(*April 27, 1915.*)

Bismarck's Policies

By Dr. R. A. Falconer.*

AT a meeting of the Canadian Club held on the 27th April, Dr. R. A. Falconer, President of the University of Toronto, who was the guest and speaker of the day, spoke on "Bismarck's Policies." First he gave expression to what was in the minds and hearts of all with reference to the Canadians' part in the battle of Langemarck, news of which had been coming for a couple of days, with growing lists of casualties. Also at the request of the President of the Club he told something of what the University of Toronto had been doing with regard to the war during the past few months. President Falconer said:

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I have to thank you for the very kind words of welcome with which you have introduced me to-day, and for the reference that you have made to the work of the University during this winter. Before passing, however, to say anything in the briefest possible way about the University, or my main subject, it would be quite inappropriate not to give expression to the feelings that are in our hearts to-day. (Hear, hear.)

The heart of the Canadian people is to-day moved to its depths as it has never been in our history. We are mourning for those whose deaths have been reported to us; we are sadly expectant of news that may still come to us; and the lull is full of foreboding of what we may have to suffer in the months that lie before us. To-day we Canadians are going through the experience that the Mother Land has been going through in the last nine months. But through this mourning there runs the note of triumph. Though those who have been directly bereaved are smitten into silence, theirs is not the grief of such as refuse to be comforted. The dead, the wounded, and those who, thank God, still live, have suffered gloriously, and have won the gratitude not only of this Dominion but of the Empire and of Western civilization. (Applause.)

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It means more, Mr. Chairman, to be called a Canadian to-day, than it did a week ago! (Applause.) There is many an unknown man who has been lifted into imperishable fame by reason of his giving all that he had to give for our country and for our Empire. We speak of imperishable fame; we speak of immortality—there is an immortality that remains in the memories of the race, that lives though the individuals die! But there is the greater immortality; and to-day, in the midst of spring time, when the earth is breaking into leaf, we cannot think of death, Mr. Chairman, but we think of those men as having entered through death into a glorious life, that I, at least, believe must be eternal! (Hear, hear.)

But who has a right to praise those who have died for us? From whom, if they came to us, and the wounded who have bled for us,—from whom would they be willing to accept congratulation? Only from those of us, Mr. Chairman, who, if we had the chance, would be willing to do the kind of thing they have done! Only from those of us who recognize that what they died to save is worth our living to maintain! (Applause.) There is one imperishable glory, the imperishable glory of our race, which has been sustained on the field of honor. And that glory must be sustained, if we are worthy of them, by the sacrifice with which we spend ourselves, not only in the months before us, but in the rest of our mortal lives!

We leave this as our expression of gratitude and loving thankfulness, and we only hope that those who have been bereaved will be able to endure with the same courage as those who have gone. (Applause.)

Proceeding next to mention the work of the University, President Falconer said:

It might have been worth while saying something, Mr. Chairman, as you suggested, of what has been done by the University through the war, during the past winter; but in view of this experience through which we have passed, I feel it would be out of place to-day to enlarge upon it. I should like to say something of the work done in our laboratories, of which the public knows little, but where means have been devised of coping with meningitis, and where the tetanus antitoxin has been prepared that is to be used in the hospitals at the front, for which work the Ottawa Government has given us more than $5,000, we doing the work at cost under the direction of our professor and his staff. I should like to have said something of our Clearing Hospital, in which twenty of our medical graduates are serving, to whom we gave special degrees a few weeks ago. I should like to say something of our present Base Hospital, to consist of 1,040 beds, as you know, which is being splendidly equipped through the generosity of the people who have contributed in a thoroughly satisfactory way. Also I should like to speak of the work to which you have referred, a work in which twenty or thirty of our professors have been engaged, giving some two hundred lectures throughout the country on the meaning of the war. (Applause.)

I should like to say something about the spirit that has been abroad, about the way the students have rallied—we had from fifteen to eighteen hundred in the Officers' Training Corps, of which the Duke of Connaught spoke in very high terms. A training camp is to be opened at Niagara next month, where in company with men from McGill University, much of their training will be brought to completion. But now it is not wise to linger on such subjects.

Before passing on, however, let me give you some statistics as to the men of the University of Toronto who are now either at the front or preparing to go, who are enlisted, either here or at the front. I think you will be interested in the numbers. Of the staff, including those just about to go, there are fifty-two in service. (Applause.) Of the graduates of the University, there are 388, including 27 of those on the staff—264 officers and 124 in the ranks. These are the last totals we have of our graduates. Of undergraduates, the total on active service is now 440. (Applause.) When you consider that that is probably 20 per cent. of the men who are undergraduates, it is not a bad showing, because more of these will be going in the summer, particularly after the camp closes at Niagara. There is a total from the University of Toronto on actual service at the front or on the way, of nearly 860 men, and we believe that our men will, along with all other Canadians, be worthy of the encomiums that are passed upon them by those who know.

