COUNT VON MOLTKE.

THE ancient Hindoo idea of the world represents it as resting upon three mighty elephants. In like manner the German Empire appears to rest upon the shoulders of three mighty men; and seeing that they are old as well as mighty, it is impossible not to wonder what will become of the edifice they have artificially reared and upheld when Nature shall demand her dues and remove them. Of this trio,—the Emperor, Bismarck, and Moltke,—we feel tempted, when we name the last, to echo the words of David, when speaking of his generals: "Was he not the most honorable of the three?" "The Great Taciturn," as he is familiarly called in Germany, is an attractive figure; and though, owing to his excessive modesty and his dislike of all noisy notoriety, Bismarck seems to overshadow him, it is doubtful whether Germany would have existed for Bismarck to rule, if Moltke had not welded her together by force of arms. In any case, the one is as great as the other, while Moltke's is by far the more refined and attractive personality.

It is no mere coincidence that the words of David have sprung to my pen. In reading the history of Prussia, and that of Germany since she has become Prussianized, the mind almost inevitably recurs to ancient Biblical history—there is so great an analogy. Here, too, we encounter as firm a faith in a God of battles as among the Israelites. Emperor, generals, ministers, subordinates—all echo the language of Israel in asserting loudly that the Lord fights only for them, is only concerned about them, that they are his chosen people. Their motto is, "Gott mit uns." Only if read in the spirit of the Old Testament can a foreigner comprehend the spirit that animates modern Germany. But while Israel was a theocracy, Germany is rather a stratocracy, if I may coin such a word. Neither in America or England—countries that are rapidly outgrowing the love of war for war's own sake, in which respectively an Emerson and a Herbert Spencer have preached that this sentiment is one allied to barbarous times—is it possible fully to conceive that, at our very doors, in this later nineteenth century, there exists a people strangely like the ancient Israelites—educated, yet combative, advanced in many directions of thought, yet left far behind in one of the most essentially civilizing. In Germany the army is the darling of the nation. The people will suffer any privations, make any sacrifices, for its sake, not knowing or not caring that this military spirit depresses their culture, prevents them from cultivating to their fullest extent the arts of peace, and keeps their manners rude and boorish. A military atmosphere has of late years pervaded all things in Germany. Military rigor is enforced already in the school-room, and the unquestioning spirit of military obedience bids fair to quench all individuality of character. All this must be borne in mind, if we would comprehend the deification by Germans of their military heroes. No wonder that above all others Count Moltke is worshiped, for to him in great part are due the efficient state of the army and its late splendid victories.

The career of this great military genius is probably unique in one respect. There is, perhaps, in all history no other man who rose so high and yet had attained his sixty-sixth year without attracting the notice of the world. It was not till after Sadowa that the name of this silent, retiring officer became familiar as a household word over the entire globe.

Count Moltke's life has not been an eventful one. It has been spent more in thought than in action. When asked to supply some details of his history, he said: "You are very much mistaken in coming to me, if you think my life will furnish any of those brilliant descriptions dear to poets and the general public. My life is so poor in episodes that it would be considered quite tedious, and I do not see how my biography should contain anything but dates." Moltke here underrates the natural curiosity felt by all the world in a man who has distinguished himself, but he is right when he speaks of his life as poor in episodes. Outwardly his career until he had nearly reached the appointed span of men's years is tranquil enough; and since to be silent is one of Moltke's marked peculiarities, he has not even furnished ana for the anecdote monger. "The man that holds his tongue in seven languages,"—so the people call him, referring to his taciturnity and his linguistic powers. Perhaps, like the Scotch, he holds that "it's canny to say nowt." But one thing is certain: when Moltke speaks, whether by word of mouth or of cannon, he speaks to some purpose; with force, clearness, and directness. His speeches in the German Reichstag are models of their kind.

This man, whose life forms a page of no small import in the history of Germany, was, like General Blücher, of Mecklenburg birth and origin. The Moltkes are an old aristocratic Mecklenburg family, who were closely allied with their neighbor, Denmark; indeed, they are more Danish than German. Moltke's father had married a wealthy Hamburg lady, and was living on his estates, having retired at her wish from the army; for from all time the Moltkes had been a military family, and there was never a question as to the sons' careers. On October 26, 1800, was born at Parchim, in the house of his uncle Helmuth, where his parents were then visiting, Carl Bernhardt Helmuth von Moltke. Born with the century, all the great historical dates of the century mark events in his own history. At his birth Napoleon's star was in the ascendant; in his childhood Bonaparte began to rule the whole Continent with his iron hand; and it was partly on this account that for some years the Moltke family led an unstable life, now residing in one spot, now in another. In 1803 they settled for awhile in the quaint old Hansa town of Lübeck. "My earliest recollections," says Moltke, "are connected with that old city and its gates and towers, and I recognized our house in the 'Schrangen' after many long years, in spite of its altered surroundings." It was here that he became early acquainted with Germany's hereditary foe. In 1806 the French stormed the town, into which Blücher had retreated. They sacked and plundered it, and treated the inhabitants with much barbarity. The Moltke house suffered much, and the incident made a lasting impression upon the boy. From this moment misfortunes thickened about the family. Their country house was burnt down just as the harvest had been gathered in. The Hamburg grandfather, from whom they had expectations, died, leaving nominally a large fortune, but one so heavily weighted with legacies that when the whole was realized, in those troublous times, owing to the heavy and unforeseen losses entailed by the war, it proved that the Moltkes were seriously out of pocket, and it became needful to retrench. In 1811 Helmuth and his elder brother, Fritz, were placed for two years under the care of an able and kindly tutor, Pastor Knickbein, who held a living at Hohenfelde, near Horst. These two quiet years in the country are counted by Moltke among the happiest of his life. He was a favorite with the pastor, who early recognized his rare genius and believed in him long before all others. "My dear master and friend, to whom I owe so much,"—so Moltke spoke of him in after life. The favorite pastime of the two brothers was playing at war, and a characteristic anecdote has happily been preserved of this time. The two brothers loved to gather together the peasant boys and place themselves at their head as commanders of rival armies. On one occasion, when Helmuth was heading the weaker section, his troops were put to flight and some taken prisoners. His brother called on him to surrender. He would not. "All is not lost," he said; and, quickly rallying his men, he marched them straight to a pond in the pastor's garden, and bade them hurry on to a little island, accessible only by a draw-bridge made of a single plank. The embryo field-marshal then turned on the enemy with a few of his strongest men and kept him at bay, while the rest of his forces made their way into this island fortress. When all had entered, Moltke himself being the last, the draw-bridge was raised and the victory complete. This island in the pond had been made by Moltke with great labor out of materials collected from all directions; he had borne in view its possible utility in their mimic warfare. It so happened that his father and the pastor beheld this scene, which delighted the Freiherr and confirmed him in his belief that Helmuth would make an able soldier yet, the tutor having asserted that he was more of a bookworm, and having urged the father to permit his son to embrace a studious career. This island, christened after his favorite pupil, was planted and cared for by Pastor Knickbein; and though he is long gathered to his fathers, it exists to this day in the grounds of the village parson, still cherished, visited by strangers and pointed out with pride by the villagers.

