

a Berlin theatre the dances which she there had executed, by special agreement with the well-known ballet-caterers, for enlivening the most disreputable rendezvous of the travelling world;* moreover a gentleman of high position in the Prussian aristocracy, and in the habit of patronising the world of Art, paid her the honour of fetching her away in his carriage. This time we had our knuckles rapped for it in the Parisian press: for the French felt rightly shocked to see how French civilisation looked without the French *decorum*. Indeed, we may conclude that it is a simple feeling of decency on the part of those peoples who were erewhile influenced by the German spirit, that now has turned them quite away from us and thrown them wholly into the arms of French civilisation: the Swedes, Danes, Dutch, our blood-related neighbours, who once had stood in innermost spiritual communion with us, now draw their requirements in the way of art and intellect direct from Paris, as they very properly prefer at least the genuine articles to the counterfeits.

But what will our French visitor feel, when he has feasted upon this spectacle of German civilisation? To be sure, a desperate home-sickness for at least the French *decorum*; and in that feeling, pondered well, there is won a new and most effectual engine of French supremacy, against which we may find it very hard to shield ourselves. If nevertheless we mean to make the attempt, let us proceed to test with care, and without a shred of idle overweening, the resources haply still remaining to us.

IV.

To the intelligent Frenchman, whom we have just seen reviewing the present physiognomy of intellectual life in Germany, we yet might speak a final word of comfort—namely, that his eye had merely skimmed the outer atmosphere of true German spiritual life. That was the

* 1867 was the year of the French International Exhibition.—Tr.

sphere wherein one let the German spirit struggle for a semblance of power and public agency: once it quite desisted from that struggle, corruption might naturally also lose all power over it. It will be both saddening and of profit, to seek that spirit out within its home, where once, beneath the stiff perruque of a Sebastian Bach, the powdered locks of a Lessing, it planned the wonder-temple of its greatness. It says nothing against the German spirit's capacity, but merely against the intelligence of German Policy, if there, in the depths of German individuality with its so universal aptitudes, a fund of gold lies buried without the power of bearing interest to the public life. Repeatedly in the last few decads have we reaped the strange experience, that German publicity has been first directed to minds of foremost rank in the German nation by the discoveries of foreigners. This is a beautiful feature, of deep significance, however shaming to German Policy: if we weigh it well, we shall find therein an earnest admonition to German Policy to do its duty and thus ensure for the whole family of European nations that healing which none of them is able to originate from its own spirit. Ever since the regeneration of European Folk-blood, considered strictly, the German has been the creator and inventor, the Romanic the modeller and exploiter: the true fountain of continual renovation has remained the German nature. In this sense, the dissolution of the "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation" gave voice to nothing but a temporary preponderance of the practically-realistic tendence in European culture; if this latter now has reached the abyss of sordidest materialism, by a most natural instinct the nations turn back to the fount of their renewing; and, strange to say, they there find the German *Reich* itself in an almost inexplicable state of suspended animation, yet not a victim to advanced decay (*aber nicht in seinem vollen Untergange*), but engaged in a very obvious inner struggle towards its noblest resurrection.

Let us leave it to men of practical judgment to deduce

from the efforts last-indicated the outlines of a truly German policy, and here content ourselves, in keeping with our theme, with addressing our attention—aloof from that department of the German's public spiritual life which has been devastated by official misunderstanding—to the persistence of the German spirit in pursuing its peculiar line of evolution albeit abandoned to the anarchy of its own initiative; for thus we may haply light upon the point where both directions of Public Life might fitly meet in a concord full of promise for the eventual raising of that hidden treasure.

More easily to reach that point, let us therefore seek the manifestations of the German spirit where they still perceptibly impinge upon publicity; and here, too, we shall meet with unexceptionable evidence of the German spirit's pertinacity, its reluctance to give up again a thing once grasped. The strictly federative spirit of the German has never thoroughly denied itself: even in the days of its deepest political downfall it has proved for all time, through the dogged maintenance of its princely dynasties against the centralising tendency of the Hapsburg Kaiser-dom, the impossibility of absolute (*eigentlichen*) Monarchy in Germany. Ever since the uprousing of the Folk-spirit in the War of Liberation, this ancient federative bent has entered life again in every sort of form; where it shewed itself the best equipped for life, in the associations of perfervid German Youth, it was looked upon at first as hostile to monarchic ease, and violently repressed; yet no one could prevent its forthwith transferring itself to every sphere of spiritual and practical social interests. But here again we are called to melancholy reflection, when we find ourselves compelled to admit that the wonderful vitality of the German spirit of Association has never yet succeeded in gaining an actual influence upon the fashioning of public spirit. In truth on every field of science, of art, of common social interests, we see the essence of German organisation still hampered with much the kind of impotence that cleaves, for instance, to our Turnvereins [gymnastic unions]

and their aimings at a general arming of the people, as against the standing Troops, or to our Chambers of Deputies, copied from French and English models, as against the Governments. With sorrow the German spirit therefore recognises that even in these self-flattering manifestations it does not in truth express itself, but merely plays a piteous game of make-believe. And finally what must make this in itself so encouraging appearance of German unionism quite odious, is that the self-same spirit of gain and outer Effect which we before discovered as reigning in all our official art-publicity, has been allowed to get the mastery of the German nature's manifestations on this side too: where everyone is so glad to dupe himself about his powerlessness for sake of at least doing something, and willingly acclaims the barrenest function as splendid productivity if one only is gathered together in good round numbers, there we may next expect to see a company in shares brought out to keep the thing afloat; and the true heir and administrator of European civilisation will soon put in an appearance here, as everywhere else, with a Bourse-speculation on "*Deutschthum*" and "German solidity." *

That no associations of ever so sensible heads can bring into the world a genius or a genuine work of art, is patent enough: but, that in the present state of public intellectual life in Germany they are not even equal to bringing knowably before the nation the works of genius, which naturally are begotten quite outside their sphere, they demonstrate by the mere fact of the art-abodes, in which the works of the great masters of the German Rebirth might be represented for the people's culture, being altogether withdrawn from their influence and turned into a nursery-ground for the ruin of German art-taste. Here on the side of Art, as there on the side of Politics, is irrefutable proof how little the German spirit has to await from all this mass of Unions, radically German as may be their underlying principle.