Taking up then the main theme of his address, President Falconer said:

Now in what remains, for twenty minutes, I wish to speak to you in a very brief way, of the policies of Bismarck as they seem to have prepared for the present war.

Bismarck stands out as perhaps the most prominent man in the 19th century and as the creator of the present Germany. He was of the Junker class from East Prussia, the squire class, with all they stand for. As a Junker, as a Prussian, from the beginning of his career he held forth as his aim the welding together of the fragments of the German Em-

pire into one Empire which would realize the ambitions and cherished ideals of the people of Germany for the restoration of what they imagined was the Imperial—the Holy Roman Empire of the Middle Ages.

1. Not to say that their historical conceptions and purpose were thoroughly exact, Bismarck recognized that the German people should be brought into one, and the only possible means of accomplishing his purpose that he could see was to weld them together under the leadership of Prussia, his own old State. From the beginning he believed also that it could only be done by force, so he enunciated his policy of "Blood and Iron."

At a time of great confusion in 1862, when King William, afterwards the Emperor of Prussia, was on the point of abdicating, he called Bismarck to his Council, and asked him whether he would be willing to be his Chancellor, on the basis that he himself had laid down. Bismarck accepted the terms. The basis was that of monarchical absolutism and the development of the Prussian military system. Bismarck gladly adhered to the agreement, and from 1862, when Bismarck first put his heel upon the developing of Parliamentary government, from that day you can trace the gradual disaster which has culminated in what the people to-day suffer. Monarchical absolutism meant with him such rule as that of the Czar of Russia, the Emperor of Austria, possibly the King of Italy. Britain he hated, and France he detested as the home of Red Republicanism. For him, there was nothing between monarchy and republicanism, which he abhorred. For him, Parliamentary government and democracy were nothing but republicanism. At the same time, he announced, more clearly than ever before, and insisted on having the Prussian military system extended, and as far as possible made effective even outside the confines of Prussia. "Blood and Iron" was his policy. Once when the King and Bismarck were standing outside a railway station, the old King turned to Bismarck and said, "If you go on as you are going, they will soon cut off your head under the Opera House there, and mine a few days later." "Your Majesty," replied Bismarck, "you are the First Prussian officer. A Prussian officer was never known to quail in face of duty. If you have to die for your people, die, Your Majesty!" With that, the old King drew himself up, and Bismarck never had any more trouble with him. (Laughter.)

2. Bismarck trampled on the rights of small peoples. In 1864, together with Austria, he absorbed Schleswig and Holstein. Your know what treatment he meted out to Poland, and to Alsace-Lorraine afterwards. In 1864 when he was proceeding to absorb Schleswig and Holstein, the more liberally minded Prussians held up their hands in horror as against an act of profligacy. The son of the Emperor, the Crown Prince, afterwards the Emperor Frederick, for a few months, was simply horrified. You find it told in his Memoirs, that when the King said to Bismarck, "I have no right to that property, it is not mine," Bismarck said it was needed, and from that time he noted a psychological change in the old King. That disregard for the rights of the small peoples has been one of the most potent influences in German history since then, for if they had been considered, the present war could not have happened. (Hear, hear.)

Then, in the third place, in 1866 Bismarck defeated Austria, just after Germany had been fighting side by side with Austria two years before. Austria up to that time was the leader of the German peoples; Austria now had to be dispossessed from her hegemony. Shortly afterwards, by the victory of Sadowa, or Königgratz, as it is commonly called, he defeated Austria utterly. The military party was bound to march on Vienna; they said, "That will make our victory complete." But Bismarck refused. He throws out in his Memoirs a reference to the influence of the military in civil matters, saying that they should not be allowed to dictate in civil matters,—I fancy that that policy has not been adhered to in latter years by Germany. After the victory, he said, "Now that we have defeated Austria we shall need to bind them to us." He then began to engineer the war with France; partly because of hatred for France, partly because of the way Napoleon III. was acting, and partly because he felt France was a danger. No matter about the honesty of his scheme: there was little to choose between Napoleon and Bismarck, except that Bismarck was vastly more shrewd, and outmanœuvred his opponent. The Germans leaped together at once, and obtained the needed unity by "Blood and Iron." France, as you know, was defeated, although it took longer to accomplish the victory than he had hoped for.

Now the victory was won, the question arose as to the terms of peace. Bismarck throughout was very severe on France in his terms of peace. Four years before, after defeating Austria, his policy was that Austria was not to be humiliated; but now he determined that France was to be humiliated, and put into a place from which she could not get again into power. Consequently, he demanded an indemnity

which he expected to cripple her; but it did not—she paid the money very much sooner than he expected!

