

**GERMAN EMPIRE
(BERLIN)**

BERLIN

FO 64/717: Lord Augustus Loftus to Earl Granville, No 100, Berlin, 28 January 1871

[Received 30 January by Messenger Leeds. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; Qy: 'Inform Mr Littlewood that a telegram has been received on the 29th from Versailles to the effect that "Mr Worth will shortly be liberated"'; 'He has been informed I think', G[ranville]]

Mr Worth on trial in Cologne after escaping from Paris via balloon; allegedly sold arms to the French

I have the honour to enclose to Your Lordship, herewith, copy of a Report I have received from M^r Harriss-Gastrell on the case of M^r Worth now under confinement in Cologne having been made prisoner by the Prussians out of a Balloon from Paris.¹

From this report Your Lordship will see that the Trial has taken place although the sentence has not been definitively pronounced, the decision having been referred to the Higher Military Authorities at Versailles.

It appears that the offence of which M^r Worth has been guilty is of a graver nature than was at first anticipated, and that he has acknowledged to have been the writer of a Letter to M^r Littlewood, which was captured previous to his own arrest, and which contained an order for the purchase of arms for the French Government. As this offence is likewise a Breach of the Proclamation of Neutrality issued by Her Majesty The Queen at the Commencement of the War;² it will I conceive preclude any intervention of Her Majesty's Government on behalf of M^r Worth, who will have to pay the penalty of his own imprudence.

I have no doubt that his case will be treated as leniently as possible, and that he will not be subjected to a further penalty than that of Confinement for the duration of the War.

¹Enclosure: copy of James Plaister Harriss-Gastrell to Lord Augustus Loftus, Confidential, Cologne, 20 January 1871. Frederick Gonner Worth, who left besieged Paris in a balloon, was captured at Verdun on 27 October 1870. He was acquitted by the military court at Cologne on 16 February 1871 and released on 20 February.

²Proclamation of 19 July 1870.

As there is no Consul at Cologne, I have no means of ascertaining the sentence passed on him, but I will communicate either with M^r Worth through the Commandant of Cologne,³ or with the Lawyer⁴ employed for his defence, and will report to your Lordship the result of my further enquiries.

**FO 64/717: Lord Augustus Loftus to Earl Granville,
No 106, Berlin, 28 January 1871**

[Received 30 January by Messenger Leeds. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; G[ranville]]

British felicitations to Queen of Prussia on King of Prussia's assumption of imperial title

In conformity with the sanction conveyed to me in Your Lordship's Telegram of the 21st Instant, I requested an audience of The Queen of Prussia⁵ to felicitate Her Majesty in the name of The Queen and of Her Majesty's Government on the Imperial Title accepted by His Prussian Majesty.⁶

The Empress-Queen having graciously invited me to Dinner on the 25th instant in celebration of the Wedding-day of The Crown Prince and Princess,⁷ was pleased to receive me in private Audience previous to the Banquet, when I had the Honor of felicitating Her Imperial and Royal Majesty on the happy event of Germany being united under the Imperial Crown which had been conferred by the unanimous voice of the German Princes and Free Towns on His Majesty the King, and I expressed my ardent wishes that this felicitous event would tend to the happiness and welfare of the German Nation, and to the future consolidation of the Peace of Europe.

Her Imperial Majesty thanked me for these felicitations; expressed the sincere attachment She entertained for Her Majesty The Queen, and referred in warm and complimentary terms to the anniversary of the union of the Crown Prince and Princess, which established, as Her Majesty hoped, an indissoluble link between the two countries.

In granting the audience for the object I had solicited, Her Imperial Majesty observed that She had declined all similar felicitations,

³Robert von Frankenberg und Ludwigsdorf.

⁴Johann Joseph Fischer.

⁵Augusta.

⁶Wilhelm I accepted the imperial crown, which was offered to him by Ludwig II in the so-called *Kaiserbrief* of 30 November 1870, on 18 December 1870. He formally assumed powers on 1 January 1871 and was proclaimed German Emperor in Versailles on 18 January.

⁷Friedrich Wilhelm and Victoria.

reserving them until She could receive them with the Emperor-King on His Imperial Majesty's return. She had made this exception for me in order to prove how deeply She valued the congratulations and good wishes of Her Majesty The Queen, and of Her Government.

**FO 64/718: Lord Augustus Loftus to Earl Granville,
Most Confidential, No 191, Berlin, 28 February 1871**

[Received 6 March by Messenger Harbord. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate]

Discussion with Thile regarding peace with France, the British position, and the war indemnity; German sensitivity to any intervention negotiations

It was evident to me that Baron Thile had been prepared by a Telegram from Count Bernstorff for the Communication of Your Lordship's Despatch N^o 74, which I made to him yesterday, and that it was a Communication which was not agreeable to him.⁸

His Excellency enquired in a cynical manner whether we were bound by a feeling of friendship to both parties, I replied "Most certainly, and in that spirit of impartial neutrality which had guided us during the War." His Excellency then merely observed that the Communication I had made was a most interesting and important one, and characteristic of us.

I thought it advisable to abstain from any discussion and therefore made no further reply.

I enquired of His Excellency whether the War Indemnity had been fixed at 5 or 6 Millions. His Excellency replied that the Telegram which had been published giving the Conditions of the Peace (of which I reported to Your Lordship the substance in my ciphered Telegram of yesterday) had been sent by the Emperor-King to the Empress-Queen.⁹ In that Telegram the Indemnity was stated to be 5 Millions, and I presume therefore that this sum included the deductions referred to in Your Lordship's Despatch. Great jealousy and sensitiveness are evinced in Germany against any Foreign intervention in regard to the Conclusion of Peace, and it is to this feeling that I attribute the apparent dissatisfaction with which Baron Thile received communication of Your Lordship's Despatch.

⁸In his dispatch to Loftus, No 74 of 24 February 1871, Granville expressed his 'conviction that it is the interest of Germany as well as of France that the amount of the indemnity should not be greater than that which it is reasonable to expect could be paid'.

⁹In his telegram, dated Versailles 27 February, Wilhelm I informed Augusta that the peace preliminaries had been signed the previous day. For the French war indemnity, see n. 107 in this section.

It is probable that this feeling may have been increased by a Telegram from Berlin published in the Cologne Gazette stating (on what authority I know not) that the signature of Peace had been delayed by the attempts of intervention on the part of England.

I enclose to Your Lordship, herewith, in original with a Précis in Translation from the Cologne Gazette referring to English intervention in the negotiations for Peace.¹⁰

**FO 64/719: Lord Augustus Loftus to Earl Granville,
No 275, Berlin, 25 March 1871**

[Received 27 March by Messenger Drury. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; G[ranville]]

Birthday felicitations to Wilhelm I; his views on the war with France

I had the Honor of an Audience of the Emperor King on the 22nd instant to present my felicitations on the anniversary of His Imperial Majesty's Birthday.

Special Missions having been sent by The Emperors of Russia and Austria to congratulate His Imperial Majesty on His return to His capital, I felt that I should be acting in conformity with the wishes of The Queen by profiting of this opportunity to express similar felicitations to The Emperor in Her Majesty's name.¹¹

The Emperor received these felicitations most cordially and specially charged me to convey His best thanks to Her Majesty, and to say how deeply He appreciated the kind interest Her Majesty had ever taken in His Welfare.

I had then the Honour to place in His Imperial Majesty's hands The Queen's Letter in reply to His Majesty's notification of His acceptance of the Imperial Title.¹²

His Majesty conversed at some length on the events of the War, and on the state of France, and the condition in which He had found that Country.

He observed with great modesty that the wonderful results achieved by His Army had surpassed all expectations, and were, in his estimation of so marvellous a nature that he could only attribute the success which had attended His arms to the favour and support of

¹⁰Enclosures: newspaper clipping from *Kölnische Zeitung*, 27 February 1871, and translation of article, dated Berlin, 26 February.

¹¹Wilhelm returned to Berlin from Versailles on 17 March 1871.

¹²Victoria's answer to Wilhelm's letter of 29 January 1871 was sent to Loftus on 7 March 1871.

a Higher Power, who had chosen Him as the instrument of the Divine Will.

His Majesty dwelt on the enthusiasm and fervour displayed by the whole German Nation, and stated that on His return from Ems, He was quite astounded by the patriotic ovations He had received.¹³ Never, said his Majesty, had the feelings of the German nation been so roused, or so strongly manifested since the War of Liberation 1813, and the result has proved that the aspirations for Unity had taken deep root in the heart of the Nation.

His Majesty observed that on entering France, He had been much struck by the fertility of the soil, the general prosperity, and wealth of the country, the excellent roads, the comfortable well built houses, the picturesque and thriving Towns. Every thing appeared to be in the greatest order, but He remarked with regret that the population had withdrawn and fled, and that much disorder and destruction had in consequence taken place, which otherwise might have been avoided.

His Majesty made no comment or allusion whatever in regard to the French army, nor did a word of reproach fall from His Majesty with regard to the French nation.

The feeling which appeared to pervade His mind was that of deep regret and sympathy for the losses and miseries which the War had produced.

With regard to the grave state of affairs at Paris, His Majesty stated that he had given orders for the German troops to halt in their present positions, but not to retrograde nor re-occupy any portions of Territory which had been already evacuated.¹⁴ This was a necessary precaution without implying any other intention than that of acting on the defensive.

