

### The Hohenzollerns

**I**N these days following closely upon the end of the great war, and the defeat of the Hun, we hear so much about the Hapsburgs and the Hohenzollerns, that we naturally wonder who they are, and whence they came. It is not my purpose to deal with both Houses in this article, but only the latter—the Hohenzollerns.

This princely line from which the late ruler of the German Empire is descended, takes its name from the old Castle of Zollern not far from Hechingen. We hear of this family as far back as 1061, when two members of the Line were mixed up in a party feud during the minority of Henry IV, the German Emperor, memorable in history for his feud with, and his humiliation at the hands of Pope Gregory VII, better known as Hildebrand.

From time to time we hear of some member of the family, figuring as a general, a statesman, or a ruler of some petty state; the first ruler of the line being Fredrick I, elector of the Duchy of Brandenburg. He in his turn was succeeded by rulers of the same blood, none of whom are very important as historical characters, until we come to John Sigismund, the ninth elector (1698-1619). Little notice is taken of this man except that, by marrying the daughter of the Duke of Prussia, he acquired the Duchy of Prussia, and was converted to Protestantism. It may be said, however, that he did not force his religion on his subjects, but inaugurated a policy of religious toleration.

In 1619 John was succeeded by his son George William (1619-40). This man may be described as "the first utterly incompetent ruler of his line." Due



allowance must be made for the time in which he lived, that of the Smalkaldic War, in which Brandenburg, a neutral state was overrun, and devastated as much as if it had been a warring power: it was, in fact, the battle-ground of Germany.

The first ruler of real importance, that we meet in the History of Brandenburg is Frederick William, surnamed the "Great Elector." He succeeded to the Duchy in 1640, at the age of twenty; and it was his good fortune to lay a firm foundation for Prussian Monarchy. When he came into power, he found Brandenburg practically annihilated; when he died forty-eight years later, he left it a flourishing country.

Among his many reforms was the establishment of an army. With extraordinary talents and diligence, he raised an army of 24,000 men—the beginning of that German Army, which, we must admit, did such great work during the first years of the world war just ended. He did not use this army except when absolutely necessary, preferring rather to shift, manoeuvre, and negotiate, than shed the blood of men whom the State could ill-afford to lose. This and many other reforms he effected for the good of his country, and after nearly half a century spent in its service he died, and was succeeded by his son and heir, Frederick III of Brandenburg.

Frederick, though not as good a man as his father, set to work with that energy characteristic of the Hohenzollerns. He took great pride in his army, and increased it so much in numbers and efficiency that in 1700, he was able to give to Leopold I of Germany, the substantial aid of 10,000 well-trained and well-equipped men, in return for which he was recognized by the latter as King of Prussia.

Frederick, though at times a hard worker, was



extravagant, and did not improve the financial standing of his country, so that when he died in 1793, his death was not felt to be a great blow to the newly-formed Kingdom. By his extravagance, he not only exhausted the treasure amassed by his father, but burdened the country with heavy taxes. He was not, however, an unpopular ruler, and by making Prussia a kingdom, advanced it several stages towards its future greatness.

A few months after Frederick's death his son took up the reins of government. In nearly every respect, he was the opposite of his father, being frugal in his tastes, quick-tempered and strong-willed.

In 1715, he was forced into a war with Charles XII of Sweden, in consequence of which, for a small sum of money, he obtained the islands of Woillu, Usedom, and Stettin, with a part of Swedish Pomerania. This was his only war.

He did nothing for higher learning, but established many rural schools and encouraged industry of all kinds, especially agriculture. He was devoted to his army, and increased its number from 48,000 to 83,500, included in which were the famous Potsdam Guards, made up of giants from all parts of Europe. He died on May 31st, 1740, and was succeeded by his son Frederick II.

Frederick, known in history as the Great, may without a doubt be called the greatest ruler of the eighteenth century, and at the same time the greatest of the Hohenzollerns and, by the way, the events of the present day do not by any means hold out any prospects of his losing the title, at least the latter part of it. In the early years of his life, he was not in favour at court; but before his father died, he proved



himself to be a man—a true Hohenzollern, and was restored to his rightful position.

During his reign he was drawn into two wars with Maria Teresa of Austria; in both of which he was successful, gaining Silesia. He raised the strength of his army to 100,000 men, and it was then one of the most formidable in all Europe. In 1756 supported by England, Brunswick, and Hesse Cassel. he fought against Austria, France, Russia, Saxony and Sweden, in what is known as the Seven Years' War.

