrible, and in addition her commercial fleet was ruined.

The years 1815-30 were naturally devoted to the healing of the wounds caused by the war. Political life in that period was stagnant.

In 1830, however, the French rising not only called forth the Belgian and Polish revolt, but also sent a wave of new thoughts even to the shores of Denmark and Slesvig-Holstein. It was mainly in Slesvig-Holstein that this influence asserted itself through two men—Uve Lornsen (1793-1838) and Kristian Poulsen (1798-1854), of whom the first named maintained the cause of the Slesvig-Holsteiners, the second that of the true whole-hearted Danish Slesvigiers.

Uve Lornsen, who was of Frisian parentage and born on the island of Sylt, led a wild and stormy life at the German Universities, but subsequently obtained an appointment as a juridical officer in Copenhagen (1821-30). He had only one intellectual interest, politics,

in which he was totally engrossed. Without regard to historic and legal facts Uve Lornsen put forth on his own account his Slesvig-Holstein programme in the following sentences :

(1) The Duchies of Slesvig and Holstein are self-governing States.

(2) The Duchies of Slesvig and Holstein are States inseparably united.

(3) Only the male lineage governs the Duchies.

Consequently he demanded a joint constitution for the two Duchies and their complete separation from Denmark, except that the Danish King might remain their Duke until such time as the royal male lineage became extinct.

With this programme he went to Kiel in October, 1830, to secure adherents. Amongst those whom he approached was the highly esteemed juridical professor Kristian Poulsen, who pointed out to Lornsen that his ideas were contrary both to history and to legislation. To this Lornsen gave the impudent reply :

‘Alte geschichtliche Verhältnisse gehen uns nicht an. Wir wollen es nun so’ (i.e. Old historic facts do not concern us. We will have it this way now).

It is a contempt for history and for the prevailing laws which has always characterized this Slesvig-Holstein movement.

Kristian Poulsen, son of a merchant from Flensburg, after a period of studentship at German schools and universities had taken the degree of LL.D. at Copenhagen, where he stayed from 1822 to 1826, taking an active part in the great spiritual life of which Copenhagen was the centre. In 1826 he became Professor of Law at the University of Kiel. In this capacity he had the difficult task of training the students as government

officials, both for Danish Slesvig and for German Holstein. Having acquired a complete German education without losing his Danish sympathies, he thought himself capable of effecting an understanding between the two nations. In his lectures on legal history he pointed out first of all, that everything regarding law and justice in Slesvig was based upon King Valdemar Sejr's 'Jydske Lov', from 1241, together with subsequent laws confirmed by Danish kings; but that all Holstein legislation originated from the German Imperial Law, which again was based upon the Civil Law. The fundamental principles underlying legislation were consequently different in the two Duchies, and laws promulgated in common would offend the sense of right in the inhabitants of both. All this Kristian Poulsen had perceived and stated before Uve Lornsen approached him.

Lornsen at this time brought about a strong movement for joint constitutional government in both Duchies, and for a complete separation from Denmark. In order to stem this agitation Kristian Poulsen published in 1832 a pamphlet entitled 'The National Equality and Constitutional Law of the Duchy of Slesvig', in which he laid down the programme of the Danish Slesvigers as it was at that time and has been ever since. In his work he points out that of Slesvig's 3,613 square miles the Danish language was used in 2,190 square miles, while the German language extended only over 1,423 square miles. Out of the total number of 330,000 inhabitants of Slesvig at that time, 185,000 spoke Danish and 145,000 German; but German influence had succeeded in securing that accommodation was provided for 220,000 people in churches and schools where German was spoken, whereas only 110,000 people

had accommodation where Danish was spoken. No one had the right to use Danish in the law courts. The clergy and other officials of Slesvig were educated at the University of Kiel, and as a rule were entirely ignorant of Danish intellectual life. Slesvig had two teachers' seminaries and three lyceums, all of which were German. Altogether there was not a single college using the Danish language outside of the public schools, the German-trained teachers of which were, as a rule, of little help to the people.

On the basis of these facts he made the extremely moderate but determined claims:

- (1) The language in the law courts, churches, and schools must be Danish in the districts where the public language is Danish.
- (2) In one of the teachers' seminaries, and in one at least of the lyceums, the Danish language must be used.

The Government in Copenhagen, however, being greatly influenced by the Holsteiners, favoured the claims of Uve Lornsen much more than those of Kristian Poulsen. A kind of constitutional government was sanctioned, but not with a joint Diet for the two Duchies, as each of them received its own Assembly of consultative estates. But in 1834 a joint Supreme Court was established and a joint local government was formed for both Duchies. Furthermore, the election laws gave to the estate owners and greater land proprietors so much preponderance that the majority of the Assembly became German.

In this Assembly, partly through fear of the King, but much more from their sense of uprightness, a small majority (21 against 18) voted for the introduction of the Danish language in the law courts in districts where

Danish was used<sup>1</sup> in church and school. This motion was carried in connexion with another which enjoined compulsory instruction in German throughout all the schools in Slesvig.