I took the opportunity to congratulate His Majesty on the cordial feeling which had been evinced towards Germany by Austria, observing that it appeared to me a happy omen for the future, and that an intimate understanding between the two countries would offer the surest guarantee for the maintenance of peace in Europe. His Majesty heartily coincided in this view, and expressed His satisfaction that the relations were on so friendly a footing. But His Majesty observed that He could not quite understand the policy of the new Ministry at Vienna. They had, on entering Office, been represented as not very friendly or well-disposed towards Prussia. On the other hand, their

¹³Wilhelm returned to Berlin from Ems on 15 July 1870, two days after the publication of the Ems Dispatch, which led to the French declaration of war on 19 July.

¹⁴German troops who had occupied parts of Paris on 1 March 1871 withdrew on 8 March. On 18 March the revolutionary government, the Paris Commune, seized power and ruled until 28 May.

assurance had been very satisfactory.¹⁵ We must, therefore wait, said His Majesty, to see what will be their acts.

I then stated that I was charged by Your Lordship to express to His Imperial Majesty the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for the great kindness and consideration which His Majesty had shown to General Walker during the time he had been at the Head Quarters of His Army.¹⁶

His Majesty replied that it had given Him great satisfaction to show any attention to General Walker.

The Audience here ended, and on taking leave of The Emperor, His Majesty charged me to convey to The Queen His sincere thanks for the kind interest which Her Majesty had evinced towards Him.

FO 64/719: Lord Augustus Loftus to Earl Granville, No 329, Berlin, 13 April 1871

[Received 17 April by Messenger Vivian. Qy: 'Express satisfaction'; Qy: 'Nothing else?'; O.R. [Odo Russell]; 'Answered', 19 April; G[ranville]]

British administration of French affairs during Franco-Prussian War; impact on embassy and Anglo-German relations

As the responsibility which has devolved on Her Majesty's Embassy of the charge of French Interests during the late war is drawing happily now to a close, it is my duty to bring under Your Lordship's notice the amount of additional labour which has been caused to the members of the Embassy and to bear testimony to the zeal, punctuality, and efficient manner in which their duties have been performed.¹⁷

I beg leave to observe that special praise is due to M^r Dering 2nd Secretary to Her Majesty's Embassy whom I charged with the management of all matters relating to French Subjects, and more

¹⁵After the accession of the new ministry under Hohenwart, on 7 February, the minister for trade, Schäffle, assured the German ambassador to Vienna, Schweinitz, of the 'friendliest relationships' between the two Empires.

¹⁶General Walker, military attaché to the embassy in Berlin, was attached to the crown prince's army in the Franco-Prussian War from 28 July 1870 until early March 1871. From 20 September 1870 he stayed in Versailles; the Palace of Versailles became the king's headquarters on 5 October.

¹⁷During the Franco-Prussian War the interests of French subjects in Germany were placed under the protection of British diplomatic and consular representatives in Germany. This included the administration of the archives of French diplomatic missions, consular matters, and, from December 1870, the payment of the *solde de captivité* to French prisoners of war, the rate of which was fixed by the French ministry of war on 10 September 1870. Payments were offset against the sums previously disbursed by German authorities.

particularly with the direction of all the payments made to the French Prisoners of War.

At times these duties have been of a most onerous nature, and have taxed the energies of the whole Staff of Her Majesty's Embassy.

To give Your Lordship an idea of the extra work caused to this Embassy I may state that there have been for some months from 3 to 400,000 French Prisoners of War interned in the North German Confederation, and that Her Majesty's Embassy has been the sole Channel of Communication for the French Prisoners of War with their native Country (among whom were above 11,000 officers).

Above 2000 Letters have been received, docketed, registered, answered (and in many Cases copies of the answers in French are preserved) on subjects connected with the Prisoners.

The drawing up and classification of lists in Duplicate for the payment of the *Solde de Captivité* to the Officers, non-commissioned Officers, and Privates, taken Prisoners at different dates and places and confirmed in 94 different Towns in Prussia, and the necessary calculations, varying almost in each case for every recipient of the amount of pay due in the first instance up to the 15th of October, and from that date paid monthly, has been an Herculean Labour. Then the filing and checking of the thousands of Receipts, the difficulties arising from the frequent shifting of the Prisoners from one fortress to another, the necessity of attending to and answering innumerable reclamations, from a body composed of nearly 400,000 men, and of rectifying errors in the sums allotted which necessarily recurred in accounts of so gigantic a nature, in fact the whole duties of a Paymaster's Office to a large Army have been attended to and carried out by Her Majesty's Embassy with the extra assistance of but one Clerk.

There have been over 500 different and distinct payments made to Officers and men, and the sum disbursed for their purpose exceeds Eight Hundred Thousand Thalers or One Hundred and Twenty Thousand Pounds Sterling.

Duplicate and Individual Receipts have been taken from the Officers for every payment. Original Receipts have been from time to time forwarded through Your Lordship to the French Government as the several payments were made. Duplicates of the same are kept at Her Majesty's Embassy for future reference and control. All the Correspondence and Papers referring to the Prisoners of War in each of the 94 fortresses are kept separately for each fortress for easy reference.

In addition to this labour M^r Dering has written above 400 Letters to Bankers and others on subjects connected with these payments.

A detailed account of the Civil expenses incurred on French Account has been kept and forwarded through Your Lordship monthly to the French Government.

These expenses chiefly consisted of relief to distressed French Subjects, into such case enquiry having been made, and generally a Railway Ticket was procured for the applicant. The necessary Vouchers accompanied all Payments of this nature. I may confidentially say, that on an average of 4 or 5 additional hours work have been daily caused to her Majesty's Embassy during the last 4 or 5 months, the greater amount of labour falling more especially on M^r Dering.

In bearing testimony to the readiness and zeal which each member of Her Majesty's Embassy has devoted to their work I must especially bring under Your Lordship's notice the assiduity, the zeal, the punctuality and the admirable manner in which M^r Dering has carried out the arduous and complicated task with which he has been charged. So highly do I appreciate the merit due to M^r Dering for the care and attention he has paid to the interests of the French Prisoners that I consider that it would be but an act of justice to him that his services should be made known to the French Government.

**FO 64/720: George Petre to Earl Granville, No 39,
Berlin, 6 May 1871**

[Received 9 May. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; 'Take a note in register of statement about Mayence'; G[ranville]]

Reichstag *discussion of bill annexing Alsace-Lorraine to German Empire; Bismarck's justifications*

The Bill for uniting the Provinces of Alsace and Lorraine to the German Empire, a copy and translation of which were inclosed in my Despatch N^o 27 of the 29th ultimo, came on for discussions in the Reichstag in its sitting of the 2nd instant.¹⁸

Prince Bismarck in introducing this measure made a long and remarkable speech, a very full report of which has been published in the "Correspondence [*sic*] de Berlin", which I have the honor to inclose herewith for Your Lordship's perusal.¹⁹

In one part of his speech the Chancellor relates that in August 1866 Monsieur Benedetti demanded of him the cession of Mayence to

¹⁸France ceded the territory of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany in the treaties of Versailles and Frankfurt of 26 February and 10 May 1871. The bill on the 'union of Alsace and Lorraine with the German Empire' was passed on 3 June and came into effect on 9 June 1871.

¹⁹Enclosure: *Correspondance de Berlin*, No 50, 1871.

France under a threat of an immediate declaration of War, to which he answered without a moment's hesitation, that he accepted the alternative of War.²⁰ Monsieur Benedetti thereupon returned to France and shortly afterwards he (the Chancellor) was given to understand that the instructions, of which Monsieur Benedetti had been the bearer, had been wrung from the Emperor when he was suffering from illness.

Prince Bismarck defended the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine to the German Empire on the ground, which has been so frequently put forward on previous occasions of the absolute necessity for Germany of erecting a powerful barrier against any future aggression on the part of France. This object, he maintained, could not have been equally accomplished either by the demolition of the French frontier fortresses or by the formation of the two Provinces into a neutral territory such as Belgium or Luxemburg.

In speaking of the Commune at Paris,²¹ which in spite of its extravagancies he described as deriving its strength from a germ of reason, viz. the wish for municipal self-government such as it exists in Germany, Prince Bismarck stated that he had heard, though he did not give his authority for so striking an announcement that there were eight thousand English (mostly Fenians he presumed) now in Paris fighting for the Commune.

The Bill incorporating Alsace and Lorraine with Germany, and which can hardly be viewed in any other light than as a provisional measure has been referred by the Reichstag to a Committee.

FO 64/721: George Petre to Earl Granville, No 148, Berlin, 24 June 1871

[Received 26 June by messenger. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; Mr Jervoise, 25 September; G[ranville]]

Formation of Catholic Party in the Reichstag and its activities

Soon after the opening of the late Session of the German Reichstag,²² a Section, consisting of about one half, of the Roman Catholic Members of the new Parliament formed themselves into a compact party under

²⁰The French demands for compensation as a result of Prussia's territorial enlargement following the Austro-Prussian War were conveyed in Benedetti's letter of 5 August 1866; on 6 August, in a conversation with Bismarck, the French ambassador to Berlin extended the claims to territory on the left bank of the Rhine, including Mainz.

²¹See n. 14 in this section.

²²The *Reichstag* met from 21 March to 15 June 1871.

the leadership of Messrs. de Savigny, Reichensperger, Bishop Ketteler and D^r Windthorst, with the avowed intention of using their undivided influence in furthering the special interests of the Catholic Church in Germany. It soon became apparent that they considered those interests to be identical with the claims and designs of the Clerical or Ultramontane party, which had exerted so powerful an influence upon the elections in the Rhenish Provinces, in Westphalia and in Silesia.