Then there was the question of taking territory. About this different opinions are brought forward: some say Bismarck wanted both Alsace and Lorraine, some say he wanted only Alsace, and was only forced to take Lorraine also. At any rate he wanted Metz; he wanted a wedge placed between the new parts of the German Empire and France. He was afraid France might again attach Bavaria, always susceptible to French influence. Possibly he was afraid of a peaceful penetration by France into the German Empire. At any rate, France was dismembered by taking those old provinces. The people wanted to remain with France; they had been French, —it had been generations since they were Germans. For the next fifteen or twenty years Bismarck's policy of Prussianization irritated the people, when it did not drive them away as exiles. Hohenlohe, the finest in many ways of the German Chancellors,—I don't mean to say the ablest, but the highest-minded, the most gentlemanly,—in his Memoirs writes that he urged Bismarck to modify his policy in Alsace and Lorraine. He says: "You are goading the people into rebellion." But Bismarck believed in force. What was the result? You saw it in the Zabern incident the year before last. Alsace and Lorraine are not sympathetic with Prussia, even to-day. By these terms he left in France a rankling wound, and for years she cherished the policy of revenge. Probably, if he had been in any way generous, France would have forgotten her defeat, because it was due partly to her own shortcoming. She is a high-spirited nation. However, as things were, France did not forget.

Then came the alliance between Russia and France, a most curious alliance. France felt that only in some such alliance as that was there any chance against Berlin, which was constantly threatening her. In 1875 Bismarck threatened France, and she knew her danger. Therefore we have the alliance between Russia and France, and if we had no such alliance there would have been no war to-day! Therefore if Bismarck's policy of generous treatment to a foe had been put in practice towards France, a high-spirited people, he would not have left to his successors this harvest of trouble they are reaping to-day.

Last is his treatment of Britain. I have said Bismarck was a Prussian Junker, and inherted the traditions and prejudices of that class. The old intellectual relations between Britain and Germany were very friendly: in fact, the saddest thing

to-day is this rupture of the friendly relations between the two peoples that existed until Bismarck broke them—for he was the first to rupture them. He used the press consistently to sow evil reports; subsidising it so as to be under his own control. He used the press consistently to create ill feeling towards Britain, because Britain represented the principle he hated, the principle as he thought of republican government. He sowed, but he had good helpers, men like Treitschke and others—though Treitschke did not always agree with all of Bismarck's policies.

The growing commercialism—I have not time to go into this fully—led to the production of an atmosphere that was dangerously electric. But the causes lay behind this as I have outlined them. Bismarck's system crushed liberty. But only in the atmosphere of freedom can great men, in succession at least, be trained. You may find a great man thrown up in a despotism, but in that despotism he cannot train up successors. What was the result? Bismarck, holding the threads all in his own hands, would not allow other men alongside him. The Court became full of intrigues, and Bismarck suffered from a revulsion. When the present Emperor came to the throne, it was plain that Bismarck or he would have to be ruler: it did not take long to decide which. But what sort of successors did he leave? Weak men, whose policy has been futile. He was not able to train successors able to understand the psychology of the world of men. Bismarck was strong enough to resist the dangerous elements. He, at least, up to the time of his death, would not have allowed Russia to be alienated. Perhaps other things might have happened, for there have been great changes of late years, which would have forced him. But he set currents moving or gave them volume, and on those currents lesser men have been carried; they could not pull against them, but drifted with their people into this disaster. We can see how the war was coming; by looking back to Bismarck we see where the currents gained their strength. They might have risen behind Bismarck, but their volume is traceable from him. The ship of State has been driving on upon those currents, and I think before long it will be stranded somewhere, and will have to get a new crew; and before it is afloat again it will have to be put in the drydock! (Applause.)

Let me read you one quotation, very striking words, by a French writer in the "Revue de Paris," which has just come out: it is one of the most brilliant articles on England that one could read, showing why Germany hates England, and

what idea England stands for, as over against all that Bismarck stands for. This is what this French writer says,—I have made a somewhat rough translation—and it is perhaps worth while to read to-day:

The soul of the archangel of Milton, "which will not be changed either by place or time, which holds in itself its own dwelling and can make in itself of heaven a hell, and of hell a heaven," is the very soul of England, and the first, the highest expression of the inflexible pride, the invincible will of never yielding or submitting, of which she has given so many examples *par la suite,* of which she is giving to-day the supreme example. The root of this energy is in faith and its nourishment is that unique book, The Bible.

It is not only for the sacred Mother Country that her sons from Canada, from Australia, from everywhere, fight, but for the heritage that they get from her, and which like her is menaced; the traditions of liberty, of equal justice, of autonomy, of democracy, which she has given to them, with her blood. They are the creation of the race, her contribution to civilzation, and no contribution is greater, more precious, more worthy of being defended at the cost of any sacrifice, at the cost of life itself. It is for the immaterial idea of their race, and not for her material grandeur that they fight: not for a poor mercantilism, the egotistical exploitation of the world, but for the free development in security and peace of their will and energy, the superior fame of a pacific humanity which places right above force and will submit to no tyranny. (Applause.)

That is the Frenchman's view of the soul of England, the greatest possible contrast to what we have seen in Bismarck. (Long applause.)

Following the hearty applause at the conclusion of President Falconer's address, the Nation Anthem was sung, on the suggestion of Mr. N. F. Davidson, K.C., and the annual business of the Canadian Club was then transacted.