When each side had suffered defeats, and likewise gained many victories, the treaty of Hubertus-burg was signed, by which Austria confirmed Prussia in the possession of Silesia. As a result of the war, Prussia was recognized as one of the great powers of the Continent; since she had virtually held out against all Europe.

Having effected many reforms for the moral, intellectual and physical good of his country, Frederick died 1786 at the palace of Sanssouci, where during his reign, Voltaire and many others of atheistical tendencies had collected, and prepared many of their nefarious works, the evil results of which we are experiencing in the present day. He was succeeded by his nephew Frederick William II, a man who was a disgrace to himself, his family and his country. After reigning eleven years, during which time he did much harm and little good to his country, he died leaving the kingdom to his son Frederick William III.

The new king strove to remove the principal grievances due to the weakness of his father, and surrounded himself with many great ministers. In 1801 he was forced to give Napoleon the territory on the left bank of the Rhine, but he received certain compensations. In 1805 he was brought into conflict



with England for accepting Hanover from France. In 1806 he had war with France, the result of which was the loss of nearly half his kingdom. In 1812 he was obliged to conclude an alliance with Napoleon, and to aid him in his expedition to Moscow. This had such a disastrous result that he turned against him in the great battles of Leipsic and Waterloo where for a time French power was broken, and the nation was humbled. When peace was declared, Frederick set about to repair the evil caused during the war just ended; and after laboring twenty-five years longer for the good of his country he died June 7, 1840 and was succeeded by Frederick William VI.

The man who now came to the throne was a son of the late king, and was born October 15, 1795. As he was educated, intelligent and generous great things were expected of him; this expectation was partly realized by the first acts of his reign, for he gave more freedom to the press, an amnesty to all political prisoners, and encouraged literature. But it turned out that, like many another son of Adam, he was more theoretical than practical; that he had great ideas which never became realities, and that he was a lover of words rather than of actions. The revolutionary movement of 1848 took him by surprise, and he promised to agitate for the unification of Germany. In 1849, however, the National Assembly at Frankfurt offered to make him Emperor, but he declined, thus showing that he was not sincere in his promises.

In 1848 Neufchatel had been incorporated with Switzerland, and in 1856 certain royalists tried to secure it for Prussia; they were tried and condemned to death on charge of treason, and Frederick was forced to give up all claim to the territory. Ten



years later he became somewhat demented, and his brother William was appointed regent. This state of affairs continued for three years, until in 1861 Frederick died and William became king.

Next to Frederick the Great may be placed William I of Prussia. It was during his reign that Germany was consolidated, he being the first Emperor of the united Kingdom. This was not achieved by William alone, and great credit must be given to the Prussian premier, William's great minister, Count Otto Von Bismarck.

Bismarck was one of the most remarkable personages in the history of Prussia. His sole aim was to place Prussia at the head of a united Germany and he fulfilled his mission. He was of a rough, despotic nature and was not restrained by scruples which might annoy ordinary statesmen; having an end in view, he reached it by the easiest method. The solemn traditions of diplomacy, he disregarded, and respected treaties only in so far as they could be defended; he "achieved by boisterous frankness, effects which other men achieve by mystery and deceit."

The first important affair of this reign was the Danish war, over the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, in which Austria and Germany defeated the Danes and had the Duchies ceded to their territories. The settlement of this war, and the carrying out of the provisions of treaty which closed it, gave rise to another conflict between the former allies. Bismarck accused Austria of violating the conditions of the Treaty and soon preparations were made for a conflict between the two powers. The war began about the middle of June 1866, and on July 3rd, of the same year was fought the great battle of Koniggratz,



which laid Prussia's chief enemy at her feet. The power of Austria was shattered, and she was glad to accept the preliminaries of Nicolsburg (July 26th), which was soon followed by the peace of Prague. This war caused the final exclusion of Austrian power and rule from Germany.

After the Austro-Prussian war, the German Parliament began plans for the consolidation of Germany. North Germany was for the Union, but the South was against it, and thus the work proceeded slowly.