The first attempt made by this Party to carry out its views was on the discussion of the Imperial Constitution when it endeavoured to introduce an amendment, the effect of which, under the guise of liberty, would have been to release the Catholic Church in Southern Germany from all State control, and to place unlimited power in the hands of the episcopacy at the expense of the laity.²³ This proposal gave rise to a series of acrimonious religious debates, and was ultimately rejected by an overwhelming majority of the Reichstag. The subsequent attitude of the "Centre Party",²⁴ as it is called, throughout the whole of the remainder of the Session, was one of coldness or of open opposition to the policy of Prince Bismarck, and the Chancellor, nettled or embarrassed by the unexpected opposition of a party upon which the Prussian Government had always safely reckoned for support, considered it politic to complain to the Holy See²⁵ of the hostility which had been shewn to him and to the new order of things in Germany by those claiming to be its peculiar champions.

It having been stated, amongst other persons, by Count Frankenberg, a Member of the Reichstag, that the political conduct of the Catholics or Central Party had been disapproved of by the Pope, the Members of the Party through their organs in the Press, published a denial of the truth of this statement. This denial has drawn forth a letter from Prince Bismarck in answer to one addressed to him by Count Frankenberg, in which the Chancellor states that Cardinal Antonelli²⁶ distinctly assured the German Minister in Rome that the attitude of the Catholic Party in the Reichstag was disapproved of by the Holy See.

²³The motion to include six articles on civil and religious liberties from the Prussian constitution of 1850 in the new imperial constitution was debated in the *Reichstag* on 1, 3, and 4 April 1871.

²⁴*Zentrumsparlei* (*Zentrum*).

²⁵Bismarck communicated with Carl von Tauffkirchen-Guttenberg, Bavarian envoy extraordinary and German chargé d'affaires to the Holy See, to this effect on 17 April 1871.

²⁶On 21 April 1871.

I have the honour to enclose herewith for your information a translation of Prince Bismarck's letter, which is dated the 19th instant.²⁷

**FO 64/722: George Petre to Earl Granville, No 217,
Confidential, Berlin, 5 August 1871**

[Received 7 August by Messenger Vivian. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; G[ranville]]

Tension between Prussia and Bavaria over latter's rights to represent the German Empire in the absence of German envoys

In the Convention which was concluded at Versailles between the North German and Bavarian Governments, in virtue of which Bavaria became a member of the North German Confederation, and subsequently of the German Empire, it was stipulated that at those Courts where Bavaria was specifically represented, the Bavarian Minister should replace the German Ambassador or Minister as representative of the German Empire during the latter's temporary absence from his post.²⁸ In accordance with this arrangement, when Count Arnim left Rome some months ago, he was succeeded by Count Tauffkirchen, the Bavarian Minister, as German Representative at the Papal Court. On Monsieur de Balan's leaving Brussels to assume the direction of the Foreign Office here during the absence of Monsieur de Thile,²⁹ objections, which appear to have been considered valid or at least to have been acquiesced in by Count Bray, were made by Prince Bismarck to the interests of the German Empire being entrusted to the Bavarian Minister³⁰ at that Court, and Count Solms was sent to Brussels to act as Chargé d'Affaires during Monsieur de Balan's absence.

A third case has lately arisen in which the right of Bavaria appears to have been practically ignored. Previous to the departure of Count Bernstorff from England on leave of absence,³¹ the Bavarian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin, Baron Tautphoeus, was instructed by his Government to communicate with Monsieur de Thile with a

²⁷Enclosure: translation, Bismarck to Frankenberg, Berlin, 19 June 1871. Frankenberg's letter to Bismarck is dated 12 June 1871.

²⁸Petre is referring to the Treaty of Union between Bavaria and the North German Confederation of 23 November 1870 and Article 7 of the Final Protocol of the same date.

²⁹On 25 May Thile left Berlin for four weeks' holiday in Marienbad.

³⁰Friedrich von Niethammer.

³¹Bernstorff left London for Germany on 27 July 1871.

view to the charge of German interests being confided to Count Hompesch during the absence of the German Ambassador, Monsieur de Thile promised to forward this communication to Prince Bismarck at Varzin, but he subsequently informed Baron Tautphoeus that considerations of health prevented the Prince from occupying himself with the business at the present moment and requested that the matter might be postponed for some weeks. His Excellency begged Baron Tautphoeus to assure his Government of the readiness of the Prussian Government to act at all times in strict conformity with the terms of the Convention of Versailles, but he added that there was nothing at the present moment of any consequence to make it desirable that Count Hompesch should assume the representation of the German Empire in London. Baron Tautphoeus observed that it was not a question of whether there was any important business to transact, but simply of the fulfilment of a treaty arrangement.

It is perhaps unreasonable to expect that the machinery of the German Empire so new in its construction, should work without an occasional hitch, but it is obvious that Bavaria is prepared to cling with tenacity to any outward sign of that independence which has been left to her, and to assert her full influence in the Councils of the Empire.

**FO 64/722: George Petre to Earl Granville, No 228,
Berlin, 11 August 1871**

[Received 14 August by Messenger Ball. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; Home Office, 17 August; G[ranville]]

Conversations with Wurm and Schulze-Delitzsch regarding the International Workingmen's Association in Prussia

If I have not hitherto attempted to furnish Your Lordship with information as instructed in your Despatch N^o 46 of the 20th of June last, relating to the organization, resources, and importance of the society called the "Internationale" in this Country,³⁵ it is not by any means that the subject has escaped my attention, but that I have failed as yet to collect any solid facts in connection with it which are not probably already known to your Lordship and to the Public.

Soon after the receipt of your Lordship's despatch above mentioned, I applied to two persons, widely separated in their spheres of

³⁵The International Workingmen's Association (First International), founded in London in 1864.

observation and sources of knowledge, who I thought would be most likely to supply me with materials for the information desired by Her Majesty's Government. These two persons were Herr von Wurmb, the able and popular President of Police at Berlin, and Herr Schulze Delitzsch, whose name is associated with the establishment of the workmen's Cooperative Associations and Credit Banks of Germany, and who has done more perhaps than any living German to benefit the working classes of this Country, and to wean them by the potent influence of material progress from the pernicious doctrines and illusions of socialism, and to reconcile the claims of capital and labour.

It was evident from the conversations with these gentlemen that two currents of opinion prevailed in regard to the strength and importance of the adherents of the "Internationale" in Prussia, a difference of appreciation which I find reproduced in the Press. Herr Schulze, who is one of the leaders of the Progressist or advanced liberal Party³³ in the Prussian Chamber and in the Reichstag, expressed to me his unqualified conviction that the "Internationale" had taken no root in Prussia and was not likely to do so; that its influence with the great body of the working classes in this Country was exceedingly slight, and that its leaders were men more calculated to inspire contempt than fear. In support of this view, Herr Schulze pointed to the fact that although the Reichstag is elected by direct and universal suffrage, the socialist-democrats of Germany, who if not actually affiliated to the "Internationale" may be presumed to sympathise in general with its aims, had only succeeded in returning one single Member, Herr Bebel, who sits for Merana [*sic*], a Saxon Constituency;³⁴ Saxony in fact being the chief stronghold of the party in Germany.

I found the views of the President of Police not in accordance with those expressed to me by Herr Schulze-Delitzsch. Herr von Wurmb looks upon the organization as far more dangerous and its adherents in Prussia as more numerous. He said that although Saxony was the headquarters of the movement, there were active agents at work in Berlin and elsewhere, whose names were perfectly well known to the Police and whose proceedings were narrowly watched. On my asking Monsieur de Wurmb if he could give me any detailed information in regard to the numbers of the adherents of the "Internationale" in Prussia, and of the funds which they were supposed to have at their disposal, he obligingly promised to send me a Memorandum on the subject, which I regret to say, however, I have not yet received.

³³*Deutsche Fortschrittspartei.*

³⁴Constituency of Glauchau-Meerane.

Although strikes are multiplying in every direction in Prussia, and the relations between Capital and Labour are in that state of disturbance and transition which inclines the working classes to listen with more favour than they otherwise would to the evil counsels and to the pestilent doctrines which form the creed of the “Internationale”, I am inclined to agree with Monsieur Schulze-Delitzsch in thinking that its importance, as far as Prussia at least is concerned, is overrated, and that it is not likely to increase. The Ministerial and Conservative Press here take the opposite view and recommend the active interference of the Executive Power for the suppression of a dangerous league which strikes at the foundations of social and political order. The “National Zeitung”, the organ of the most numerous and influential section of the Liberal Party, contained, a short time ago, a remarkable article on the “Internationale” of which I enclose a French translation extracted from the “Correspondance de Berlin”.³⁵

I shall not fail to revert to this subject of the “Internationale”, as soon as I can collect any trustworthy information which may be of use or interest to Her Majesty’s Government.

**FO 64/722: George Petre to Earl Granville, No 303,
Berlin, 30 September 1871**

[Received 2 October by Messenger Haworth. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate / Florence / Rome; G[ranville]]

Comments on congress of Old Catholics at Munich; reflections on political Catholicism

The general tendency of the comments which have appeared in the Press of North Germany upon the proceedings of the recent Congress of Old Catholics at Munich is extremely favourable both to the motives and to the aspirations of the Party which has so boldly raised the standard of religious freedom within the Catholic Church of Germany, but in estimating the depth, vitality and future importance of a movement which, if successful, cannot fail to be productive of great results both political and religious, the verdict on the whole is adverse to the probability of its taking any deep root in Germany.³⁶ To

³⁵Enclosure: clipping from *Correspondance de Berlin* (undated). The article was originally published in the *National-Zeitung* on 30 July 1871.

