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# The Greatest Secret of German Progress.

By FRANK KOESTER.

(In this article Mr. Koester discloses the strongest trait in the German, a trait peculiarly his own and which, for the want of a better name, is called "efficiency.")

The tremendous progress which Germany has made within little more than a generation has been the marvel of the world, and not only the marvel but for some parts of the world, a mortal terror.

Germany's growth, her recession, her efficiency, her unified action have made her competitors stand aghast. Nothing seems to be able to stop her. Everything that Germany does is done with the minimum of effort and the maximum of result.

In Germany it works. Whatever it is, it works, and it works with irresistible power.

In other countries it does not work. Or if it works, it works badly.

And when we come upon the real secret of what it is that works and how it works, the fundamental secret of Germany's progress will be revealed. The fountain head will have been reached.

The thing that happens is that in Germany, largely by the accident of political consideration, a form of government has been evolved which, in the midst of the relics of by-gone forms of government, is able to accomplish its purposes, the purposes of all governments, that of carrying out the will of the people, in a more effective manner than that of any other existing form of government.

The government of Germany comes nearer that ideal than does the government of any other country, and to the enormous effectiveness of its form of government is due in an overwhelming measure, its success.

Unless other countries put into practice the principles which are so effective in Germany, there is no question but that within a few generations Germany must outstrip all the other countries of the world combined.

Imagine the power of the government of the United States, for example, or of any government, if the will of the people could be instantly ascertained and instantly put into effect by a single, responsive and responsible instrument. It would be irresistible. It would be the ideal of government, the apotheosis of democracy.

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America, however, is already experimenting with the same governmental principle, locally applied and without realizing that it is the same principle that has made Germany what it is today. The principle has as yet no name but it will undoubtedly in time acquire a name. For the present purposes it may be termed a polyarchy.

To understand its meaning, it will be necessary to describe the salient features of the very complex governmental system of Germany, which is but imperfectly understood even by many Germans, but which contains, due, as stated, to the accidents of political exigencies, the working apparatus which produces the wonderful results and which works in spite of the complexity rather than because of it.

In order not to be deflected by non-essentials, it will be necessary to lay aside for the moment, criticisms of the German government system due to what we term "gerrymandering," which is not a vital principle but rather a disease. To understand the tree of government we must imagine it stripped of the disease or fungus of the gerrymander, for that has nothing to do with its life and proper growth. Gerrymandering is no worse in Germany than in the United States, for here Rhode Island has as many votes in our Senate as has New York while 3,600,000 farmers in New York State overrule 5,500,000 citizens of New York City through so laying out the boundaries of the state's election districts as to vitiate the suffrages of the city dwellers.

Germany Not a Monarchy

To begin with, the German Empire is not a monarchy. These misconceptions prove a powerful source of error to Americans in dealing with German institutions and government.

The German Empire is a confederation of what were once kingdoms, duchies, states, and free cities. All these sovereign members upon entering into the confederation, surrendered their sovereignty to the "empire" as regards foreign relations and such functions as coinage, tariffs, and certain others best administered by a central government, but retained their individual powers to a much greater extent than did the states of the American union when it was formed.

The kingdoms which compose the German Empire still have their kings, their courts, their houses of lords and commons, their local governments, and practically all the procedure and powers over their own affairs which they formerly exercised.

Of these kingdoms, Prussia was by far the largest and it now has 42,000,000 of the 67,000,000 population of the whole empire.

The confederation which we now know as the German Empire succeeded a partial previous confederation known as North German Bund (union). In that Bund the King of Prussia was made president of the Bund and also commander-in-chief of the united armies still retaining his complete powers as King of Prussia with the exception that Prussia surrendered her sovereignty, as a kingdom among the other kingdoms of the world to the Bund. When the German Empire was formed by Bismarck, the same conditions were put in force, and thus the German Empire is a United States of German Kingdoms in which the King of Prussia, whoever he may be, is the president with the title of "German Kaiser," a style especially adopted rather than Emperor of Germany or Emperor of the Germans, so as not to offend the other kings.