The years that followed those at Hohenfelde were not happy ones for Moltke, and it is probable that he then first contracted that habit of excessive taciturnity that has earned for him his nickname. The family affairs had gone from bad to worse. Economy was imperative. Freiherr von Moltke moved his two sons to Copenhagen, that they might attend the school for cadets. As there was no vacancy for them at first in the school-house, they were boarded with a General Lorenz, an easy-going bachelor, who took little heed of them, but left them to the tender mercies of his virago of a housekeeper, from whose violent temper the two boys suffered much. Helmuth, in especial, had a sensitive nature, and the change from the love and care at Hohenfelde to the lovelessness and loneliness here told on him. Nor did matters mend greatly when ultimately they were removed to the academy, where they received board, lodging, and an allowance of fifty thalers

each. At General Lorenz's it had been an existence of perpetual bickering; here it was the soulless monotony of barrack life. To this day Moltke cannot speak without a shudder of those joyless years. "Our boyhood in a foreign city, without relations or friends, was truly miserable. The discipline was strict, even severe; and now, when my judgment of it is quite impartial, I must say that it was too strict, too severe. The only good this treatment did us was that we were early obliged to accustom ourselves to privations of every kind." It must be borne in mind, too, that Danish was an unfamiliar language, and that in this speech all their studies were conducted. This obstacle, however, weighed little with Helmuth; after six years, a much shorter time than the usual curriculum, he passed first class in his officer's examination. He had particularly distinguished himself in all the literary and scientific branches of military study. This was in 1818. He was now ripe for his lieutenancy; but before getting this he had, according to a rule of the school, to fill for one year the post of court page, this being deemed a mode of acknowledgment for the free education accorded by the state. A school-fellow thus describes Moltke at this period: "He was a slender young fellow, with fair hair and good-humored blue eyes, with a quiet courtesy of manner, an open and genial countenance, clouded at times by an expression of deep melancholy. There was no difficulty, however great, which his indomitable industry and firm will did not overcome. His comrades had a great respect for him; but though he knew this, he never abused it in the smallest degree. In social intercourse he could be talkative and communicative; on duty or at work he was sternly reserved. An untiring devotion to his duty and an almost unexampled conscientiousness distinguished him."

In 1819 Helmuth von Moltke was appointed lieutenant in a Danish regiment stationed at Rendsburg. His father, who had reëntered the service, owing to his losses, had already attained in Denmark the rank of lieutenant-general. But he had a large family and small pay, and could not assist his son, who was forced to live upon the scanty pittance of a Danish officer. Nor were his prospects more brilliant than his pay. When by the peace of 1815 the powers obliged Denmark to cede Norway to Sweden, Denmark saw herself obliged to reduce her army; but as she retained her large staff of officers, chances of promotion were slender for the younger ones. Moltke, who felt in him the strivings of genius, longed for a wider sphere, a larger army. Very naturally his thoughts turned to Prussia, which had so distinguished herself in the War of Liberation; and, undaunted by the knowledge that if he entered that army his four years of service in Denmark would count as nothing, that he would have to begin afresh and undergo the Prussian examinations, to the regret of his commanding officer he tendered his resignation and left the Danish army. From this time forward Moltke was to live almost entirely alone. At Berlin, whither he turned his steps, armed with high testimonials, he passed the needful entrance examination for the army, and passed it so brilliantly that he was at once gazetted as second lieutenant in the Eighth infantry regiment, then stationed at Frankfort-on-the-Oder. The regiment is one that boasts noble traditions, yet to-day its officers are prouder of nothing than that the great Moltke once served in its ranks. At that time, however, he was unknown. Still, his superiors soon noticed him, because of his serious application to his work and the rare ability he displayed in its execution. After a year with his regiment, Moltke returned to Berlin and remained there till 1826, studying closely at the great military academy. He studied not only the art of war, but its history, also mathematics, physics, geography, everything that bore, however indirectly, upon the one theme that was the passion of his life. Already, then, his peculiarly scientific method of regarding and conducting warfare evinced itself: a method so far removed from — so much more intellectual, if we may so call it, than — the mere butchery of earlier times. Hard work, privations of all kinds, marked those years at Berlin. Moltke did not lead the gay, careless lieutenant existence. He was poor, and he was eager for knowledge. His scanty pay hardly sufficed for his livelihood, much less to defray the cost of lessons. Still he contrived, by means of pinching and self-denial, to save enough to enable him to take private lessons in foreign languages — an essential in his eyes to a soldier's career, and one he has encouraged since he has had the control of the German army.