³⁶The Old Catholic movement was formed in opposition to the First Vatican Council (1869–1870), especially the dogma of papal infallibility (see n. 11 in Munich section). The congress in Munich took place from 22 to 24 September where it was resolved to establish distinct parishes. In June 1873 Joseph Hubert Reinkens was elected first bishop of the Old Catholic Church in Germany.

do so it must penetrate from the intellectual circle of its present leaders to the clergy and through them to the Catholic populations. Neither the adhesion, more or less avowed, of even a considerable portion of the educated classes of Catholic Germany, nor the “benevolent” neutrality, if not the active assistance of the State can succeed, it is thought, in galvanising a movement of this nature into permanent strength or vitality, so long as the great body of the Clergy and the whole of the Episcopate refuse to join it.

It cannot be denied that the Clergy of Germany so far, with few exceptions, not only stand aloof, but are bitterly hostile to the Anti-infallibilist Agitation. Whether they will continue to be so time alone will shew, but on this will depend whether the “Old Catholic” like the “German Catholic” movement some years ago of which Ronge was the founder and apostle,³⁷ will gradually sink into obscurity, or whether it will spread and grow into a powerful instrument of religious Reform.

It is reported, though I cannot vouch for the truth of the statement, that the Prussian Bishops at the meeting which they held at Fulda in the early part of this month, decided upon appealing directly to the Emperor to protect the Catholic Church in his dominions from the persecution with which they assume it is to be threatened.³⁸ It is difficult to believe that any such danger is seriously felt, but if so I need hardly add that it is purely imaginary. Nothing can be more preposterous than to suppose that there is any intention either on the part of the Government or the Parliament of this country to interfere in any way with the rights and liberties which the Prussian Constitution guarantees to the Roman Catholic Church, although the Government refuses to admit, and acts in conformity with the refusal, that those Catholics who reject the doctrine of Papal Infallibility cease thereby to be members of the Religious Body which the Constitution recognizes as the Catholic Church.

In the meanwhile the “Germania”,³⁹ the able organ of the Catholic Party in the Reichstag, has certainly of late somewhat modified the asperity of its tone, when speaking of the Government, and although it does not abandon any of the pretensions of the Party which it represents, shews nevertheless a desire to avoid in the coming Session of the Reichstag anything which may tend to widen the breach between it and the Chancellor of the Empire.

³⁷The schismatic *Deutschkatholiken* were formed in December 1844.

³⁸George Petre is referring to the petition (*Immediateingabe*) of the Prussian episcopacy to Wilhelm I and accompanying memorandum of 7 September 1871; the bishops met at Fulda from 5 to 7 September.

³⁹*Germania – Zeitung für das Deutsche Volk* (Berlin).

**FO 64/723: Lord Augustus Loftus to Earl Granville,
[unnumbered], Baden Baden, 3 October 1871**

[Received 7 October by post. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; Chief Clerk; G[ranville]]

Audience with emperor and empress to deliver letters of recall

I have the Honor to inform Your Lordship that on my return to Berlin on the 22nd Ultimo M^r Petre delivered to me, in conformity with Your Lordship's instructions, The Queen's Letters to The Emperor and Empress⁴⁰ of Germany, notifying my recall from the post of Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Court of Prussia.⁴¹

On my return here I had the Honor of presenting Her Majesty's Letters at an Audience of Their Imperial Majesties on the 2nd Instant[.]

The Emperor was pleased to receive me in the most gracious and cordial manner, and to express to me His great regret at my departure from his Court. He referred in the most kind terms, to the many years He had known me at the Court of Berlin, commencing with the last years of the reign of His Father,⁴² and assured me that His sentiments towards me were unchanged, and would ever remain the same.

His Majesty, in referring to the great Events of the past year stated that He had never expected to see the realisation of the national aspiration for the restoration of the German Empire. He had always thought that this great work would be reserved for His Son or even His Grandson,⁴³ but the Decrees of Providence overruled all Human Calculations.

"You know", said His Majesty, "how thoroughly Prussian I am at heart, and you can therefore understand the greatness of the sacrifice I made when I consented to give up my Prussian, for the Imperial, Title."

His Majesty then observed that He had been quite unprepared for the offer of the Imperial Crown which had been conveyed to Him by the King of Bavaria thro Prince Luitpold⁴⁴ – but it was an offer which on national grounds He did not feel Himself justified in declining.

⁴⁰Augusta.

⁴¹The letters were sent to Petre in Granville's dispatch No 95 on 18 September 1871. On 16 October 1871 Loftus was appointed ambassador to St Petersburg.

⁴²Loftus began his diplomatic career in 1837 as attaché in Berlin, during the reign of Friedrich Wilhelm III.

⁴³Friedrich Wilhelm and Wilhelm.

⁴⁴The so-called *Kaiserbrief* of 30 November 1870, delivered by Prince Luitpold on 3 December; see n. 6 in this section.

After conversing with me on other subjects, His Majesty took leave of me, shaking me most cordially by the hand, and expressing a hope that I would never pass Berlin without announcing myself to Him.

Subsequently I was received by the Empress,⁴⁵ and had the Honor of placing in Her Majesty's hands The Queen's letter.

The Empress expressed great interest for Her Majesty The Queen and stated that She had received that morning a more satisfactory account of Her Majesty's Health.⁴⁶ The Empress spoke in the warmest terms of affection for The Queen and expressed the deepest interest in the Health and Welfare of Her Majesty and of the Royal Family.

On taking leave, Her Majesty was graciously pleased to express Her sincere regret at my leaving the Court of Berlin, assuring me that I bore with me Her Majesty's high esteem, and regard.

In accordance with Your Lordship's instructions I have forwarded the Queens Letters notifying my Recall to the respective Ministers⁴⁷ for Foreign Affairs of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburgh Schwerin and the Grand Duke of Mecklenburgh Strelitz for presentation to these Royal Highnesses, as also to the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburgh Schwerin and the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburgh Strelitz.⁴⁸

I propose leaving this on the 6th Instant, and shall return to England via Paris.

FO 64/724: Odo Russell to Earl Granville, No 1, Berlin, 4 December 1871

[Received 8 December by post. For: The Queen / Gladstone; G[ranville]]

Russell's arrival in Berlin; presentation of credentials

In obedience to Your Lordship's instruction, N^o 1 of the 8th ultimo, I have the honour to report that I left London on the 26th and reached Berlin late on the 28th ultimo.

Early on the following morning Prince Bismarck sent Monsieur Abeken, one of the Under Secretaries whom I had known at Versailles last winter,⁴⁹ to welcome me in the most gratifying terms on my arrival, and to say that the Prince being laid up with influenza, he regretted his

⁴⁵Augusta.

⁴⁶In August and September 1871 Victoria suffered from an abscess in her arm.

⁴⁷Henning Graf von Bassewitz and Wilhelm von Hammerstein.

⁴⁸Friedrich Franz II and Marie (Mecklenburg-Schwerin); Friedrich Wilhelm II and Augusta (Mecklenburg-Strelitz).

⁴⁹From 12 November 1870 to 8 March 1871 Russell had been on a special mission to Bismarck at the headquarters of the German army in Versailles.

inability to be present at the Audience The Emperor would grant me immediately on His Majesty's return from Hanover but that Monsieur Delbrück, the President of the Imperial Chancery, would take his place at the presentation of my Credentials.

I then made the customary official application and received an immediate reply from the Foreign Office, to the effect that Their Majesties The Emperor and Empress,⁵⁰ who were expected to return to Berlin on Saturday night, would receive me on Monday afternoon, and Monsieur de Röder, the Master of the Ceremonies and "Introducteur du Corps Diplomatique", called on me at once to make all necessary arrangements.

On Saturday night Prince Bismarck who had been too ill to see anyone lately, made an exception in my favour and invited me to call on him. He received me with the most flattering cordiality, but I regretted to find him lying on his sofa and looking very ill and weak.

Today at 3,30 P.M. the Master of the Ceremonies called with three State Carriages to convey the Members of the Embassy,

M^r Petre,

M^r Plunkett,

M^r Bentinck,

Major General Walker and

Captain Goodenough,

to the Palace, where we were received with the Customary Ceremonial by the High Officers of the Imperial Household and President Delbrück and conducted into the presence of His Majesty The Emperor-King and subsequently of Her Majesty The Empress-Queen, who were graciously pleased to receive the Letters of Her Majesty The Queen,⁵¹ of which I was the bearer, with expression and assurances of friendship, goodwill and respect, that augured well for the future relations of the two Empires and filled me with loyal gratitude.

We took our leave and returned to the Embassy as we had come and later in the evening I had the honour of being received in a manner, no less gracious and gratifying by Their Imperial and Royal Highnesses The Crown Prince and Crown Princess of Germany.⁵²

The other Members of the Royal Family not being yet established at Berlin, Prince Bismarck said I should only be received by Them after my return from England.

⁵⁰Augusta.

⁵¹Letters of credence to the emperor and empress were transmitted to Russell on 8 November 1871. Russell was appointed on 16 October.

⁵²Friedrich Wilhelm and Victoria.