Meanwhile the talented and highly educated King Christian VIII had ascended the Danish throne. On May 14, 1840, he issued a Royal Rescript enjoining the introduction of the Danish language in the law courts, but ignoring the other proposal. Against this the German-minded section of the population raised such an outcry and violent agitation that the King wavered. To stem their wrath the King appointed as Governor and Generalissimo in the Duchies (1842) his brother-in-law, Prince Frederik of Noer, who had strong German leanings. But this step only made the affair still worse, as the Slesvig-Holsteiners conceived the idea that the King was afraid of them, and that they only needed to raise their outcries once more.<sup>1</sup> Their agitation surpassed all bounds, and when the Assembly was convoked in the autumn the most revolutionary motions were introduced by the Slesvig-Holstein section. This party even dared to propose that the old flag, Dannebrog, should be abolished in the Duchies, that a special Slesvig-Holstein flag should be introduced as soon as possible, and that the distinguishing mark 'Danish Property', which was stamped on the outside of ships, should be changed to 'Slesvig-Holstein Property'. The promoter ended his address with the bombastic words, 'Erase the brand of slavery'.

As neither the Chairman nor the Minister present, Count Josef Reventlow-Criminil,<sup>2</sup> repudiated this improper statement, the leader of the minority, P. H.

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the German-minded section in Slesvig and Holstein, which endeavoured to keep the two provinces together.

<sup>2</sup> Son of a French emigrant.

Lornzen, at once commenced to speak in Danish, for even the minority had hitherto used German. The Slesvig-Holsteiners started to their feet, shouting in order to prevent Lornzen from speaking Danish. But nothing could shake his composure and firmness. His address was entered in the minute-book in German. He protested against this, but it only resulted in the omission of his speeches from the minute-book, which merely recorded: 'P. H. Lornzen spoke Danish,' or, 'But P. H. Lornzen spoke only Danish': 'P. H. Lornzen continues to speak Danish,' &c. At last the Chairman of the Assembly deprived him of the right of speaking because he used the Danish language. He then lodged a complaint with the King, who replied that it was the natural right of the Danish Slesvigers to speak Danish in the Assembly.

Notwithstanding this, a Royal Letter Patent was published on March 29, 1844, settling the linguistic question so unjustly that only those members of the Slesvig Assembly who were unable to speak German were allowed to use the Danish tongue in the meetings, and in such cases it was prescribed that the Danish speeches should be entered in the minute-book in German.

This contempt for the Danish people and language gave rise to strong opposition in Denmark proper as well as in Slesvig. In Denmark an address was presented to the King, who received it rather ungraciously. In Slesvig the movement occasioned the strongest expressions of dislike at a meeting held at Skamlingsbanken, where 12,000 Danish men and women were present. The Slesvig farmer Laurids Skau (twenty-seven years old) fascinated the whole assemblage by his famous address on the 'Mother Tongue'. Some

of his words will never be forgotten in the history of nation and life and strife. 'The mother tongue', he said, 'is the tie which links together the different units of a people, communicates all that is best and truest from one to another, and therefore whosoever despises and scoffs at our mother tongue, he also despises and scoffs at our parents, our fellow-townsmen, the whole parish, and the whole country.'

This great gathering at Skamlingsbanken caused a powerful movement in Denmark as well as in Slesvig. Even the King, although not carried away by the national tide, altered his views considerably, and freed himself more and more from the influence of his German surroundings.

The King afterwards appointed capable men to inquire into the question of succession. They unanimously agreed, after investigation, that the Danish king had always possessed the right of succession to Slesvig, and that the right of succession was vested in both the male and female lines. But the succession in certain parts of Holstein was a matter of dispute, and might fall to the Russian Emperor should the royal male lineage become extinct. This seemed quite a probable event, as the King's only brother and only son—the last of the male lineage—were childless.

Regarding this matter a Royal Letter Patent was published July 8, 1846. A strong protest was lodged against the royal decision by all the princes of Augustenborg and Lyksborg with the exception of one—the future King Christian IX.

The Slesvig Assembly attempted to protest, but the Royal Commissioner disputed their right to do so and refused to accept it, which resulted in the dissolution of the Assembly. The Prince-Governor was dismissed



and succeeded by Minister Josef Reventlow-Criminil; he again was succeeded by a loyal Holsteiner, L. N. Scheele, who was subjected to great hatred and scorn by the Slesvig-Holsteiners.

On January 20, 1848, King Christian VIII died, to the last filled with presentiments of the coming storm, and exclaiming to those around him, 'In Slesvig-Holstein the link is breaking asunder'.

The year 1848 was in Denmark, as in the rest of Europe, a year full of uneasiness, and particularly so in Slesvig.

On the 18th March seventy members of the Slesvig and Holstein Assembly met at Rendsborg to consider how they could succeed in their demands for a joint government and parliament for Slesvig-Holstein, and the separation of this new State from the kingdom of Denmark. Some of the members insisted upon sending envoys to Frankfurt requesting that Slesvig should be amalgamated with Holstein and incorporated in the German Confederation, thus disregarding the Danish king and the Danish people. Other members thought it advisable to send a committee to Copenhagen with the object of inducing the Danish Government to grant Slesvig and Holstein joint military and monetary administration and legislation. This might be attained without war.