Speaking of this period, Moltke says:

> "The first part of my career was destitute of the joys of life. I entered the Kriegs-Schule at Berlin at a time when my parents had lost almost the whole of their property, owing to war and a series of misfortunes. Not one penny could they allow me, and it is scarcely possible to imagine how I had to economize. And yet, in spite of this, I contrived to save enough to get instruction in foreign languages. But truly, the lot of a poor lieutenant is not an enviable one."

In 1827 Moltke rejoined his regiment at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, and how highly his

superiors thought of him may be gathered from the fact that he was appointed to the direction of the military school there, a school that had fallen into disorderly ways. He entered upon his post with such courage and energy that in a year the school was well conducted and well regulated. Moltke's conduct of this by no means easy task earned him high commendation. No longer needed there, he was attached to the topographical department of the General Staff, then engaged on a survey of Silesia. General von Müffling was at the head of this department, and to this kindly and able man Moltke loves to acknowledge his obligations. Under him, Moltke studied practical and theoretical tactics, a branch of knowledge in which it is demanded that all members of the German General Staff should be proficient.

"The examinations in tactical exercises," says Moltke, "used to excite us younger officers greatly. We knew that not only a correct, but a terse and precise solution was required from us. It was demanded that we should imitate the concise and logical style of our chief."

It was upon the language of this chief that Moltke modeled his own pithy, laconic style, which rightly commands admiration. Never a word too little, never a word too much: what could be more desirable for military dispatches and commands? That Moltke, while always being direct and simple, can still expand, be copious and discursive in private intercourse,—to that his letters to his friends bear testimony.

For three years Moltke served on the staff, his powers of combination and organization developing under the scientific and exact nature of his studies. In 1833, he was formally enrolled in it, a distinction that is only accorded to men that are decidedly above the average. He also received his captaincy. It was then that Moltke first paid attention to the yearnings that had long agitated him to enlarge his knowledge of the world. His youth and early manhood had been spent in hard struggles and severe application; holidays had been unknown. He now longed for one, but he wished that it should also combine profit with pleasure; and hence, while his desires turned toward classic Greece and romantic Italy, they also turned to Turkey, then as now the center of all European complications, the crux of all diplomatists. He wanted to see with his own eyes the country whence any day a war involving Europe might arise. In 1835 Moltke therefore applied for a so-called royal leave of absence which would permit him to be away some months. He little dreamed it would be years before he again set foot upon his native soil.

It was to Turkey that Moltke first wended his way. The journey thither was at that time one of no inconsiderable difficulty, difficulties graphically described by Moltke in his letters home. Indeed, with no period of Moltke's life is the world so fully acquainted as with that of his Turkish sojourn. He addressed long letters about it to his sister, the only member of his family with whom he remained in constant intercourse. This sister, who had married an English widower, Mr. John Burt, was settled with her husband in Holstein. To her were written at every spare moment detailed accounts of his experiences, the only mode of expansion and expression the silent man found or needed in a strange land. These letters have since been published, and ought to be translated into English. They are delightful reading, for their graphic power, their vivid coloring, the wide and general knowledge and sympathy they display, as well as for the side-lights they throw upon their author. Moltke's visit to Turkey was in the reign of Mahmoud the Second, the Sultan who seriously desired to restore the Sick Man to health, and who broke his heart in the vain endeavor. When he learnt of Moltke's presence, he requested the Prussian Government to lend him this officer for awhile, that he might have his aid in reconstructing his army on the Prussian model. Moltke's proposed holiday resolved itself into very hard work, for he could not learn Oriental apathy and lethargy. He drew up a scheme of military reform; he planned bridges, fortifications, and water-works; he made topographical surveys of the country; on horseback, on foot, by cart, boat, raft, and carriage, he explored the whole empire, which he pronounced lovely, but neglected beyond all conception. The more he grew acquainted with Turkish affairs, the less hopeful he was of their reformation. "The kingdom is rotten," he exclaimed, and he regarded this rottenness as even more likely to cause Europe trouble than the conquest of the country by a foreign power. Turkey, he said, had fallen under a ban, and this ban is the Koran, which teaches so warped a doctrine that its laws and decrees must of necessity oppose all social progress. Moltke did all that a single man could do to carry out the high trust the Sultan had reposed in him; but what could one man do against Eastern indolence, indifference, and dishonesty? He was about to demand his leave, when there broke out the conflict between Turkey and Mehemet Ali, the Egyptian Viceroy. The Sultan desired Moltke to join the troops that were placed

on the frontier of Asia Minor under Hafiz Pasha, that this general might profit by his advice. The story of this campaign, as told by Moltke with some caustic humor and much descriptive force, is highly interesting. It is perhaps almost needless to say that the Turkish commander would not listen to Moltke's counsels, and consequently met with a disastrous defeat, that would have been yet more disgraceful and calamitous but for Moltke's coolness and judicious conduct of the retreat. And yet, though he could not bring himself to obey him, Hafiz Pasha really felt high esteem for Moltke's knowledge and energy. Once, when reviewing his artillery that had anything but distinguished itself, he said to them, "There was a time when our artillery was considered the finest in the world, and now we can scarcely execute the simplest manœuvre. We have daily to thank the Padishah for having provided us with an officer who has our interests more at heart than even we ourselves, and who works whilst we are sleeping."