Under these circumstances I shall avail myself of Your Lordship's permission to return at once to England and leave Her Majesty's Embassy as heretofore under the able charge of M^r Petre.

FO 64/742: Odo Russell to Earl Granville, Most Confidential, No 12, Berlin, 24 February 1872

[Received 26 February by Messenger Johnson. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; G[ranville]]

Bismarck's political inclinations in relation to school inspection bill

Since my arrival at Berlin,⁵³ the chief subject of conversation in political circles has been the strong and straightforward course taken by Prince Bismarck in the debate on the School inspection Bill.⁵⁴

The Imperial Chancellor having announced his firm resolve to ensure the enactment of the Bill, which passed the lower House on the 13th instant by a majority of 52, but has still to be discussed in the Upper House on the 5th proximo the Poles, Catholics and Conservatives feel that no effort on their part can counteract his iron will, and the result is a feeling of bitter disappointment and of increased hatred on the part of the Opposition, and of exultation on the part of the national majority.

And should even the Government Bill not pass the Prussian Upper House, which is unlikely as matters stand, Prince Bismarck would have but to refer it to the Imperial German Parliament and Council of the Realm⁵⁵ to ensure its almost unanimous adoption.

The point, however, which gives rise to more comment and speculation than any other is the fact that Prince Bismarck by his speeches on this question has virtually broken with the old Conservative and Catholic parties, and placed himself at the head of the great National German Party, that party which desires the absorption of Prussia and the Minor States into one great centralized German Fatherland.

People ask themselves whether Prince Bismarck was merely carried away by the heat of debate, or whether he had calculated the

⁵³Russell, who returned to England after presenting his credentials on 4 December 1871, arrived in Berlin on 16 February 1872.

⁵⁴The Prussian school inspection bill, which brought all schools under the control and jurisdiction of the state, was introduced to the Prussian house of deputies on 8 February 1872; it was passed by the upper house on 8 March 1872 and came into effect on 11 March 1872.

⁵⁵Federal Council (*Bundesrat*).

consequences of his threats beforehand? It is said that by threatening the Conservatives with the imposition of the distasteful school supervision Law by every means at his command he has alienated for ever his old political friends who brought him into power, – that by threatening to reimpose by force the use of the German language on Poland he has again kindled the revolutionary spirit of the Poles, – and that by denouncing the Catholic Clergy to the nation for their anti-German opposition to the new Empire he has declared War to the Vatican.

For my part I have not a doubt that Prince Bismarck had well-matured reasons for making those declarations, which he himself calls the most important he ever uttered in his life, and Time, I think will prove that he is acting for the good of Germany.

For his own good Prince Bismarck by so suddenly taking the lead of the great liberal National party has secured one great advantage, and that is that in the event of the Emperor's William's death, whose health is said to be failing, and of the Crown Prince's⁵⁶ accession to the Throne, whose enlightened Constitutional Tendencies prognosticate the selection of the most popular administrations, no other more powerfully popular Minister could be charged with the formation of a new Cabinet and the Crown Prince will find it impossible to govern the German Empire without him.

FO 64/743: Odo Russell to Earl Granville, No 69, Berlin, 30 March 1872

[Received 1 April by Messenger Hare. For: Gladstone / Circulate / Home Secretary, 4 April; G[ranville]]

Measures against foreign members of the International Workingmen's Association in London

In transmitting to Your Lordship M^r Consul General Crowe's N^o 4 of the 28th instant, I must call attention to the importance of these vigorous and successful State measures against the foreign Members of the International Workmens' Association in London as the inauguration of a policy which may lead in the future to questions between the Governments of England and of Germany.⁵⁷ The London

⁵⁶Friedrich Wilhelm.

⁵⁷In his dispatch to Earl Granville Crowe reported that the Leipzig police director, in a local proclamation of 23 February, had prohibited the recruitment of members and payment of subscriptions to the International Workingmen's Association in London; Crowe's dispatch also dealt with the trial and the subsequent imprisonment of August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht in March 1871.

Central Committee will resent the prosecution of its members abroad, – their Agents will invade the Continent coming from England, – and foreign Governments will resent the existence of the Committee in London and of their Agents abroad.

The German Governments, as Your Lordship knows, hold that the two greatest enemies of the temporal and spiritual development of Germany are the International of London and the Church of Rome. The International because it undermines the temporal Authority of the State, and the Church, because it imposes its Spiritual Authority on the people.

To both these so-thought revolutionary associations the German Government has declared War, and the coming struggle will be long and painful.

FO 64/745: Francis R. Plunkett to Earl Granville, No 35, Berlin, 30 July 1872

[Received 1 August by Post. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; G[ranville]]

Working-class riots in Berlin

I regret to have to inform Your Lordship that some rather serious rioting has been going on for the last four evenings in the Blumen Strasse, a quarter of Berlin, chiefly inhabited by the working classes.

The tumult began on the afternoon of the 25th instant. A carpenter having been turned out by his landlord for non payment of rent a waggon was sent for to fetch away the trunks, furniture &c, but as he would not come to terms as to the price for transport, the waggoner drove off leaving the furniture piled up in the street.

A crowd soon formed which without enquiring into the matter at once took part with the dispossessed carpenter and began smashing the windows of the Landlord's house and breaking the street lamps.

The Police interfered but were received with stones and hisses: they soon however succeeded in dispersing the crowd and made some arrests.

In the evening a fresh crowd re-assembled and were again dispersed.

On the two following evenings similar scenes again took place on the same spot with this difference that the crowd were always getting more numerous, and the resistance to the Police being greater, although over four hundred Constables were on the ground, they had to draw their swords and some severe wounds were inflicted.

On the 29th a notification of the Acting President of Police was posted about the town warning the Public to avoid the streets in

which the tumults were going on. Nevertheless the crowds went on increasing until at last on Sunday night the disorder got so bad that a small force of Cavalry was sent down to help the Police and quell the riot.

At present I believe tranquillity is re-established but it is nevertheless still thought prudent to keep a considerable force of police in the neighbourhood, and sentries have been posted at the end of the street to warn off any crowd which should attempt to form.

Although these disturbances are not very serious, for there is no doubt the Government can put them down the moment it chooses to make use of the troops, nevertheless they are not without significance as a proof of the lawless spirit which is gradually cropping up in this city, and which to a certain extent arises from the sudden increased prosperity of the Nation.

Stragglers from all parts crowd into Berlin expecting wildly to get some share in that great wealth which Germany has extracted from France.⁵⁸ Once here, they find that although wages are much higher than in their country villages, everything else also is so much dearer that they get but little benefit from the change and when finally they find themselves unable to pay the enormous and preposterous rents which are now demanded for workmen's lodgings their discontent breaks forth against the landlord who to them appears the representative of all that is avaricious and grasping.

The question of lodgings for workmen is a vital one for Berlin, and unless something be done to supply the present excessive demand there is for that class of accommodation I much fear that the present riots will be followed before very many months are over by other and far more serious demonstrations.

FO 64/746: Francis R. Plunkett to Earl Granville, Most Confidential, No 88, Berlin, 31 August 1872

[Received 2 September by Messenger Vivian. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Paris – confidential; G[ranville]]

Three emperors' meeting in Berlin; rumours about Bismarck's health

Your Lordship's attention has doubtless been attracted to the rumours so persistently repeated in various Berlin newspapers that perhaps the

⁵⁸Plunkett is referring to the French war indemnities. See n. 107 in this section.

state of Prince Bismarck's health would prevent his attending the Interviews between the three Emperors.⁵⁹

The report made its first appearance about ten days ago in the "Spencersche Zeitung", a journal which is often made use of to feel the public pulse. It was then taken up and explained away to a certain extent, by the "Kölnische Zeitung", and the public had ceased to occupy itself with a rumour which seemed from the first to be perfectly incredible; when suddenly it appeared again three days ago in the columns of the "Nord Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung", a newspaper which is known to be in close connection with the Government circles.

It is impossible to suppose that this persistent renewal of such a report can have been made by the three newspapers which I have cited without a hint having been given to that effect from Varzin,⁶⁰ and on the other hand as His Serene Highness's health is not believed to be worse than usual, and certainly is not as bad as to excuse absence from Berlin for the few days during which so many august personages will be congregated within its walls, the question arises, what can have been the object which is sought to be obtained by this mysterious announcement?

I hope Your Lordship will not consider it presumptuous if I venture to express my opinion, founded on a comparison of the various conversations which I have had during the past week with different people, that the explanation of the enigma will be found in the Prince's determination to keep the direction of the political part of the meeting in his own hands and not to tolerate any interference in the subjects which he has decided shall be discussed on this occasion. I believe more especially that the notion, which has been freely spoken of, that the Emperor of Austria will take the opportunity to suggest that some arrangement should be made with reference to the property of the Royal family of Hanover, and to the Brunswick Succession Question,⁶¹ is peculiarly offensive to his Serene Highness and there are not wanting people who suggest that the late indisposition of the Emperor William at Gastein⁶² which prevented him paying the contemplated visit to the Emperor of Austria at Ischl when of course Prince Bismarck would not have been present, was the result of a strong desire on His Majesty's part to avoid offending so powerful a Statesman.

⁵⁹The Austrian, German, and Russian emperors met in Berlin from 5 to 11 September 1872 (known as the three emperors' meeting).

⁶⁰Bismarck's Pomeranian country residence in Warcino.