This opinion found most favour, and five deputies were sent to Copenhagen with the following demands:

- (1) That the Assemblies of the Duchies be convoked in a joint meeting, and a joint Slesvig-Holstein constitution be drafted for approval.
- (2) That the necessary measures for the incorporation of the Duchy of Slesvig in the German Confederation be prepared.

- (3) That a measure be adopted for a general national militia with officers independently elected.
- (4) That there be entire liberty of the press and the right of public meetings.
- (5) That the President of the Government, L. N. Scheele, be immediately dismissed.

Among the five members who were to hand over these demands to the King was Gullich, the lawyer who had characterized the Danish flag ('Dannebrog') and the words 'Danish Property' on the ships of the Duchies as 'A brand of slavery'. Another was Olshausen, who had said at the same time that the Danes were lazy, indolent, and without cohesion, and that they had made themselves the laughing-stock of the whole of Europe.

These five Slesvig-Holstein delegates did not, however, on arrival in Copenhagen find the Government so easy to deal with as they expected. As soon as the news of their coming reached the capital (the 20th March) many Danes were seriously alarmed lest the Government, with its two vigorous Holstein Counts, H. Reventlow-Criminil<sup>1</sup> and Karl Moltke, should grant the demands of the delegates. The Town Council in Copenhagen therefore decided to apply to the King, and on the next day it asked him to dismiss the Ministers. A great public meeting was also held at the Kasino theatre, where a resolution was passed supporting that of the Town Council.

Accordingly a great multitude gathered on one of the large squares of the city ('Gammel og Nytorv'), and, headed by the Lord Mayor and Town Council of Copenhagen, moved in procession towards the Palace. The King received them with the assurance that he had granted their wish even before it was expressed;

<sup>1</sup> Brother to Josef Reventlow-Criminil, p. 15.

the old Ministry had been dismissed, and if the people would have as much confidence in the King as he had in them, he would prove to them a faithful leader to glory and freedom.

A Coalition Government was formed, with the previous Minister of Finance, Count A. V. Moltke,<sup>1</sup> as Premier, and through this Cabinet the King answered the Slesvig-Holstein delegates that he had neither the will nor the power to allow Slesvig to be incorporated in the German Confederation, but that Holstein could pursue its own course according to its wishes.

Previous to the giving of this answer a rebel Government had been formed in the Duchies. The Duke of Augustenborg had hastened to Berlin to obtain the assistance of Prussia to the rebel cause, and the Prince of Noer had surprised the fortress of Rendsborg, induced the garrison to mutiny, and informed them that the King was in the hands of the Copenhagen rabble, which was hostile to the Duchies.

Thus commenced the insurrection, which would have been subdued sixteen days later in the first battle, if Prussia, desirous of war to relieve her internal troubles, had not meddled in the affair. Under these circumstances it developed into a three years' war between Denmark and Prussia, with alternating fortunes. In the last year of the war, however, the rebels were left to their fate, which was sealed in the battle of Isted, July 24-25, 1850. After this the rebel army had to evacuate Slesvig, and was disarmed in Holstein by the Austrians. Upon the conclusion of the war the Danish Government decided that Slesvig should neither be incorporated in Holstein nor in the kingdom, but should remain as an independent Duchy on the same footing as the other provinces in respect of the crown, the

<sup>1</sup> Adam Vilhelm Moltke, † 1864.

army, the fleet, state property, customs, mail service, and foreign affairs—all other matters to be controlled by its own Assembly of consultative estates, which now became legislative.

Unfortunately this Assembly was elected in the same unjust manner as before, and did not represent the people.

This of course conveyed to Europe a wrong impression of the real facts, and led to the belief that the majority of the people were German-minded, because the majority of the Assembly was German.

The German agitation, constantly supported by attacks on Denmark in the German press, was for some years especially directed towards destroying all arrangements as to language which had been made by the Danish Government. According to these arrangements German was exclusively used in churches, schools, and law courts from the Holstein frontier to a line drawn five to six miles to the north of Slien and running parallel to it towards Husum, where it then bends north-west to Tönder. On the other hand, from Denmark to Tönder-Flensburg the language used in churches, schools, and law courts was Danish.

Between these two belts both languages were used, so that there were Danish and German services in the churches every alternate Sunday. In the schools Danish was spoken, but liberal instruction in German was also given. In the law courts German or Danish was used according to desire.

This regulation was vehemently attacked by the Germans, and the contemptuous feeling against Denmark was continuously maintained in Germany.

Bismarck therefore thought that by attacking Denmark he might ward off the storm which his infringement

of the constitution was about to raise against him. Austria, too, found it an opportune time for saving her waning prestige in Germany by joining a popular and non-committal war.

Pretending that Christian IX's right of succession to the Duchies was doubtful, the two Powers attacked and overwhelmed Denmark, while the whole of Europe, which had guaranteed the disputed arrangement, stood calmly looking on at this unequal fight.