After this defeat Moltke returned to Constantinople to explain the disaster to the Sultan, and once more to request that he might return home. He crossed from Asia in an Austrian steamer. Writing to his sister, he said: "With our foot once on the Austrian steamer, we exchanged Asiatic barbarism for European civilization. The first thing we asked for at Samsoun, on the Black Sea, was potatoes, which we had not tasted for eighteen months, and then for some champagne, wherewith to drink our king's health, here on the waters of the Black Sea. In our tattered Turkish dress, and with haggard faces and long beards and our Turkish servants, they scarcely allowed us to go into the cabin until we had spoken to the captain in French. You can't think how comfortable everything seemed there, with chairs and tables and a looking-glass, books, knives and forks,—all luxuries of which we had almost forgotten the use."

Moltke was chafing at the Turkish inaction and restlessness; he was proficient in Turkish; he knew the country far better than the Turks themselves; there was nothing to retain him longer in the East. The Sultan, too, under whom he had served, was dead, for Mahmoud had expired six weeks before Moltke again entered the Golden Horn. He had died a victim to the failure of his life's aim. His young and incompetent successor readily granted the demission Moltke craved, and in September, 1839, he once more turned his face homeward.

Without much delay Moltke resumed his post on the General Staff, his energies quickened, his intellect sharpened by his travel. The four years in the East had been of great value to his development: they had taught him independence of action, quickness of perception, promptness and precision in forming a correct estimate of the strategic advantages of a position. He has ever delighted to recall his Turkish experiences, and to say that he was the first European who penetrated to the Mesopotamian desert, and that his immediate predecessor in observing the Euphrates, where it forces its way through the Kurdish mountains, had been Xenophon. In this statement, however, Moltke is mistaken, for it would appear that General Chesney visited both the Kurdish gorges and the Mesopotamian desert some few years before him. It seems strange that Moltke should not have known this, or should not have seen General Chesney's work, which contains a map of the route of Xenophon for comparison with his own. After Moltke's return he published anonymously an account of the Turkish campaign, also maps of Constantinople, the Bosphorus, and Asia Minor.

In 1841 Moltke perceived that the exertions and privations he had undergone had given a shock to his nervous system. He once more applied for leave of absence, and visited Heligoland and his sister in Holstein. The German writer Adolf Stahr, who met Moltke at the watering-place there, describes him at the time: "In figure he was tall and spare, his face gaunt and weather-beaten, with clear-cut features, the taciturn earnestness of his thin-lipped, compressed mouth in nowise corresponding with the vivacity and occasional sly humor which we meet with in the clear and fluent pages of his book. At that time he was only forty years old, though, from his appearance, one would have taken him for close upon fifty. What was specially noticeable about him was the simplicity and naturalness of his whole person, his reserved demeanor appearing only to spring from a mind of innate reticence." Indeed, nothing is more remarkable about Moltke than that he has at all times been free from that supercilious, arrogant manner that has made the Prussian officer an object of dislike and a byword to all Europe.

Stahr was not the only person whom Moltke charmed at this time. His letters to his sister had been eagerly read by the whole household, and none had read them with more eagerness than Frau von Burt's stepdaughter, who had been a mere child when Moltke went away. She was prepared to like their writer; how well she liked him and he her may be gathered from the fact that they soon became engaged, and were married in

1842, shortly after Moltke had been gazetted major. As the Turkish voyage was the romantic episode in Moltke's life, so his marriage was the poetic. It was a union of rare happiness, concord, and sympathy, despite disparity of years and nationality, for Frau von Moltke, it must be remembered, was an Englishwoman. After his marriage Moltke continued to labor ardently, but unobtrusively, at his post until, in 1845, he was appointed adjutant to Prince Henry of Prussia, then living in Rome. The position being a mere sinecure, Moltke had much time on his hands; but, since to be idle was impossible to him, he employed his spare hours in making the peaceful conquest of a desert hitherto unexplored from a scientific point of view. Accompanied by his wife, an intrepid horsewoman, Moltke daily rode out at early dawn to the Roman Campagna, armed with theodolites and other instruments of exact measurement, and thus drew up the first map of the Roman environs that had been based on actual survey and made with instruments of mensuration. He had intended to accompany the map with an itinerary, of which five historical sketches remain in a fragmentary form. What there is of them is interesting, displaying Moltke's accurate classical knowledge, his acquaintance with geology and physics, his power of picturesque and graphic expression. His descriptions are as sharply defined, as definite, as the choicest etchings; with a few touches he delineates the landscape. Even when technical, he is never dry. Among other matters, he wrote urging the repopulation of the Campagna by agricultural laborers. That his work remained a fragment was owing to the circumstance that Prince Henry died in the summer of 1846. Moltke, however, remained in Rome just long enough to hear the exultant cries of "Evviva Pio Nono!" that greeted the newly elected Pope, in whose liberal promises the Romans had yet faith. Then he hastened to Berlin to acquaint the King with his uncle's death. He was appointed to return to Rome and superintend the removal of the body to Prussia. On his return, he notes: "I saw how rapidly the enthusiasm had subsided as soon as the new Pope had convinced himself that he would have to halt upon the liberal path which he had chosen." The corpse was taken by sea to Hamburg. Moltke landed at Gibraltar and pursued his journey by land, taking this opportunity of gaining a general idea of Spain. His letters thence testify to his power of turning every moment of his life to account, and of rapidly mastering the characteristics of a country and its inhabitants.