⁶¹The private property of the Hanoverian king was confiscated in 1866 after the Prussian annexation of Hanover. Despite being deposed as King of Hannover, and Bismarck's resistance against a Hanoverian pretender, Georg V upheld his claim to succeed Wilhelm – who was childless – as Duke of Brunswick.

⁶²Wilhelm stayed in Gastein from 5 to 28 August 1872.

It may perhaps also be intended as a warning to prevent any allusion to the Danish question on the part of the Emperor of Russia.⁶³

Prince Bismarck has already shown on other occasions, as for instance, during the negotiations at Versailles,⁶⁴ his determination not to brook interference of any kind with his arrangements; and in the present case he will certainly not accept any advice from other countries which would be in opposition to the policy which he is prepared to carry out.

I may add I am informed by a German Official who saw the Emperor yesterday after his arrival that he did not suffer at all from his journey, and is looking remarkably well.

I learn from M. de Balan that Prince Bismarck will arrive tomorrow night, and will not only be here during the Imperial Interviews, but will also accompany His Majesty on his visit to Marienburg to assist at the fêtes which are shortly to take place there in honour of the Centenary anniversary of the annexation of Prussian Poland.⁶⁵

FO 64/747: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, No 269, Berlin, 19 October 1872

[Received 21 October by Messenger Ball. For: The Queen / Gladstone; G[ranville]]

German press hostile towards England; general suspicion of Britain; analysis of public opinion

Your Lordship has probably observed that for some weeks past attacks on England have been cropping up again in the German Press.

Here they are considered as having been called forth by the critical tone of our Press in regard to the Imperial Congress at Berlin⁶⁶ and to the option in Alsace-Lorraine.⁶⁷

The Saturday Review of the 5th inst. in an Article headed "Church and State in Germany" comments with great good sense on the

⁶³In 1871 the Danish question revolved around the provisions of Article 5 of the Treaty of Prague of 23 August 1866, which stipulated a plebiscite for the future rule of North Schleswig.

⁶⁴Russell is referring to the negotiations with France which led to the preliminary peace treaty of 26 February 1871.

⁶⁵The festivities took place on 13 September 1877 and celebrated Frederick the Great's *Besitzergreifungspatent* of 13 September 1772, by which, as negotiated between Austria Prussia and Russia (First Polish Partition), Polish territories were formally incorporated into Prussia.

⁶⁶Three emperors' meeting from 5 to 11 September 1872.

⁶⁷According to Article 2 of the Treaty of Frankfurt of 10 May 1871, inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine had until 1 October 1872 to decide whether they wanted to keep their French nationality. If 'yes' the so-called *optants* had to leave the newly founded *Reichsland* by 1 October; otherwise German authorities considered their decision as invalid.

“sensitiveness” of the German Papers to English Criticism and the “Kölnische Zeitung” which is generally fair and friendly towards us, in an Article dated from Köln on the 7th instant, fully acknowledges the truth of those comments, and recommends its Contemporaries to be less susceptible.

After a careful investigation I have come to the conclusion that there exists in Germany, lurking in the public mind, an uncomfortable Suspicion that England has more sympathy for France than for Germany, and has not cordially accepted the realization of her National Ideal.

I can only compare it to the erroneous and deeprooted conviction of every American that England favored the South against the North.⁶⁸

This suspicion owes its origin to the general absence of faith in German aspirations manifested by our Press from 1848 to 1870, and latterly to the Impression that the struggle with France was prolonged and many German lives lost after Sedan by the Arms and munitions of War our Laws of Neutrality could not prevent the French Government from purchasing in England.⁶⁹

Our Schleswig-Holstein and Luxembourg policy⁷⁰ is still considered as having delayed the establishment of German Unity, and our Neutrality as not sufficiently benevolent to deserve the gratitude of the German Nation.

So susceptible is the public mind that the visit of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales to Trouville and the speech of Captain Vansittart at Havre are talked of as demonstrations in favor of France and against the homage paid to the German Empire by the Sovereigns of Austria and Russia.⁷¹

Even the present negotiations of Her Majesty’s Government for a Treaty of Commerce with France are looked upon as a concession to the enemies of Germany.

On the other hand enlightened liberal and constitutional Germans reckon a close Alliance with England among the national Aspirations that have not yet been realized, and deplore that for some

⁶⁸Russell is referring to the American Civil War, 1861–1865.

⁶⁹Private arms’ exports from Britain to France continued after the Battle of Sedan of 1 September 1870 despite German remonstrances. This practice followed British interpretations of international law and was not affected by the British proclamation of neutrality of 19 July 1870.

⁷⁰Russell is here referring to British policies with regard to the Schleswig-Holstein question, in particular the Second Schleswig War of 1864, and the Luxembourg crises of 1867.

⁷¹Edward visited Trouville on 22 August 1872 and met briefly with President Thiers. On 15 September, when proposing a toast to the municipality of Le Havre, Vansittart, captain of the iron-clad *Sultan*, declared that public feeling in England was ‘more than favourable to France’.

unaccountable reason Public Opinion in England does not appear to share the wish of Germany for Unity of purpose with a kindred and powerful Race.

All things considered, I cannot but think that however sensitive the Public Press may be under the present transitional circumstances about foreign criticism, the seeds of critical understanding with us lay buried in the depths of the German mind, and that the blessings of peace, freedom, and Public Life are necessary to drain the land, before those seeds can ripen into the international friendship and goodwill both countries must have so much at heart in the future.

FO 64/747: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, Most Confidential, No 285, Berlin, 30 October 1872

[Received 5 November by Messenger Robbins. For: The Queen / Gladstone; Qy: Paris; G[ranville]]

German ill-feeling towards England; Prussian army unwilling to share information with British military attaché; review of Bismarck's foreign and internal policy

General Walker in his Despatch N^o 107 of this day's date, enclosed to Your Lordship in my Despatch N^o 284 of this day, makes some remarks on the present spirit of the Prussian Army to which I beg to call your Lordship's attention.

He says he does not find the same willingness to furnish information for the use of Her Majesty's Government, as was the case previous and up to 1870, – the favoured nations being at present the Russians and the Americans, whilst next to the French, the least in favour are the English, the fact being that “everybody feels that the War of Revenge is a certainty, and values only those (Nations) who are likely to be of use to them (Germany) when that time arrives”.

To the General's remarks I can only add that they unfortunately apply to the civil as well as to the military element in Berlin. The home and foreign policy of the German Government is now based on the conviction that the French war of revenge is inevitable.

And that conviction is based on the rapid recovery of France who is making an Army and paying her debt⁷² without any effort or hesitation after a War that Germany intended to be decisive and final.

Convinced as the Germans are that the French will attack them again, they are right to prepare for defence, and they are doing so with all the powerful means at their command.

⁷²For the French war indemnities, see n. 107 in this section.

I leave it to General Walker to report on their improved military organisation which will render their Army invincible, while it lasts, and there is no reason why it should not last until they have absorbed the balance of Power in Europe.

Experience has shewn the army the mistakes of the Civil Authorities. – Had they but been allowed to keep Belfort and Rheims⁷³ and to claim another milliard or two, France could not have recovered so rapidly as to render another war inevitable.

But the teachings of experience are never lost on the German mind, and while General Moltke is preparing another great war, Prince Bismarck is making alliances to isolate France, and deprive her of her friends.

His anticlerical policy is intended to neutralize and render harmless the sympathies France might derive from the Roman Catholic element in Germany and to secure the active cooperation of Italy against France as the eldest son of the Church and natural Protector of the Pope. The Bishop of Rome shall in future be appointed by the German Emperor.

By renewing the old relationship of Prussia with Russia, and telling Germany that she has no interests in the East, the great Chancellor has rendered Russian leanings towards France objectless, since Germany promises to be neutral in Eastern Affairs.

By joining hands with Russia to protect Austria, Prince Bismarck has acquired the faculty to break up Austria into German and Slave Provinces if ever her Statesmen ventured upon a revival of Count Beust's pro-French policy which cost him his political life.⁷⁴

Meanwhile the alliance of the three Emperors⁷⁵ with their armies enables Prince Bismarck to view the existence of the minor Powers of Europe with indifference.

England alone remains unconquered and unconquerable with her Neutrality, her Fleet and her Freedom, – three black spots in his political horizon. Her neutrality, because it might again prove benevolent to France, – Her fleet, because Germany has none to rival it, – Her Freedom, because the example of Freedom so near Germany is fatal to the rule of Blood and Iron.

⁷³Reims was occupied by German troops on 5 September 1870, Belfort (after a 103-day siege by German troops) on 18 February 1871. Under the terms of the Treaty of Frankfurt, Belfort, despite belonging to the annexed Haut-Rhin department, remained French.

⁷⁴Beust was dismissed as Austrian chancellor and foreign minister on 8 November 1871.

⁷⁵Russell is referring to the three emperors' meeting in Berlin in September 1872, which led to the creation of the League of the Three Emperors on 22 October 1873 (see n. 108 in this section).

That is the reason why General Walker has observed with great truth that one of the nations most favoured by Prince Bismarck at Berlin, is America.