Thus, a German is not a citizen of the empire, but is a subject or citizen of whatever particular kingdom or state that he may belong to. In fact, the Kaiser or emperor, is nothing more than the president of the league of kingdoms. William is thus only a psychological emperor and not a real emperor.

one, and as German Kaiser has vastly less actual power than the President of the United States.

However, as King of Prussia, as king over 42,000,000 of Germany's 67,000,000 population, he retains his royal power and prerogatives, for the Kingdom of Prussia is still a powerful monarchy, so strong that the other kingdoms of the "Empire" could scarcely withdraw even if they wished, no more than could an American state withdraw from our union.

Although the comparison can at best only be a rough one, an idea of the organization of the German Empire may be had from supposing the eastern part of the United States a kingdom, united to the various western states, each as kingdoms with kings and nobilities, in a union effected by sending ambassadors to Washington, each representing his state with absolute powers, and then giving to this body of ambassadors the authority at present given to the U. S. Senate, the U. S. Supreme Court, and the President, and placing an "emperor" over all with about the power of the Vice-President over the Senate, but keeping the lower house of Congress spread all over the country, as a check against the house of ambassadors, the said "emperor" being, however, the king of the eastern part or kingdom.

In practice, however, it would work out more as though our governors of states had kings over them and went to Washington to govern in place of the Senate, the Supreme Court, and the President, checked only by the lower house of Congress and an "emperor" having no great power as president of the body but with royal power as king of his own two-thirds of the country.

How the German Government Works

The German government is thus composed of the Bundesrat (literally, council of the union) corresponding to a body of governor-ambassadors in the supposition just cited, the Reichstag, (literally, empire-day, or meeting day) which corresponds to our lower house of Congress, and the president of the Bund, or the German Kaiser.

The Bundesrat is the most important, in fact, the decisive element of the government. It consists of 58 members, 17 being Prussian, 6 Bavarian, 4 Saxon, and 4 Württembergers, the rest being from other kingdoms and state-cities in lesser numbers.

The Bundesrat sits in a legislative sense continuously and, with the Kaiser, has power to dissolve or terminate the Reichstag, which is composed of 397 members, at any time during its term of five years, in which case a new Reichstag must be elected within 60 days and convened within 90 days for a new term of five years.

The Reichstag is elected over the Empire generally. The members are elected by districts but are not responsible to the instructions of their constituents but vote freely in the interests of the whole people.

The members of the Bundesrat, however, are strictly responsible to their particular kingdoms and states and vote in accordance with the views of their particular monarchies. It is as if Congress in the United States were elected without reference to state lines and the senators were not two for each state but roughly in proportion to the population of the states, and always acting under instructions.

When a law is to be passed it may originate either in the Bundesrat or in the lower house, and either may amend. When they agree, it becomes a law without the necessity of being approved by the Kaiser, and is not subject to any power of veto on his part, such as the President of the United States is entitled to exercise.

As a matter of routine he signs it, sees that it is technically in the proper form, and has it published, but he must do this in any event, so that he may be said, in this respect, to be nothing more than the rubber stamp of the German Empire.

In other respects he has more power. Like the President of the United States, he is commander-in-chief of the army and navy. He also appoints the Imperial Chancellor.

Here comes in another of the remarkable features of the German government, for the Imperial Chancellor, who is the presiding officer of the Bundesrat of which the Kaiser is the president, represents German policy and has under him as subordinates all the heads of departments who correspond in other countries to cabinet ministers. He is a cabinet with its powers unified in one member.

When the Imperial Chancellor resigns it indicates a break between the Kaiser and the legislature, that is, if he resigns from lack of a vote of confidence on the part of the Bundesrat.

To Americans the significance of this does not appear very great, as the members of the President's cabinet are not particularly important politically, being generally personal friends and advisers of the President.

In England and France, however, where the legislative bodies are composed of a number of political parties and not of two large parties as with us, the King of England or the President of France appoints a group of men as a cabinet, and must make his selections, that the group of men he selects will have the confidence of the legislative branch. Such a cabinet is the real seat of government. If at any time it proposes a measure which is defeated in the legislature it must resign or the legislative body must be dissolved by the king and a new election held to find out if the public supports the cabinet or the legislature.

In a country with a cabinet, the cabinet must always represent the will of the people. This it does, roughly speaking. The American cabinet represents nothing but the President's personal selection of head clerks or free-advice givers, and even then only

posed in America, to the Kaiser.