Once more in Prussia, Moltke was appointed to the staff of the Eighth army corps, then at Coblentz; and in 1848 he became chief of the staff of the Fourth army corps, then at Magdeburg, which post he held seven years. Advancing by degrees, he became lieutenant-colonel in 1850, and full colonel in 1851. In 1855 his staff duties were interrupted for a time by his appointment as equerry to the Crown Prince, whom he accompanied in this capacity in journeys to England, France, and Russia. He thus made acquaintance with the principal European capitals and their chief dignitaries. In a series of clever, picturesque letters written to his wife, he sketches his surroundings; and mingled with much caustic humor there is much shrewd wisdom, much accurate observation. In 1856 he went with the Prince to Russia to be present at the coronation of Czar Alexander. His letters from Russia, of which an English translation is extant, reveal his ideas of the national character of the Russians. They show, too, as usual, his talent of turning all opportunities to account. He made some valuable military notes, studied the Russian fortifications, the Russian army, and gauged their efficiency. The outcome of his remarks is that Russia has a great future before her, but that this future cannot be realized until her officials become more honest. "Honesty among Russian officials," he writes, "can only be brought about by many years of iron severity." A few weeks after his return, Moltke went with the Crown Prince to Scotland, and in 1858 he again accompanied him, to be present at his marriage with the Princess Royal of England; 1861 was to see him again in London, at the funeral of Prince Albert. His English letters have unfortunately not been made accessible; hence we do not know what Moltke thought of the native land of his wife, nor how he was impressed with the atmosphere and institutions of a free country. In the French letters written in 1856, when the Empire was at the pinnacle of its glory, Moltke once more evinces acute penetration; he was not wholly blinded by the glitter and glamour of the gay Tuileries Court. For the Emperor he conceived a genuine respect, which was not abated even after the Sedan disaster, which Moltke lays to the charge of the French people rather than to that of their monarch. While entertaining him, Napoleon little knew or guessed that in the person of this taciturn, unobtrusive officer he was welcoming the man who at no distant date should pull his gay throne down into the dust.

Returned to Berlin, Moltke once more resumed his staff duties, and continued to lead

his life of modest obscurity. It was in the following year that an important change in Prussian affairs called him to the front. The King's at-last-acknowledged dementia made it needful that his brother should become Regent. This change meant that less attention would be paid to art and letters, and more to the army, for Prince William was then and ever nothing more than a soldier. The military force was at once to be strengthened and enlarged, and at General von Manteuffel's suggestion Moltke was appointed chief of the general staff. Manteuffel had long observed the diligent, intelligent, quiet officer, and felt assured that Moltke was fitted for this high post.

He was not to find himself mistaken. Moltke entered into his new duties with heart and soul, and among other matters he drew up a plan of a general system of defense for the German coast. As the Germanic Diet was then still determining the affairs of the various states, the plan had to be submitted to its approval. After three years' hesitation and foolish objections the Diet rejected it, though Moltke and other efficient military men had shown how urgently it was required. This done, Moltke and his master, recognizing that nothing was to be looked for from Austrian and Hanoverian indifference and the mutual jealousies of all the little states, resolved to concentrate their efforts and their attention upon themselves, and to reorganize, strengthen, and improve that which was under their own control, the Prussian army. These efforts were supported by Von Roon, the Minister of War; and while he and Moltke were thus quietly, unobtrusively, but surely laying the foundation of Germany's military power that should one day unite her by force of arms, another man, who had also learned to despise the sluggish action of the Diet, was scheming how, diplomatically, to bring about the same results. This man was Bismarck, who, long Prussian representative at the Diet, was at this moment living quietly as Ambassador at St. Petersburg. No wonder these three men, when they became acquainted, became sworn friends and allies. Bismarck, recalled by King William on his accession to the throne and appointed Prime Minister, in his favorite autocratic manner soon made an end of the opposition the military reorganization scheme had met with in the Prussian Parliament. When Parliament refused to vote the supplies for this purpose, Bismarck dissolved the Parliament and governed without it; and as he was upheld by his sovereign, and as parliamentary institutions in Germany are feeble, he of course carried the day. Moltke was, therefore, able to work on unhindered. The minor points concerning the army he left largely to the King, who loved to occupy himself with the petty details of military millinery. Moltke concentrated his own energies upon the more intelligent section and upon the staff, which he gradually worked to that pitch of excellence that has made it the wonder and the admiration of Europe. As yet, however, no one, not even the King or Bismarck, knew that Moltke was not only a great organizer, but the greatest of strategists. They were soon to know it, however. Scarcely was the reorganization of the army completed, when storms loomed over Prussia, successively from the north, south, and west. The first to break out was that which came from Denmark in 1864. The feud between the Diet and Denmark concerning the Schleswig-Holstein Duchies, long continued, now broke into open rupture; and, to the amazement of Europe, Austria and Prussia for a time suspended their bickerings and joined issue against the common foe. Moltke went with the Prussian army as chief of the staff, and now for the first time displayed his marvelous coolness and foresight. He was convinced from the outset that the most rapid and effective method to coerce the Danish Government was to take possession of Fünen and Alsen, the two islands lying opposite North Schleswig. The Austrians were not inclined to second him; but Moltke felt convinced of the justice and efficacy of his plan, and he forthwith ordered the Prussians to put it into execution. Alsen was secured, and Fünen, too, would have been seized in a like way, had not the Danes, overwhelmed by this *coup de main*, sued for the armistice that proved the first step to the subsequent peace. The plan upon which this campaign had been formed was like in essentials to that on which Moltke had beaten his brother in the pastor's garden at Hohenfelde,—a curious coincidence enough, as also that Moltke's first strategical honors had been won in a campaign against the country in which he had learned his first military lessons. It was a plan as wonderfully conceived as it was calmly, effectually executed. To be slow, cautious, careful in planning, bold, daring, even seemingly reckless in execution, is Moltke's method of action, true to his self-chosen motto, "Erst wägen, dann wagen" (First weigh, then venture). From this time forward the army looked with confidence to the chief of the staff. The country, however, still did not know him; but the time of his universal recognition was approaching. Scarcely was the war ended when Austrian and Prussian bickerings were resumed, the