Had the completion of unity depended wholly on internal causes, it certainly would not have been soon achieved; but other forces came to Bismarck's aid. France had been irritated at the enormous increase of Prussian power, and wished to be "compensated" with the left bank of the Rhine, for keeping aloof in the Austro-Prussian conflict. This was not granted and France was bent on war; an opportunity soon presented itself.

Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern was asked by the Spaniards to become their king, and accordingly the French Ministers protested. As a result Leopold would not accept the Crown. Stimulated by this triumph, Napoleon III, Emperor of France required Prussia to sign an agreement, whereby no Hohenzollern prince should in future become king of Spain. This was too much for Bismarck, and he declined to so humble himself and his country; consequently on July 19, 1870, France declared war against Prussia. Many believe that Bismarck was in a great measure responsible for the War, by sending to Paris a telegram wrongly stating that the French ambassador to Prussia was publicly insulted. Paris was in an uproar and war was inevitable. As to whether or not he was to



blame, it is hard to say; at any rate, we know that he was not averse to war.

Napoleon relied on the help which he expected to receive from Austria, Italy and the South German Confederacy. But Austria really feared Prussia, and like Italy could not easily forget the Napoleon Wars; and the south States were not so unpatriotic as to see a sister State go down to defeat at the hands of a doubtful friend, if not a real enemy. Thus in every case, the French king was cruelly disappointed, so that the war was almost a one-sided affair.

In battle after battle the French armies were defeated, her fortresses one after another were surrendered to the enemy, and her stalwart sons were sent in thousands as prisoners to Germany. At last on the 1st of September, after the disastrous battle of Sedan the Emperor yielded his sword to the Prussian king.

The victorious army continued its march, and entered Paris on January 28th, 1871. On May 10th of the same year, the peace of Frankfurt was signed. By this treaty France was to pay five billion francs or one billion dollars and to restore to Germany, Alsace and the German portion of Lorraine.

In this war France and Prussia both showed themselves in their true light. When the French Armies were pushed back by degrees to the Belgian Border, their case was not altogether hopeless and had they retreated into Belgian territory, France might have saved her men and ammunition, and eventually won the war, but rather than violate the neutrality of Belgium, the armies stood their ground, and thousands were shot or taken prisoners by the oncoming hordes.

When the French king submitted to the Prussian at the battle of Sedan, it was the general opinion



that the victors should have discontinued their march, but pride and brutality was uppermost, in their hearts, and they continued on their way, causing needless desolation of the country through which they were passing, and eventually reached Paris.

One may well guess the joy and pride of the German in the wonderful achievement of their armies. Bismarck saw this, and knew the time was ripe for the completion of the Union. In the autumn of 1870 negotiations were opened between the Southern Governments and the Northern Confederation, and in November treaties were signed whereby the North German Confederation became the German Confederation. Thus Germany became a united country; thus was Bismarck's dream realized. The king of Bavaria then proposed that the head of the Confederation should be declared Emperor. The suggestion met with approval, and on January 18th, 1871, in the palace of Versailles—the very palace of Louis XIV, who in the seventeenth century had so deeply humiliated the Prussian Elector and the Germans as a whole—the king of Prussia was proclaimed German Emperor. In the French army at that time was a young French officer Lieutenant Foch, who today as Marshal Foch has defeated the grandson of the first Emperor of the United Germany, and has utterly crushed a people who were so despotic when they had the “upper hand.”

When the Franco-Prussian War was over, Bismarck began to put the whole machinery into good order. In his foreign relations he tried to disregard France; he was not unfriendly to England, and cultivated the friendship of Russia and Austria.

In her home politics the attention of Germany was for some years mainly occupied with a great



struggle between Church and State in Prussia. In 1872, Bismarck began the expulsion of the Jesuits. This was followed in 1873 by the famous May Laws promulgated by Dr. Falk, Minister of Public Worship. By these laws all clerics were to undergo a certain amount of secular training at the Universities; and every ecclesiastic appointed was to receive the sanction of the secular authorities. This legislation, which the Pope denounced as invalid—was disregarded by Catholic Bishops; and Prince Bismarck along with Dr. Falk, imprisoned, deposed, and banished bishops who would not submit; religious orders were dissolved, the administration of Church property was taken from the clergy and invested in bodies of laymen. These and other stern measures have alienated from Bismarck the sympathies of the vast majority of German Catholics, which is a faction to be reckoned with in the Reichstag.