Indeed, to the German coming to this country, the enormous place in the public mind occupied by the Kaiser is a great surprise. In Germany his powers and prerogatives are understood and he stands in his true relation to the other branches of the government. In America, however, the Kaiser appears to be the dominating spirit of Germany. This misapprehension of his real position is the source of much error in judging Germany's relations to this country. Bismarck, too, looms much larger in America than he does in Germany, while the Bundesrat, the true power of the empire, is only known as a legislative term.

(To be continued.)

### Wünsche und Hoffnungen.

Prof. Dr. Euden über den Lebensinhalt des deutschen Volkes.

Der bekannte Philosoph Professor Dr. Rudolf Euden aus Jena stellte dieser Tage in einer Versammlung in der "Atronia" in Berlin einige deutsche Wünsche und Hoffnungen für das neue Jahr auf. Neben einem entschiedenen Siege und einem dauerhaften Frieden begannen sich diese Wünsche auf die Vereinigungen und den Lebensinhalt des deutschen Volkes.

Vor allem, so wünschte er, möge die herrliche Einmütigkeit auf dem Grunde der Vaterlandsliebe bleiben, auch wenn die Gegensätze und Parteien wiederzukommen werden, die ja zum Leben und Blühen eines Kulturvolkes gehören. Möchte die bloße Individualität mehr und mehr vertieft werden durch eine Sozialpolitik. Der Krieg hat das deutsche Volk als Heldentum gezeigt — und das Großartige ist, daß das Heldentum alljährlich geworden ist. Auch das muß bleiben. Wir müssen diesen großen Zug behalten und nicht wieder in die Kleinlichkeit zurückfallen, wovon einmal ein wohlwollender Franzose sagte: Es fehlt den Deutschen das "Talant der Bogatere", das Talent, das kleine klein zu nehmen. Wir müssen hinaus in den Welt- und geschichtlichen Geschehen. Alles das wird sich aber erst recht erfüllen, wenn wir den Inhalt unseres Lebens höher heben. Dieser Krieg ist ja nicht bloß ein Zusammenstoß beliebiger Völker, sondern auch ein Kampf der Kulturen. Daß auch fremde Gelehrte und Künstler uns vielfach jetzt so beurteilen, zeigt, daß wir sehr wenig verstanden werden, daß wir der Welt im allgemeinen noch ein Rätsel sind. Das macht, weil hier die ausländische Formentulatur, die bis in die Philosophie und Religion hineingehört, der deutschen Innenkultur gegenübersteht, der alle Arbeit Entwicklung der Seele ist. Daher ist der Deutsche nie fertig, daher ist er immer im Ringen und Suchen. Das erhält ihn jung, während die Formentulatur schnell greisenhaft macht. Freilich auch hier drohen uns mancherlei Gefahren. Eine Inzuchtulatur braucht z. B. der Form nicht feindlich zu sein, weil sie sie nur als Mittel benutzt. Ja, wir könnten sogar den Inhalt steigern, wenn wir noch die Form hinzunehmen. Wir wollen beiden Seiten in unserem Gemüte das Gleichgewicht halten: der Weltarbeit und der Innerlichkeit. Wir Deutschen müssen in Zukunft lernen, Charakter und genügende Weite zu verbinden und die deutsche Art kräftiger in die Welt hineinzuwirten. Wir waren oft viel zu schüchtern. Die Welt hatte eine englische Formentulatur angenommen, und wenn dann der Deutsche kam, zog er sich oft sehr zurück. Das darf nicht mehr sein. Wir wollen darum auf wissenschaftlichen Kongressen nicht mehr fremde Sprachen sprechen und Selbstgefäß lernen. Wir müssen für unsere Kultur auch kämpfen können und brauchen dafür auch Unübersichtlichen gründen. Wenn sich nach dem Frieden, und wenn er noch so günstig wäre, wie wir hoffen, Ermattung einstellen will, so gilt es, auf der Hut zu sein, dann gilt es, in zäher Arbeit das Erwungene in einen Besitz für immer zu verwandeln. Das Bekenntnis aller Deutschen soll heißen: Pflicht!

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