**FO 64/748: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville,
Confidential, No 317, Berlin, 19 November 1872**

[Received 25 November by Messenger Hare. For: The Queen / Gladstone; G[ranville]]

Political crisis in Prussia; conflicts between National-Liberals and Bismarck versus Conservatives, Ecclesiasticals, and Particularists; reform of Herrenhaus

The Prussian Correspondent⁷⁶ of the Times in his letter on the 15th instant, describing the necessity to break up the Conservative and Clerical opposition in the Prussian House of Peers, says:⁷⁷

“At a juncture such as the present, the German Emperor and Government deem it somewhat dangerous to continue in a state of dependence on the views of these Tory politicians and they have therefore determined to break the resistance once for all. France is arming with a view to revenge. The Pope, France’s Van, has already begun the attack. There is no time to be lost in completing the German defences, in warding off the hostile skirmishers who are already penetrating into the camp and in securing the hearty assistance of the popular party patriotically elated now”.

These few lines, from a Clever Prussian pen, accurately describe the popular feeling. The liberal National party are elated because they are confident that, in assuming their Leadership, Prince Bismarck has entered on the path of reform so long advocated by them in opposition, –i.e. the neutralization of the Conservative, Ecclesiastical and particularist Elements in Germany, and the Centralization of Power through a really national representation of the people.

Their confidence in him is unbounded, because they think that he is now, in his retirement at Varzin wisely and prudently biding his time to complete the work of Unification at Home and of Supremacy abroad he has hitherto so gradually and skilfully carried on against immense odds, and that the coming War against the Clergy, the Pope, France and their allies will end as triumphantly for Germany, thanks

⁷⁶Carl Abel.

⁷⁷“The constitutional crisis in Prussia (From our Prussian Correspondent)”, Berlin, 12 November 1872 in *The Times*, 15 November 1872.

to the Chancellor's genius, as the Wars of the past against Denmark, Austria, and France.⁷⁸

Whatever may be in store for the future, it now appears that the Emperor, who has twice summoned Prince Bismarck to his presence in vain, his health not admitting of the journey, will not go the whole length in reforming the House of Peers recommended by his Chancellor and expected by his people. It is asserted that the loyal Peers have offered to obey their sovereign and surrender their feudal rights to save their House, and that the Emperor will, in consequence, select the forty new Peers who are to form the future Government majority among the Squirarchy and Dignataries [*sic*] of the State, whose presence in the Upper Chamber will not alter its constitution in the sense desired by the people.⁷⁹

The crisis in Parliament, and the agitation in the Press will therefore probably continue even after the present difficulty has been overcome by the creation of a Government majority in the Prussian House of Peers.

FO 64/748: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, Secret, No 358, Berlin, 22 December 1872

[Received 30 December by Messenger Robbins. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Prince of Wales]; Circulate after the holiday; G[ranville]

Interview with Bismarck outlining his opinions on the press, state of Germany, crown, and cabinet

Prince Bismarck's Conversations are sometimes marked by such startling frankness that to report them appears a breach of confidence, and it is not without hesitation that I place on record the following communications he made to me during his two visits to this Embassy yesterday and the day before.

His manner was, as usual, very cordial:

He said he wished to tell me the truth of what was going on, – the Berlin Press having misunderstood the drift of his policy.

He had told me on former occasions that he could not carry on the Government of Germany with his present colleagues, who were not equal to the situation, – that he had asked the Emperor to let him form the Administration the country required, – but that His Majesty

⁷⁸The Second Schleswig-Holstein War of 1864, the Austro-Prussian War of 1864, and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871.

⁷⁹In response to opposition to government policies, Bismarck's plans for reform consisted of transforming the upper house of the Prussian *Landtag* into an advisory council. For the enlargement of the *Herrenhaus*, see n. 82 in this section.

with advancing years, suffered from hesitation and procrastination, and could not make up his mind to part with the Ministers He was accustomed to:

Besides which His Majesty liked to be His own Premier, to deal with each Department separately, and to work one Minister against the other, and “diviser pour mieux regner”⁸⁰ as the French called it.

The Emperor’s hesitation to adopt his advice, the Chancellor said, amounted to a want of confidence in him, which was offensive and undeserved, considering the intimate relations that had existed between them for 20 Years, when The King was Crown Prince, and lived at Coblenz and Baden, and he was Prussian Minister at Francfort, – the services he had been able to render since then to his Royal Master were surely sufficient proof of his loyalty and Capability to conduct the affairs of Prussia and of Germany.

During his illness and absence from Berlin,⁸¹ Prince Bismarck went on to say, Count Eulenburg, who was a fool, and General Roon, who was in his dotage, had mismanaged the Bill for the “Abolition of Feudal Rights”, which was an ill-digested measure, and had misled the old Emperor, who did not understand the question, into insulting the Conservative Supporters of His Crown by swamping the House of Lords without reforming it:⁸² The Prussian Conservatives were loyal and plucky, but devoid of political capacity, and thought conservatism consisted in resisting administrative improvements, – but they were manageable enough when matters were properly explained to them.

Thanks to Eulenburg’s and Roon’s blunders, the Conservatives were running riot, and voting with the Ultramontane enemies of the Dynasty.

But by far the most serious impediment he, Prince Bismarck, had to contend with, was The Empress:⁸³ Her Majesty had the advantage over him of breakfasting with The Emperor, and of looking over the morning Papers with His Majesty, when She found daily opportunities of fighting the battles of the Clericals, Her spiritual and political Directors, and of undermining The Emperor’s confidence in him (– Bismarck –) whose services Her Majesty had unhappily never appreciated.

⁸⁰French proverb: ‘divide and rule’.

⁸¹With a brief interruption in September, when he attended the three emperors’ meeting, Bismarck stayed at Varzin for almost seven months and returned to Berlin on 14 December 1872.

⁸²The new *Kreisordnung* of 13 December 1872, an administrative reform of the districts in the five eastern provinces of Prussia, which, for example, abolished the remaining manorial police powers, was adopted by the upper house after the creation of 24 new peers (*Pairsschub*).

⁸³Augusta.

When the Emperor agreed in Her views She was in the habit of saying to Him; “You will never have the Courage to repeat that to Bismarck!”

After breakfast, The Emperor of course met him prepared for resistance, and it became his laborious and wearisome duty to counteract The Empress’s influence by arguments and persuasions, which often called forth the Emperor’s tears, His Majesty not having really sufficiently studied or understood the requirements of His new Empire to have a practical opinion in the matter.

Under these circumstances the Prussian Government was like a coach with eight horses harnessed to its four wheels.

He could no longer consent to be one of them and wear out his strength in matters of administrative detail, while the consolidation and peaceful development of the great German Fatherland demanded all his energies.

In asking The Emperor to relieve him of the Prussian Premiership, he expected to free himself from all these petty annoyances that wasted the time he required to carry out the higher and more important duties of German Chancellor, but he reserved his post of Foreign Secretary because the foreign interests of the Prussian Kingdom were identical with those of the German Empire.⁸⁴

I asked Prince Bismarck why the conflict he complained of with the Crown and his colleagues should cease, since he remained, as Foreign Secretary, a Member of the Prussian Cabinet, and though no longer at its head, still to all intents and purposes responsible to the Sovereign and the Country for the acts of his Colleagues?

Prince Bismarck replied that, practically, his Colleagues would find it useless to interfere with his foreign Department, – whilst as Members for Prussia of the Imperial German Council of the Realm (Bundesrath), of which he was the President, they would simply rank with the other German Representatives of Bavaria, Saxony, Württemberg [*sic*], &c. &c. and hold a subordinate position to himself as German Chancellor.

As Prussian Premier, Prince Bismarck explained, he had to waste his time in battling for The King’s Sanction to every administrative measure in the Kingdom – a duty that would now devolve on General Roon, the future President of the Prussian Cabinet, – whilst as sole responsible Minister for Germany, (the Chancellor of The Empire having no Colleagues) his, Prince Bismarck’s sanction and signature was indispensable to the German Emperor’s Decrees.

⁸⁴On 15 December 1872 Bismarck asked the emperor for dismissal as Prussian minister president; on 21 December his (first) tenure ended.

On taking his leave, Prince Bismarck shook me cordially and cheerfully by the hand saying that, thanks to this gradual growth of his power in the State, he could devote the rest of his life to the good of Germany, and the peace of Europe with increasing prospects of success.

Whether Prince Bismarck has held similar language to my Colleagues or not, I have not yet been able to ascertain.

The general impression in the Public is that the Chancellor has sustained a defeat in failing to turn out his Colleagues, Eulenburg, Roon, and Itzenplitz, whilst The Emperor, by passive resistance to his caprices has had the triumph over him of keeping the Ministers in office Bismarck was intriguing to turn out.

My impression is that Prince Bismarck is reaping the fruits of the plot his ambition has inspired him to work out in his retreat at Varzin. It is not the first time he has forced the King to carry out a policy His Majesty had neither contemplated nor intended.

Left to Himself, King William would not have planned and undertaken the Danish, the Austrian or the French War,⁸⁵ none of which he conscientiously approved of.

In following the extraordinary phases of Prince Bismarck's progress to power, I cannot but feel reminded of Wallenstein and ask myself how long The Emperor will submit to his tyranny?

**FO 64/748: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, No 360,
Secret, Berlin, 24 December 1872**

[Received 30 December by messenger. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Mr Cardwell / Circulate after the holiday; G[ranville]]

Remarks on General Walker's observation concerning a potential German invasion of England; state of Anglo-German affairs

I must add a few remarks to General Walker's Despatch N^o 199 of to-days date, on the Invasion of England, herewith enclosed.⁸⁶

That soldiers flushed with Victory and rolling in booty should study and dream of the Invasion of a country known to be richer than, and believed to be allied to, an enemy preparing for a War of Revenge lies in the nature of things.