victors adding squabbles over the war spoils to their other points of contention. In 1866 there broke out that war between Prussia and Austria that proved of such vast import to both countries, giving to the former the ascendancy in German affairs, and forcing the latter to abandon the proud position she had held for centuries. The events of this seven weeks' war are too fresh in all memories to need recapitulation here. It was the crowning success of Sadowa (or Königgrätz, as the Germans prefer to call it) that brought to the light of day all Moltke's genius; to him it was due that the war was so short and so entirely successful for Prussia. The difficulties with which he had to cope were enormous: ignorance of the enemy's exact whereabouts and strength; ignorance as to the exact position of his own troops, that had been divided into three armies. Calculating for all possibilities, all emergencies, Moltke saw at a glance how his troops should be distributed, how concentrated. His clear intellect not only apprehended everything needful, but he had also the power of making others see with his eyes and believe in the probability of his conjectures, the justice of his conclusions. As chief of the staff, Moltke never led the troops to battle; he had to arrange how and where these troops should march; he is the brain of the machine of which the commanders are the arms. His plans are formed, his orders issued often, far from the scene of action. Thus Sadowa partook of the character of an impromptu. At the last moment there came to head-quarters dispatches that altered the whole state of the case. Moltke was not flurried; he did not hesitate; he had long been ready with schemes to meet all emergencies. Late on the night of July the second, in his tent, before a table strewn with maps, on which were placed colored pins indicating the different armies, Moltke played as on a chess-board the game of war before his King, explaining why he desired to issue certain orders. The King gave the requisite sanction, and Moltke then sent to the leaders of the armies his pregnant directions,—directions that display his peculiar qualities, and are half the secret of the Prussian successes. For Moltke issues no hard-and-fast orders, such as lead to disasters like that of the charge of the Light Brigade. He outlines his scheme; he holds it the secret of good strategy that the will of one man should direct the whole, that there should be no clashing views of action; but to the discretion of those in command he leaves the nature of the execution, rightly comprehending that something must be left to the man who is in action, to the changeful exigencies of the moment. The Prussian generals are therefore no mere wire-drawn puppets, as many imagine. Each must think and act for himself, and is responsible for his actions. When all the orders were issued, long past midnight, Moltke retired quietly to rest. At five he was up again, superintending everything with an iron calmness. He knew that it was a hazardous game that was about to be played, but he felt so certain that he had calculated all chances and mischances that no doubts tormented him. The whole day was spent by him on horseback, watching at different points the movements of the army. At the most critical hour he was calmly smoking a cigar. When the news of victory reached him, he was neither elated nor astonished, but at once issued dispatches directing how it should best be followed up. To strike before he could be struck was Moltke's method, and that he always knew how and when to act is the secret of his genius. Concerning this war, he tells us in his own modest words: "Two points only were decisive in the attainment of our object, together with God's help and the bravery of our men. These were the primary distribution of our forces upon the different theaters of war, and their concentration upon the field of battle. Austria, fully prepared as she was, was manifestly our most formidable opponent. If she were crushed, the bond which held Prussia's other enemies together would be burst asunder; for, though banded together by their enmity to us, they were without any natural unity between themselves. The only course to success was a bold one—namely, to move our whole nine corps simultaneously toward the center of the Austrian monarchy." "I have but done my duty," was his reply to the praises and congratulations that came to him from all sides. It was a real annoyance to him, on his return to Berlin, to find that his name was in every mouth, his praises sung in all quarters. In the course of a speech relative to the campaign, he took the opportunity of saying publicly: "I have a hatred of all fulsome praise; it quite unsettles me for the whole day. Ay, the Bohemian campaign is a great and deathless page in the world's history,—an event, the importance of which it is impossible now to fathom. In this campaign I but did my duty; my comrades did theirs too. God's omnipotence led on our banner to victory. He alone lent strength to our army, vigilance to our generals, success to my plans. And thus, when I listen to all the exaggerated flattery which the public see fit to bestow upon me, I can only think how it would have been if this victory, this triumph, had *not* been ours. Would not

this self-same praise have changed to indiscriminate censure, to senseless blame?"

Pursuing the subject, he said of Benedek, the Austrian general: "Alas! a vanquished commander! Oh, if outsiders had but the faintest notion what that may mean! The Austrian head-quarters on the night of Königgrätz—I cannot bear even to think of it! A general, too, so deserving, so brave, and so cautious."