The period following the war with France has been remarkable not only for the ecclesiastical struggles in Prussia, but for the remarkable growth of Socialism. This was a fitting time for the founders of the movement to do their work, for many of the German Middle Class, believing the French indemnity to be an inexhaustible source of wealth, indulged in wild speculation, and contracted habits of reckless expenditure. At the same time the resources of the Nation were drained by the most costly military system the world has ever seen. As a result, in a short time trade was depressed; wages fell; and large numbers of workmen were thrown out of employment. Socialism found its opportunity; multitudes of sufferers eagerly listened to those who depicted a life of comfort and ease which might easily be obtained. Thus it was that Socialism, the curse of



all countries, found its way into Germany, and its progress has been remarkable.

In the first German Parliament there had been only two Socialist members; in 1877 the number was increased to twelve; 1893 it had risen to forty-two. In 1871 about one hundred thousand Socialist votes had been recorded; in 1890, this number had risen to one million seven hundred and eighty-six thousand, seven hundred and thirty-eight.

The years of 1877 and 1878 saw a serious drawback to Socialism. In the former year the old Emperor was shot at by a youth named Hoedel of Socialistic tendencies. Had this come alone perhaps nothing would have been done, but in the following year another Socialist, Dr. Karl Nobiling, shot at and wounded the Emperor. For some days Germany was convulsed with rage and horror, and on all sides was raised the clamor that at last socialism must be dealt with sternly. Bismarck dissolved Parliament, and its successor wholly against the Socialists, gave the Chancellor the powers he wished.

In 1888 the aged and venerable Emperor died after a few days illness. Under him Prussia and Germany advanced with great strides, and he may be reckoned as one of the outstanding rulers of his time. He was succeeded by his son Kaiser Frederick, who reigned only three months, dying of cancer in the throat. In the same year William II. ascended the throne.

William II, German Emperor and King of Prussia was born January 27, 1859, and ascended the throne June 15, 1888. At the time of his father's death, Bismarck was still chancellor of the kingdom, which position he had occupied during the two previous reigns. The young king did not like the chancellor's



methods, and when he had reigned a few years dismissed him from office and became his own chancellor.

When he came to the throne religious differences were the cause of a sharp cleavage in the German States. In fact, from the time of Charles V and Luther, fierce and prolonged wars had been fought between sects of Christians. Under the reign of William, Protestants, Catholics and Jews live in the greatest harmony. From 1871, when the unification of Germany was effected, there were many rival factions in the Reichstag but all of the numerous political divisions have been unified in support of the Kaiser—the Socialist party, the Catholic party (the centre), the Conservatives, Poles, National Liberals and Progressives.

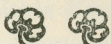
But while the Kaiser achieved in his kingdom such excellent results from his work, he was equally successful in his relations with other nations, at least for the first twenty-five years of his reign. True it is, that a few times unfriendly relations existed between Germany and other nations, principally with England at the time of the Boer War, nevertheless, William averted open hostilities.

In 1914, however, Europe was plunged into the most terrible war the world has ever known. On one side was arrayed Germany, Austria, Turkey and Bulgaria against almost every other nation under the sun. For four long years the war continued, during the course of which about six million men were killed and many more disabled. In the end Germany and her allies were beaten, hostilities ceasing on the signing of the armistice November 11th, 1918. As yet the Peace Conference is still in session, but peace is expected shortly. In the meantime, we hear daily reports



that the ex-Kaiser is to be tried for his crimes before an international court. If he be tried, found guilty and condemned to death, what will be the result ? Before this generation will have passed away he would be praised as a martyr and a patriot, and side by side with that veneration and praise would come hatred of his destroyers, so that the German people would take the first opportunity for war against her old-time enemies, the murderers of their king and idol. No! let the last of the Hohenzollerns live their lives chopping wood and shoeing horses as the case may be; they will soon be forgotten by this everforgetful world.

G. P. M.—'20



The Spring is here—the delicate footed May,  
With its slight fingers full of leaves and flowers,  
And with it comes a thirst to be away,  
In lovelier scenes to pass these sweeter hours.

—N. P. Willis.

Rumor doth double, like the voice and echo,  
The numbers of the feared.

—Shakespeare.

Let's learn to live for we must die alone.

—Crabbe.

Love is a lock that linketh noble minds,  
Faith is the key that shuts the spring of love.

—Robert Greene.