As soon as the joint Prussian and Austrian armies had forced their way into Slesvig, all law and order became a thing of the past. The royal arms and monograms were removed from public buildings; government officers were expelled and replaced by Germans; Danes were imprisoned and persecuted. Even the peace of the grave was violated, for the exquisite monument the 'Isted Lion', which was erected over 861 Danish heroes killed in the battle of Isted, was removed from its place and taken to Berlin.

As the rest of Europe could not make up its mind to stem the progress of the German Powers, Denmark, of course, had to sue for peace, renouncing to the victors the whole of Slesvig as well as the German Holstein and Lauenburg.

This was of the greatest value to Germany, enabling her to create a great navy at Kiel and to construct the Holstein canal, thus making it possible for her to operate in the Baltic and in the North Sea at the same time.

The present war has already taught the 'Allies' how shortsighted they were in 1864, when the brave little Danish nation was left to bleed to death at the cruel mercy of the German Powers.

Prussia soon became strong enough to attack her

previous ally of 1864, and to secure the whole booty for herself. Bismarck with cynical frankness made his chief lawyers declare that the Duchies beyond all doubt had justly belonged to King Christian IX, as otherwise he could not have ceded them to Germany. Openly it was declared that the war of 1864 had been based on a wrong foundation.

France, however, demanded the insertion of clause 5 in the treaty of peace between Prussia and Austria. This clause read as follows :

‘H.M. the Emperor of Austria hereby transfers to H.M. the King of Prussia all the rights which according to the Peace Treaty of Vienna of October 30, 1864, he had acquired in respect of the Duchies of Slesvig and Holstein, *provided that the northern districts of Slesvig shall be reunited to Denmark, if the inhabitants by a free vote declare their desire to that effect.*’

It is impossible to say whether Prussia ever intended to keep this promise. Only once did she pretend to do so. This was in 1867 when the proposed European conference regarding Luxemburg was about to be held. The Prussian Government entered into insincere negotiations with Denmark about clause 5 in order to escape any danger of having the question raised at the conference.

Not only France, the promoter of the clause, but the whole of Europe felt its sense of justice outraged when Prussia treated this paragraph as non-existent.

As, however, the chosen spokesmen of the Danish Slesvigiers several times embarrassed the Prussian Government by reminding it of the ignored clause, Prussia took steps to escape from her obligations. Austria at that time greatly needed the support of Prussia in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian question, and

was easily duped by her wily ally in the Danish war. Prussia compelled Austria in 1878 to declare that she relinquished her interest in the fulfilment of clause 5; but nevertheless the right of the Slesvigers to a free vote for incorporation with Denmark was still binding.

For more than fifty years Prussia has governed Slesvig, and during that time there have been eight Governors, all of whom have made it their object to Germanize the population, and to force the Danes to leave their ancestral soil; but they have differed in the means by which they have sought to accomplish this. They have at any rate employed different methods, more or less in accordance with their own convictions or with instructions from Berlin. These methods have varied from the so-called 'more lenient course' (1890-4) adopted while Caprivi was German Chancellor, to the 'Köller policy' with its harshness, recklessness, and injustice, which was carried out in the severest manner by Governors von Köller and von Wilmovski from 1897 to 1906.

We shall now shortly deal with the government of churches and schools, and with the general legal position. In the State Church it was assumed that the clergy, as State officials, should assist in the Germanization of the people by representing all strong adherence to their nation and to their mother tongue as worldliness, diverting their minds from 'the one thing needful'. The more the clergy have participated in this work of Germanization—directly or indirectly—the greater distrust has arisen between them and their congregations, alienating these more and more from the State Church. This does not, however, trouble those in authority, who seem to prefer German materialistic teaching to Danish Christianity. But the danger of

de-christianizing the population has greatly roused the anxiety of pious Danish Christians, who have tried to stem the tide of unbelief. One section (the Home Mission) is doing this by compelling its clergy to relinquish the Germanization system, and in their pastoral work—so far as is possible for German officials—to side with the population. Another branch (the Grundtvigian) has formed free churches outside the established Evangelical-Lutheran Church. They build their own churches, elect their own pastors, and are devoted to both of them. These endeavours have been restricted and hindered by the executive powers. The free church in Haderslev, for instance, was kept closed for three years on the most insignificant pretext, while the congregation went to law to obtain the right to use the church that they had built for themselves. They won their case at the supreme court in Berlin, but it took a whole year to send the information from Berlin to Haderslev. The services in the free churches were regarded by the German police for a long time as 'gatherings where public matters were discussed', i. e. as political meetings, and accordingly the churches had to comply with the usual restrictions applied to public meetings. In addition to this the authorities have not granted to the free churches the use of their own cemeteries, and a deceased member of a free church is not allowed to be buried at the parish church with the usual sermon and hymns. Within the State Church itself Germanization has predominated. Many parishes in which the majority of the population speak Danish have entirely, or almost entirely, German services. During the war of 1864 the Danish service was entirely discontinued in forty-one parishes; and from 1864 to 1870 only 121 parishes had Danish services. This number



has since been further limited, and at present only twenty-six parishes have purely Danish services. As soon as a German functionary is appointed to a Danish parish the German authorities arrange a certain number of German services for the benefit of this one official, to the detriment and restriction of the Danish services. At the same time they urge one or more members of the congregation to apply for German services.