* Cf. "*Judaism in Music*," in Vol. III.—TR.

Yet precisely in their case may we shew the plainest, how, with one right step from the region of power, the most fruitful relation might be established for the good of all. For this we will refer once more to the Turnvereins, merely coupling with them the no less numerous supported Schützenvereins [rifle-unions]. Sprung from a desire to exalt the Folk-spirit, their present agency—viewed from the ideal side—serves rather to narcotise that spirit, seeing that it is given a pretty toy to play with, and, especially when the fire of eloquence rules high at the yearly banquet of the founders' festival, is flattered into the belief that in this guise it really *is* of some account, that the welfare of the Fatherland hangs out-and-out on *it*; whereas, from the practical side, these unions serve the advocates of our standing troops for just as irrefragable a proof that it would be impossible to institute a reliable army upon the basis of Folk-arming.* Now, the example of Prussia has already shewn how the above contradictions may be almost completely adjusted: on the practical side, that of compassing a whole people's preparedness for war, the problem may be considered completely solved by the Prussian military organisation; nothing lacks but on the ideal side, as well, to give the weaponed Folk the ennobling sense of the true value of its arming and its readiness for action. It certainly is characteristic, that the last great victory of the Prussian host was ascribed by its commanders to other, to newer counsels, in the sense of returning to the principle of a standing army pure and simple, whereas all Europe took in eye the Landwehr's constitution, as the origin of that success and an object for most serious meditation. In that a very accurate knowledge of an army's needs, in the way of organisation, is assuredly at bottom of the Prussian monarch's estimate—in itself a perhaps not quite unbiased one—it would not be difficult

* It may be of interest to recall the fact that August Roeckel (part-editor of the *Süddeutsche Presse*, in which these articles appeared) had published a pamphlet in the troublous times of 1848-49, at Dresden, upon the subject of "*Volksbewaffnung*," i. e. a "general arming of the people."—TR.

to discover in what relation the whole system of Folk-unions should stand to organisations proceeding from the Governments in order to help forward a state of matters expedient from every point of view and, in our opinion, conducive to true and general salvation. For, that a host, to be at all times fit for service, needs a specially practised nucleus such as only the newer army-discipline can perfect, is just as undeniable as it would be preposterous to want to train a country's whole able-bodied population for absolutely professional soldiers — an idea whereat the French, as known, were lately so horror-struck. On the other hand the Government has only to present to German unionism, in every branch of public life therein involved, just what has been brought to meet Folk-arming in the constitution of the Prussian army—namely the effective earnestness of Organisation, and the example of the real professional soldier's valour and endurance—to extend to the dilettantism of a male population merely playing with firearms the strengthening hand of universal welfare.

Now, we ask what an unheard, what an incommensurable wealth of quickening organisations might not the German State include within it, if *all* the various leanings toward true culture and civilisation, as exhibited in German unionism, were drawn, in due analogy with the example of Prussian military organisation, into the only sphere of power to further them, into that sphere in which the Governments at present hold themselves close-hedged by their bureaucratism?

As we here proposed to deal with Politics merely insofar as, in our opinion, they bear upon the German art-spirit, we leave it to other inquiries to yield us more precise conclusions as to the political development of the German spirit, when brought into that leavening union with the spirit of the German princes which we desire. If we reserve to ourselves, however, a further discussion of the German spirit's artistic aptitudes, both social and individual, upon the lines of the root-idea last-broached—we beg, for all our later researches on that domain, to carry

over the result of this preliminary disquisition in something like the following sentence.

Universal as the mission of the German Folk is seen to have been, since its entrance into history, equally universal are the German spirit's aptitudes for Art ; the Rebirth of the German spirit, which happened in the second half of the preceding century, has shewn us an example of the activation of this universality in the weightiest domains of art : the example of that Rebirth's evaluation to the end of ennobling the public spiritual life of the German Folk, as also to the end of founding a new and truly German civilisation, extending its blessings e'en beyond our frontiers, must be set by those in whose hands repose the political fortunes of the German people : for this it needs nothing but that the German Princes should themselves be given that right example from their own midst.

V.

It is encouraging, to be able to draw our invoked example of a German Prince's understanding and furtherance of the German Art-spirit from the midst of the Bavarian land. Here was this high example already first, nay only, set ; and as we have not accustomed ourselves to building mere speculations in the air, we will confess at once that the idea of that invocation itself would probably never have come to us, had the lesson of just this already-given example and its effect not lain before us. Do we need to name King Ludwig I. of Bavaria, to afford a clue to our meaning ? Is it first necessary for us to designate the uncommon energy of initiative wherewith this prince, aflame with the true fire of German zeal, despite the prejudices of inertia and stupidity, proved far and wide to German princes through his own example, and through the example incited by him, that there was in very truth a German art, that it was a beautiful and a worthy thing to cherish it ? He proved that this art was