Still Moltke, though he disclaimed all excessive laudation, was not indifferent to his successes. Soon after his return from the seat of war, he said: "How beautiful it is that God should have thus lit up the evening of a man's life as he has done that of our sovereign and many of his generals! I, too, am now sixty-six years old, and for my duties in this state of life I have had such splendid reward as can fall to the lot of few. We have conducted a war of immeasurable importance to Prussia, to Germany, to the world. God's mercy has crowned our honest endeavors with the glories of victory; and we elders in this campaign, in spite of the rough battles of our earlier years, may yet boast ourselves to be seemingly still the darlings of fortune." In public acknowledgment of his services, the Prussian Landtag voted him a gratuity of thirty thousand pounds, and with this he purchased an estate in Silesia that has become his Tusculum.

Some outwardly quiet years followed, though those that were behind the scenes knew full well that the relations between France and Prussia were strained and that an ultimate outbreak was inevitable. Moltke, therefore, worked quietly at a plan for a French campaign, making himself acquainted with all the needful minutiæ and being careful to see that the army was kept in its high state of efficiency. He knew that king and country put supreme trust in his strategy, and that he should be looked to when the political horizon had once more darkened with the clouds of war. Before this storm broke, there fell upon Moltke the great sorrow of his life. His dearly loved wife, his constant companion, his friend, his helpmate, was taken from him on Christmas Eve, 1868, leaving him childless and alone. It was fortunate for him that the political cloud grew darker and darker, that he was forced to work and could not wholly abandon himself to his grief. In order that he might not be quite alone, the King of Prussia by a graceful and thoughtful action appointed as Moltke's adjutant his only and dearly loved nephew, the son of Frau von Burt, his sister. Thus Moltke secured a constant companion; and when, soon after, his sister was widowed and came to keep house for him, he once more had a home circle—a matter of inestimable value to one of the most retiring and domestic of men.

The storm from the West finally broke quite suddenly upon Europe, not prepared for the foolhardiness of the French, in rushing into war before they were ready. Moltke, however, had long been ready. The news was brought to him at Kreisau late one night; he had already gone to bed. "Very well," he said to the messenger; "the third portfolio on the left," and went to sleep again till morning. From that hour till the end of the campaign he was incessantly active. Once asked at Versailles whether, at his advanced age, he did not feel the effects of all the privations and hardships, he quietly answered, "I should if I were old." War is his element. We have it on Bismarck's authority that the mere prospect of war makes Moltke look ten years younger, while the reality takes from him twenty years of life.

The Franco-German war proved the crowning evidence of Moltke's marvelous gifts of combination and foresight. An event like that of Sedan, when a whole army was made to surrender to the enemy, has no parallel in the history of the world. The nearest analogy is the brilliant successes of General Grant at Fort Donelson and Vicksburg; but, notwithstanding that there is considerable likeness, Sedan was the more remarkable operation. Moltke's powers were now revealed to all Europe, and all Europe united to laud them. But that his art cannot be taught—that a tactician, like a poet, "*nascitur non fit*"—is Moltke's firm persuasion. Strategy, as he conceives, is not so much a science that can be learned as an inborn genius which enables its possessor to form plans bearing upon a certain situation, which, though it may alter hourly, may not interfere with those plans, nor with the calmness and decision which must regulate their execution. In all Moltke's campaigns it would almost appear as if he must have foreseen the plans of the enemy, so surely did he counteract them.

On his return from France, all Germany vied in showering honors upon him. The Emperor created him Count and General Field-Marshal; the chief cities bestowed on him their honorary citizenship; his statues and busts were multiplied. But as little as he had cared before for praise, so little did he care for it now, and he shrank as far as possible from all public and private demonstrations.

The following little anecdote is highly characteristic of Moltke's simple tastes as well as of his decision. The regiment in which he had served on entering the Prus-

sian service had just erected new barracks at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, and were going to open the building with some ceremony. In honor of the event, they were anxious that their oldest surviving as well as most distinguished officer should grace the occasion with his presence. Moltke assented to their wishes, but stipulated that he should be in no wise distinguished above the other officers, and very specially begged that there might be no public reception at the railway station. The officers agreed; but when the moment came, they could not bear the thought that the general should not at least have some extra conveniences. Frankfort-on-the-Oder boasts few carriages. A rich burgher, however, is possessed of one, and on him a deputation of officers waited, begging the loan, which was readily accorded. At the appointed hour, therefore, an officer appeared at the railway station with this carriage, of which he asked Moltke to avail himself. To his dismay, and to the astonishment of the bystanders, Moltke simply thanked him, but declined, and, beckoning to a modest cab that stood close by, he entered it together with his nephew and drove off.

Moltke's life is passed in busy regularity; for, notwithstanding his advanced age, he does not abate his labors in the least. His time is divided between Berlin and his home at Kreisau. At Berlin he occupies a wing of the General Staff building, a fine roomy dwelling that looks out upon the monument commemorating the three wars whose extraordinary successes were mainly due to Moltke. His time is marked out with military exactitude, never broken except when he attends the sittings of the Reichstag, which is only on occasion of a military debate. Moltke is a stanch conservative, but not an ardent politician. That department of the German Empire he leaves with absolute confidence in the hands of his colleague, Bismarck.