In the schools it is still worse. There is compulsory education for all children from the sixth to the fifteenth year. The law certainly permits parents to instruct their children themselves, if it can be proved to the Prussian Board of Education that the children get adequate instruction. It is also lawful to promote private schools, when the promoters 'have good morals and correct religious and political views, and where the schools at the same time meet a real need'. Whether these conditions are present is decided by the Prussian authorities. It is a fact that all Danish private schools have been closed, and not one is now left open in the whole of Slesvig, although there is great need for them. The Germanization of the schools has proceeded gradually, but quickly. In 1864 Danish was first excluded from the schools in Gottorp, in the deaneries of Husum-Bredsted, in twenty-five parishes of the Flensborg deanery, and in ten of the Tönder deanery. In addition to this the masters of the Slesvig schools were obliged to give three weekly lessons in German, if any one desired it. In 1871 German became a compulsory subject in all schools. In 1878 German was partly used for teaching, but became entirely the official language. Finally the authorities went the whole length on December 18, 1888, by excluding the use of Danish in the schools either as a medium of instruction or as

a subject. Only in a few places could a couple of Danish Scripture lessons a week be given.

When therefore a child of six years, who has never heard a German word in the home, is sent to school it is addressed in German, and must answer in German if possible, which of course makes the child unhappy. The Danish children soon develop a hostile feeling towards their German masters, who force them to sing 'Ich bin ein Preusse' or 'Deutschland über alles'. Frequently enmity arises between the children themselves, because those from German homes denounce the Danish ones for speaking Danish in the playground. It has, moreover, often been observed that Danish children are more severely punished than the German children. The masters are compelled to act as they do, because they are jealously watched by the Prussian police. It is the duty of the school inspectors to inquire about the political views of the masters and to report them to the authorities. These reports contain particulars as to whether

- (1) The master is a member of the German associations.
- (2) Whether he attends the festivities on the Kaiser's birthday.
- (3) With what kind of people he associates.

If he is not zealous in the German cause, he is dismissed or removed to a German locality. The school books, especially in history, present many striking and curious features. They are entirely compiled to aid the system of Germanization irrespective of the truth! Briefly it may be said that the books conceal unpleasant facts, distort the meaning of many other facts, and invent what is lacking. For instance, in a much-used text-book of history nothing is said about the three

years' war, 1848-50, except that 'The Danes lost two war-ships in the Firth of Egernsforde, April 5, 1849'. As to the distortion of facts it will be sufficient to quote the following: 'In 1851 defenceless Slesvig was handed over to the hereditary foe' and 'from that time the Danes ruled with unlimited high-handedness, expelling the members of the Augustenborgian House, and compelling the Duke himself to cede to Denmark his rich dominions for a sum much less than their real value. In central Slesvig the Danish language was established by force. Officials, clergy, and schoolmasters were dismissed on account of their German sympathies.<sup>1</sup> The vacant places were given to Danes, frequently undeserving and incapab'e men. Protests were vain.' There are many other pure inventions of this kind.

When the children, having been taught this at school, relate it at home, their parents at once contradict it, thereby provoking hostility between the home and school, which is both painful and prejudicial to the children.

The whole administration of justice is in German. Not only does the use of the German language create difficulties for the Danes in the law courts, but the tribunals are entirely capricious, and the administration is high-handed. The editor of the Danish *Flensborg Avis* was sentenced to nine months' imprisonment because he, without mentioning names, characterized as forsworn those officers who in 1848 joined the rebels after having affirmed by oath their fidelity to King Frederik VII, whereas at the same time the editor of a German paper in Haderslev was let off with a fine of 500 marks although he had described the repre-

<sup>1</sup> The real cause of their dismissal was their disloyal conduct in the rebellion.

sentatives of North Slesvig in the German Parliament and Diet as traitors who had broken the oath that they had taken regarding the Prussian constitution, and furthermore he was exempted from paying the fine by an act of grace on account of his 'noble sentiments'. Neither can one understand how the same court in the same year and on the same evidence could pass entirely conflicting sentences, as was so clearly shown in 1912 in the so-called Finnemann case. Chr. Finnemann of Taarning, adjacent to the Danish frontier, declared in December 1886 that he would avail himself of one of the regulations in the Vienna Treaty, granting the right to live in Slesvig as a Danish subject. He altered his decision, however, and appeared next year at the Prussian session. The Government at that time maintained the practice of regarding as Prussians those Danes who expressed the wish to continue to be Danish subjects (Optants), but who had not removed to Denmark. Consequently the Government recognized Finnemann as a Prussian subject; he was elected municipal superintendent school-inspector, and enjoyed for thirty-five years the privilege of being a Prussian subject. But von Köller formed a scheme by which he might be able to remove the Danish agitators, declaring them to be troublesome Danish subjects and banishing them from Slesvig. Chr. Finnemann and his farmer son, N. Finnemann, were expelled from the country. Finnemann, who had been regarded as a Prussian subject for thirty-five years, naturally would not submit to the expulsion order, but stayed at home until he was forcibly thrust across the frontier. The next day he returned to his home; he was fined for unlawfully returning, and an action was brought against him. The superior county court pronounced judge-

ment, that Finnemann was a Prussian subject, and could not be expelled from Slesvig ; but a witness was brought forward, a gendarme, who swore that Finnemann had stayed in Denmark for several weeks in the spring of 1867. Later on it was proved that the gendarme had committed perjury, as he only came to North Slesvig in October 1867. Another witness, a woman from Esbjerg in Denmark, stated that Finnemann had stayed in Denmark for six months in 1867. During the cross-examination by Finnemann's solicitor the six months were reduced to four weeks. Subsequently the woman admitted that previous to the examination she had had an interview with the Landrat Becherer, in Haderslev, and the Amtsvorsteher Valentin, together with the aforesaid gendarme Stegmann, and stated that she was given 20 marks and the promise of a further 2,000 marks, if on the strength of her evidence Finnemann could be shown to be a Danish subject. In the office what she had to say was written down, as she could remember nothing. Then followed an extraordinary issue of these proceedings, for the same court, which shortly before had recognized father and son as Prussian subjects, now ruled that both were Danish subjects. This legal decision seemed, however, to have staggered even the Kaiser, as he rescinded the judgement by an Imperial act of grace, and permitted the expelled men to return to their home. Confidence in the tribunals has suffered much from the fact that several judges were extreme German agitators. One of these fanatics, Dr. Hahn, on the 6th April, 1908, in Lübeck expressed the hope that a law would be passed, permitting the Government to deprive the Danish people in Slesvig of their land. At the same time he said he was much pleased to see that the new law

respecting associations had inaugurated the possibility of the extirpation of foreign languages from public associations within the borders of the German Empire. Clause 7 of the new German law of associations of 1908 provides that after 1923 Danish will be banished from all public gatherings in Slesvig.

It is already prohibited outside Haderslev, Aabenraa, Sonderborg, and the northern part of Tønder district.

The same year, on the 24th October, Dr. Hahn again declared in Lübeck that German national feeling should be roused, and that the Germans in North Slesvig should declare against the Danes the same implacable war which the Germans in Bohemia had declared against the Czechs. A few days later the same Dr. Hahn advocated in Haderslev that 'Danish arrogance should be broken by the use of the mailed fist'.

No wonder that one public meeting after another expressed its disgust at Dr. Hahn's utterances on political matters. What is indeed surprising is that he was promoted so quickly in his official career. But confidence in the administration is even less than in the tribunals. Captain Fischer of Aabenraa and the bank manager Möller of Skærbæk, regarded by the administration as non-Prussians, but recognized by the tribunals as Prussians, have been unsuccessful in making the administration accept these judgements. They have continually been deprived of the right of voting. Another instance which shows the disregard of the administration for the decisions of the tribunals has attracted great attention. In 1907 three men, disclosing their names, announced in a public paper that the parish clerk and schoolmaster (named Bager) at Ketting in Als, while in school, had abused the Danish Slesvigers, calling them 'Danish rabble', 'Danish dogs',

'lying prophets', &c. One of the three men was at once arrested, as the accusation was so serious that the master in question would have to be dismissed if the charges raised against him were verified. They were fully proved, and the three men were acquitted; but 'Herr' Bager is still both schoolmaster and parish clerk, assisting the clergyman in the church on Sundays.

During the régime of Herr Oberpräsident von Köller as Governor no fewer than 1,200 Danish Slesvigers were made Optants, and only about 200 of these were recognized as Prussian subjects. All the others had no rights. The most shameless attempt to make 'Optants' originates from Skærbæk in the western part of Slesvig. Herr Amtsvorsteher Winter von Adlersflügel wrote a letter to a prominent German Slesviger named Lassen, a hotel proprietor, to this effect: 'The bootmaker Grejsen in Blankær . . . must be induced to state that he has seen Peter Finnemann in Denmark, and that the said P. Finnemann stayed for a long period in Denmark at a specified time. This statement he must affirm by oath, whether he remembers it exactly or not. For this sworn statement I place 1,000 marks, or if necessary 2,000 marks, at the disposal of Herr Grejsen.' Probably Grejsen did not want to make 2,000 marks in this way. But although this letter was handed over to the public prosecutor on account of a disagreement between the local Germans, Grejsen did not bring an action against Winter von Adlersflügel. On the contrary Grejsen was honoured at a banquet where the chief official, Landrat Becherer, highly praised not only his great intelligence, zeal, and industry, but also his goodness and high principles.