Winter and summer, Moltke enters his study at the stroke of seven A. M. Here he drinks his morning coffee, smokes a cigar, and writes until the stroke of nine, when his business letters are brought to him, which he reads and dispatches. He then exchanges his dressing-gown for his uniform, and is ready at eleven to receive his adjutants, to hear their reports, and issue his orders. While at work he partakes of a simple lunch, and when his adjutants are gone resumes his writing until the stroke of two, when the work is pushed aside. He then receives the higher officers of the staff and listens to their reports. This ended, which may be longer or shorter according to circumstances, Moltke goes for a walk. It is no infrequent thing to encounter him in the busy streets of Berlin, peeping into the shop windows which appear to have an attraction for him. At four he takes a frugal dinner in company with his family, and the hour of dinner is for them the happiest of the day. Then the taciturn man becomes loquacious, and delights his hearers with his charming, cheerful talk. From five to seven he again devotes himself to writing; from seven to eight the newspapers are perused. At eight he once more rejoins his family at the tea-table, after which follows a game of whist, in which the great strategist is naturally a proficient. The game over, the evening is generally ended with music, to which Moltke is devoted. At eleven he retires to rest.

At Kreisau he allows himself a little more leisure. He is attached to his little farm, and spends the early morning hours superintending his laborers. The garden, too, receives the benefit of his personal attention; and, above all, his nursery of young trees, which he musters as strictly, tends as carefully, as though they were a regiment of recruits. With his own hand he prunes weakly or dead branches. In matters great or small the Field-Marshal hates all that is incompetent, unfitted to its task and purpose. As long as his wife lived, she generally accompanied him on these expeditions, and it is her memory that attracts him to Kreisau. For it is on an eminence in his park that Moltke has erected, after his own designs, a modest chapel, in which reposes the body of her he loved above all things in the world. The exterior is red brick bound with sandstone; the interior is lined with black and white marble. In front of the altar stands the simple yellow coffin, at all times covered with wreaths; while in the apse is a fine sculptured figure of the Saviour, his hands spread out in benediction. Above Him are inscribed the words of Saint Paul: "Love is the fulfillment of the law." The key of this chapel Moltke always carries about him. When at Kreisau, his first and last walk in the day is up the gentle eminence to commune with his own heart and his dead wife. Often and often, when business retains him too long away from his country home, he will pay it a rapid visit, merely going to the chapel, and returning after a few hours' stay.

Outwardly stern though he seems, Moltke has a warm and tender heart. Of this, alone, his undying affection for his wife is a proof, while innumerable stories of unobtrusive, thoughtful acts of kindness to friends and perfect strangers still further testify to his amiable disposition. Strange that a man with so gentle a spirit, so loving a nature, should be utterly devoted to a profession so cruel and ferocious, regarding it not merely as a

sad temporary necessity until mankind shall have further advanced out of the barbarous state, but as a divine and divinely appointed institution. "War," he wrote to the Swiss jurist Bluntschli, who had pleaded in favor of gentler measures, "war is an element in the God-ordained order of the world;" and he added that, though he could sympathize with efforts to alleviate its horrors, he regarded it as an unthinkable proposition even to contemplate its possible suppression. Moltke thus gave his adhesion to the sentiment expressed by another gentle spirit, Wordsworth, "Carnage is God's daughter."

"Caute et candide" is the ancient motto of the Moltke family, and one to which their youngest descendant has remained faithful. It is a fine life to look back upon,—that of this veteran soldier who has never swerved from the service to which he has devoted his life and energies with a self-sacrifice and fidelity as rare as it is admirable. The outer aspect of the man is true to his character. His spare, tall, upright figure, which the burden of fourscore years has not bent, seems born to command. His features convey the impression of being cast in bronze; and since his face is beardless, every line and wrinkle is distinctly to be seen. The iron firmness of his will is written in deep lines upon his face. Of his heart the evidence can only be found in his eyes, that look out upon the world with an expression of deepest melancholy. It is a singularly immovable face; even when he speaks, it does not alter, brighten, or darken. His mode of speaking, too, is slightly colorless and monotonous; but when he does break his habitual silence, all ears wait upon his words, for these Moltke never wastes.

Moltke is the ideal impersonation of a German officer, in his rectitude, his unquestioning devotion to his sovereign, his narrow-visioned patriotism, his want of imagination, his self-negation, his stern, unbending, unelastic devotion to his profession and the duties it entails; a man who, taken as a whole, is rather the representative of an elder day, when life was more circumscribed, the intercourse of humanity more inimical, before that advance had been made toward a fulfillment of the angelic greeting, "Peace on earth, good will to men," toward which we fondly hope mankind is tending. But, judged from the elder platform, he is a splendid figure. Of him, when Nature shall claim her dues, Germany may well say, in the words of Hamlet,

> "He was a man, take him for all in all,
> I shall not look upon his like again."

THE VOYAGER.

Down stormy seas our straining bark
By whistling gales is onward blown;
The tackle shrills, the timbers groan,
The rack is wild and dark.

No land we sight, no bark we see,
The ice makes in the forward shrouds.
The blast that curls the scudding clouds
Is cold as cold can be.

Sometimes the moon is red as blood;
Sometimes the air is white with snow;
Yet care we not, but on we go
Across the hissing flood.

The swift flaws darken on the lee,
The salt sea-spray is flung behind,
The canvas bellies in the wind,
The north wind whistles free.

And sometimes, on still southern seas,
We feel the freshening of the gale,
That leaves behind our path a trail
Like swarming, silver bees.

The bell sounds in the quiet night;
Through driving clouds the full moon plows;
The shadow of our plunging bows
Doth split the wan moonlight.

Yet still we sail and sail and sail
Through many circles of the sun;
Sometimes into the dawn we run,
Sometimes through twilights pale.

And though the wild wet waste is round,
We cannot sail for evermore;
There is no sea without a shore,
Some port will yet be found.

L. Frank Tooker.

VON MOLTKE.