In the reasons for expulsion, and the manner in which such expulsions have been carried out, much

harshness has been used. A wholesale business man in Haderslev was expelled because he neglected to be shaved by a German barber. Fifteen servants in Bentoft were expelled because their masters had attended a meeting of electors. Von Köller defended his policy by saying: 'I have been reproached because I have expelled innocent people. But as I cannot strike at the agitators in any other way I shall ruin them, and thereby force them out of the country.'

A widow was expelled, but applied for a respite because her daughter was seriously ill. The reply was that she must leave the country within twelve hours. The police came and placed the poor girl in an open carriage, which took them to Aabenraa, and this in the winter time. In Aabenraa they were put into the train, but the girl died before they reached the Danish station on the other side of the frontier.

We shall now deal with another problem, one of the most difficult to solve—that of the homeless. According to Prussian law, a child belongs to the nationality of the father, whereas according to Danish law the right of naturalization pertains only to a person who is born in Denmark. As a consequence of these opposite views there comes into existence a class of homeless people—children of Danish subjects, but born in Slesvig. They have no right as Prussian subjects in Slesvig, because the parents were Danish, and no rights in Denmark, because they were born outside the kingdom. This class of people was itself unfortunate, but it also caused the Prussian State authorities many a pang. Accordingly there was an earnest desire on both sides of the frontier for the just treatment of them. When therefore the prudent von Bülow became Imperial Chancellor, the moderate von Schoen Minister for Foreign Affairs



in Prussia, and the dexterous H. P. Hanssen-Norremölle a member of the Diet, the way was prepared for the solution of this difficult question. On the 11th January, 1907, Prussia agreed to recognize as her subjects all the 'homeless' children of the Optants who lived in Slesvig. As a consequence of this treaty more than 5,000 of the 'homeless' became Prussian subjects.

There was, however, a class of homeless people who could not benefit by this agreement, because they were children not of 'Native Optants' but of Danish workmen, who had emigrated, married, and settled down in Slesvig. These people were left unmolested until they married; when they did so they were refused permission to reside in Slesvig unless they deserted their wives. Here is one typical example. A working man, Mads Egholm, was expelled because he had married. He went to Denmark, but returned shortly after. He was imprisoned for four weeks. At this time his wife gave birth to a child, and her mother lay at the point of death. In the absence of the bread-winner the family had applied for assistance to the relieving officer. When the four weeks had elapsed, Egholm was again sentenced to imprisonment; and in this way it continued. The same fate befell many others. The 'homeless' cling to the little spot where their cradle stood, because nobody can show them a place in the whole world where they have a right to live.

The most burning question in Slesvig is the 'fight for the land'. The Germans try, exactly as in the Polish provinces of Prussia, to wrest the land from the Danish Slesvigers. The State has purchased for huge sums very extensive property (Crown land), which is again leased out to Germans for such a small rent that it only brings in 2 to 3 per cent. interest on

the capital outlay, while the State pays 4 to 5 per cent. According to the law of 1890, the Germans have established what they call 'interest farms'. The State lends the buyer a sum equal to the value of the land and the sum insured on the buildings. On this amount the lessee of the farm pays  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. interest per annum and  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per annum in redemption of the loan; by this method the loan is paid off in sixty years. But the owner of an interest farm cannot sell or parcel out his farm; he must leave it to the eldest son, who thereby inherits nearly the whole patrimony. Besides this he is obliged to cast his vote with the Germans at the elections, he must celebrate the anniversary of Sedan, the birthday of the Kaiser, and all other things prescribed by the German Association. The latest law is that usually called the 'binding law', which offers the proprietors loans if they pledge themselves not to sell their properties without the consent of the Government. These attempts to break up the ownership of land have been vigorously counteracted on the part of the Danes by the establishment of a co-operative building society, which gives loans on the mortgage of properties. This association started with a capital of 830,000 marks. There have also been formed the so-called Landeværn<sup>1</sup> and Sogneværn<sup>2</sup> associations, whose main object is to watch those properties that are in danger of passing into German hands. These measures taken for the security of the land have proved to be very effective, whereas the results achieved by the State are small in

<sup>1</sup> *Landeværn*.—A league, the object of which is to defend the Danish land, and to assist all the 'Sogneværns'.

<sup>2</sup> *Sogneværn*.—A union formed by the Danish inhabitants of the rural districts in defence of the Danish land and farms, to prevent these from passing into German hands.

proportion to the many millions expended. Considerable assistance in the great national struggle has been rendered to the Danish population by its press, its national associations, and its meeting-halls. Papers like *Dannevirke* in Haderslev, *Heimdal* in Aabenraa, *Dybbølposten* in Sønderborg, and *Flensborg Avis* far surpass in contents and style all their German competitors supported by the State. These papers are largely read in Denmark itself, not only for the sake of Slesvig, but also because they are well-informed daily papers.

Slesvig has a good many national associations, each with its special object, thereby dividing the work in the most effective manner. The oldest of these is 'The Association for promoting the Danish Language', the purpose of which is to spread good Danish literature amongst the people.

This association has spread Danish books in hundreds of thousands amongst the Danish population in Slesvig, and it is greatly due to its activity that the people, although politically separated from the mother country, can keep as closely in touch with Denmark's literature and spiritual life as any district in the kingdom. The next in seniority is the 'Association of Electors', which makes all the arrangements for the elections, giving assistance socially and politically to the Danish Slesvigians, and at the same time instructing them thoroughly as to their rights and duties. The youngest of the associations, 'The School Association', was formed after the complete Germanization of the State schools (1888). The main object of this association is to provide for the intellectual training of the young men who have passed the age of compulsory education, securing for them the means to frequent schools in the Danish kingdom, and to attain full instruction in their own mother tongue, literature, and history.

These associations have always been a thorn in the side of the Germans, who have done all in their power to stop their activity. The well-known judge Dr. Hahn tried for a long time to take the children from their parents, in order to prevent their being sent to schools in Denmark. This attempt, however, failed entirely. In spite of all persecutions the associations have been steadily growing. The Association for promoting the Danish Language shows a great increase in the membership during the years 1906-12. In these seven years the number of members has been as follows: 3,153, 3,417, 4,711, 5,071, 5,724, 6,173, and 6,354. The membership of the Association of Electors for the same period is as follows: 3,469, 4,024, 5,451, 6,420, 6,500, 6,635, 7,257, and 8,215; and that of the School Association: 4,720, 5,475, 7,212, 8,171, 8,222, 8,772, 10,725, 10,873, and 11,431. As the Germans have called forth these associations through their tyranny, so they have also brought into existence the Danish meeting-houses. The authorities for many years have attempted to obstruct the Danish meetings and the greater social gatherings by threatening landlords, whose assembly-rooms were suitable for these meetings, with severe punishment if they let the rooms to Danish people. In such cases the landlords would be required to close their premises earlier at night, and would also be deprived of the right to have dances in their rooms. This is distinctly stated in a letter of March 21, 1899, from Amtsvorsteher Stojentin in Toftlund to a landlord in that town. Even high officials have behaved in a manner which one shrinks from describing in the language that it deserves. During an election in the second ward in 1903 the Danish candidate, Andresen, a tobacco manufacturer of Aabenraa, inquired of the

Landrat at that place whether the landlords would suffer any loss if they let their rooms to him for his election meetings. The Landrat's answer was in the negative ; but on the same day he wrote an autograph letter marked 'strictly confidential' to all the Amtsvorsteher:

'I hope that the landlords will not let their rooms for Andresen's meetings. I ask you to act cautiously and adroitly. If any one of the landlords should place his rooms at the disposal of Andresen, I request you to name him for the purpose of surveillance.'

The most effective answer that the Danes could give to such treatment was the building of their own assembly-halls, fifty in number, which are more attractive and wholesome than the rooms of an inn. Most of these meeting-houses are provided with a library, a reading-room, and a gymnasium. The building and use of these premises has caused much irritation to the German authorities, and they have also been subjected to rough treatment at the hands of German mobs.

When for instance the beautiful meeting-house 'Frej' at Kristiansfeld was opened and all the tables were laid and decorated, Amtsvorsteher Valentiner appeared on the scene, closed the doors and sealed them. The tables were left with all the decorations and food for one year, until the supreme court declared that the closing of the house had been unlawful. This is only one of the many striking examples of German harshness.

But all the suffering which the population has endured in the fifty years they have been under their foreign master has only developed their intelligence and hardened their will-power.

Also the afflictions which the present war has brought upon suffering Slesvig have strengthened their sense

of grave responsibility in the peculiar position which they so unfortunately occupy.

This population will not be easily mastered ; it is worthy of a better fate.

H. ROSENDAL.

What will become of Slesvig after the war? That is the great question, the unsolved problem, which at present cannot be discussed openly either in Denmark or in Slesvig, and nevertheless is most vital for both parties. But right is right and will always conquer at last. For more than fifty years the Danish Slesvigers have suffered under a foreign yoke ; they have been deprived of the liberty to develop their own national qualities ; the Danish language has been forced out of the law courts, churches, schools, and assembly-halls ; and still the hope is as strong and vivid as ever, the hope of reunion with the mother country. A single instance will illustrate the Danish national spirit in Slesvig. An old man from Slesvig, now eighty years of age, travelled in the train with two German parsons many years ago. The subject of their conversation was the Slesvig question, and especially clause 5 in the Treaty of Prague respecting the plebiscite. Suddenly the parsons exclaimed, 'But surely you do not mean that Slesvig will come back to Denmark?' The Slesvig gentleman, a strong whole-hearted Christian, replied with emphasis, 'I believe in this as I believe in the Holy Gospel'. Not a single word was said after that. May this old man live to see his dream and hope fulfilled! he will certainly say with old Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace : for mine eyes have seen thy salvation'. If ever this happen, Europe will witness

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with amazement the unspeakable joy and jubilation when the Slesvigers again can assemble underneath the old Danish flag, 'Dannebrog', the banner of the cross, and sing their Danish hymns and national songs; and praise the only Ruler of the whole world, the Almighty God who hath done all things well.

A. T.-H.

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