⁸⁵Wars of 1864, 1866, and 1870–1871.

⁸⁶Enclosure: Walker to Russell, No 133, Confidential, Berlin, 24 December 1872.

Happily, however, for the peace of the World, armies are instruments in the hands of Diplomacy, and the Statesmen of Germany earnestly desire friendship with England rather than War.

It rests, therefore, with His Majesty's Government to neutralize the invading spirit of the Army by cordially meeting the desire of her statesmen for a close and cordial Alliance.

Our present relations with Germany, though peaceful, are not as cordial as they ought to be, because we are still suspected of leanings towards France, which might prove detrimental to German Interests by prolonging the coming War of Revenge, – as our Laws of Neutrality and contraband are thought to have enabled France, by purchasing Arms in England, to prolong the late War after Sedan.

To prevent a recurrence of what was called our “benevolent neutrality” towards France, M^r Bancroft is said to have offered the assistance of America, to occupy the attention of England, and M. de Krause, the German Secretary of Embassy in London to have been instructed to study and report upon the advantages to Germany of hostilities between England and America, as proposed by M^r Bancroft.

Another contingency in which we might be at variance with Germany would be a complication in the East, the possibility of which was foreshadowed in a Leader of the ‘Times’ on the 11th instant.⁸⁷ In that event Germany would joyfully give her moral support to her Russian Ally, for a slice of the Baltic Provinces.

FO 64/767: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, No 56, Berlin, 31 January 1873

[Received 3 February by Messenger Byng Hall. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Lord Kimberley / Colonial Office; Qy: ‘Approve of Lord Odo Russell’s view’; ‘Done’, 10 February; G[ranville]]

Recommendation to not promote emigration to Canada

Your Lordship having granted me permission to use my own discretion in carrying out the instructions conveyed to me in Your Lordship’s Despatch N^o 19 of the 17th instant respecting Emigration to Canada, I beg to be allowed to postpone all action in the matter for the present.⁸⁸

⁸⁷The *Times* leader dealt with the uncertain state of the Ottoman Empire, particularly with regard to growing Russian and diminishing British influence over the sultan.

⁸⁸On 17 January 1873 Granville instructed Russell to refute German warnings to intending emigrants of the hardships that awaited them in Canada. In particular that German emigrants were being deceived by British immigration agents and that, as naturalized subjects, they were only entitled to limited protection by Great Britain when abroad.

My reasons for recommending this course to Your Lordship are:

1st because the object of the Government of Canada might be defeated by raising an international question in favour of immigration at the very moment when the whole of the Politicians and of the Press of Germany are unanimously intent on checking the alarming increase of emigration from the Imperial Fatherland.

2nd because the attacks of the German Newspapers on the immigration arrangements of Canada are founded on Letters from the Emigrants themselves complaining of the disadvantages experienced in Canada, and recommending their families to avoid them by emigrating in preference to the United States, – and

3rd because the statement of the German Consul at Toronto⁸⁹ respecting the inferior position of Germans naturalized in Canada when they leave the country of their adoption is true, and that the Government of Canada is not yet prepared to inform the German Government that the disadvantages accruing therefrom to German Emigrants reported by their Consul have actually been removed.

Your Lordship has probably learnt through Her Majesty's Minister at Washington,⁹⁰ that the German Minister, Baron von Schlözer, has been instructed to negotiate an Emigration Convention with Governor Fish.

**FO 64/768: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville,
Confidential, No 96, Berlin, 22 February 1873**

[Received 24 February by Messenger Harbord. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate;
Qy: Paris / Madrid; G[ranville]]

Likelihood that Bismarck may exploit political crisis in Spain

Lord Lyons in his Despatch to Your Lordship N^o 196 Confidential of the 18th instant reports that the French Government are possessed with the idea that Prince Bismarck will endeavour to take advantage of the present crisis to establish a state of things which may make Spain a dangerous neighbour to France!!⁹¹

Granville attributed these incorrect statements in Prussian newspapers to the German government's desire to check emigration.

⁸⁹Joseph Adolph Simmers.

⁹⁰Edward Thornton.

⁹¹The First Spanish Republic was declared on 11 February 1873.

This impression appears to me well founded.

A practical Statesman like Prince Bismarck, intent on consolidating the national Edifice he has founded and establishing the supremacy of his own Country on a Military, Monarchical and Protestant basis and having still before him the task of fighting the threefold war of revenge with France, the Pope and Republicanism, will not waste the opportunity once more brought about in Spain, of depriving France on an Ally, – Popery of a refuge, and Republicanism of a basis of operation in Europe.

The establishment of another Republic in Europe will be looked upon as a dangerous example to Germany by her Rulers and doubly so if by enjoying the cordial sympathy of liberal England and France Republican Spain appears to add to the moral influence and strength of France and her allies.

It is difficult to penetrate Prince Bismarck's policy but so long as it is anti-republican in principle he is sure of the alliance of Austria and Russia in regard to Spain.

FO 64/772: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, Confidential, No 300, Berlin, 6 June 1873

[Received 9 June by Messenger Leeds. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; G[ranville]]

Negotiation of commercial treaty with Persia; sale of guns to Persia; Reuter's concession

I asked Prince Bismarck whether he was negotiating a Commercial Treaty with Persia, and His Serene Highness told me that he even hoped to sign it before the Shah left, if the Emperor was well enough to attend to business.⁹² The negotiation had commenced about sixteen years ago at St Petersburg between the Prussian and the Persian Minister;⁹³ the two countries not having Representatives of their own at Berlin and Teheran, and had dragged on till now. It was a favoured nation Treaty like those of other Powers, with no special stipulations.

Prince Bismarck then asked me whether Her Majesty's Government would object to the Shah purchasing some of their old Prussian needle guns for Persia, which were to be replaced by the

⁹²Naser al-Din Shah visited Berlin from 31 May to 7 June 1873. The treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation was signed at St Petersburg on 11 June 1873 by the German ambassador and the Persian envoy.

⁹³Karl Anton Philipp von Werther and Mohammad Qassem Khan.

Mauser guns in Germany.⁹⁴ His Majesty had made an offer, and the German War Department were ready to give them cheap.

I said that Her Majesty's Government could not object to the Shah buying guns wherever he pleased, but that His Majesty would perhaps do better for Persia, if he bought new guns instead of old.

Prince Bismarck said he might buy better, but not so cheap, – however nothing would be settled for the present.

His Serene Highness next expressed his surprise at Her Majesty's Government having countenanced Baron Reuter's Concession, which gave him and his Jewish and Persian associates power over half the country, without sufficient credit in the European money market to meet their engagements.⁹⁵

I said that Her Majesty's Government was in no way connected with, or responsible for, Baron Reuter's Concession, who was a private gentleman speculating on his own account.

Prince Bismarck appeared surprised and incredulous, and said that he agreed with the Russian Government in thinking that Concession a misfortune for Persia.

I may as well state here that Baron Reuter called on me, and represented himself as being in communication with Your Lordship about his Concession, and with the Lord Chamberlain⁹⁶ about the Shah's movements, but he asked me for nothing.

His presence at the Crown Prince's⁹⁷ Garden Party in honour of the Shah at Potsdam appeared to surprize the older Berliners very much, who recollect him as a bookseller before he escaped to England from his Creditors in Berlin.

An impression has gone abroad that Her Majesty's Government have contracted at so much a day with the Houses of Reuter and Sassoon, for the reception and entertainment of the Persians in England.⁹⁸ Many of my Colleagues have asked me whether they might contradict this rumour in writing to their respective Governments.

⁹⁴The M71 rifle, developed by Wilhelm und Paul Mauser, was adopted by the German army, with the exception of Bavaria, in March 1872.

⁹⁵On 25 July 1872 the shah granted Reuter an exclusive seventy-year concession which included a railway monopoly and mining rights. The concession was annulled in October 1873.

⁹⁶Francis Seymour, 5th Marquess of Hertford.

⁹⁷Friedrich Wilhelm.

⁹⁸On his European tour the shah visited England from 18 June to 6 July 1873; on 5 July he met with Reuter.

**FO 64/772: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 306, Berlin, 7 June 1873**

[Received 9 June by Messenger Leeds. For: ~~The Queen~~ / Gladstone / Circulate / Copies to: Paris / Lord Chamberlain / Pen a Copy; 'Odo requests that this dispatch should not be forwarded to the Queen. Let Lord Lyons see it confidentially', G[ranville]]

Unfavourable impressions made by shah and his suite in Berlin

M^r. Thomson, Her Majesty's Secretary of Legation at Teheran, will arrive in London as soon as this report, and he will be better able to tell Your Lordship than I can, what impressions the visit to Berlin has made on His Majesty the Shah and his numerous suite.⁹⁹

The impression made by the Persians at Berlin is not exactly a very favourable one. The free and easy manners of the Shah, who is not yet accustomed to the Society of European Ladies, have given offence to the Royal family, the disastrous effects of the Persian encampment in the magnificent apartments of the palace have irritated the Imperial Household, and the habit of His Majesty's followers not to pay for what they order in the Shops has exasperated the Tradespeople of Berlin.

It is to be hoped that before reaching London the Persians will have been persuaded to mend their ways.¹⁰⁰

Steps have already been taken by the Grand Vizier¹⁰¹ and Mirza Malcom Khan to improve the habits and manners of the Suite, but nobody ventures to tell the Shah that he should be punctual, and not keep the Royal family waiting, – that he should not sit down before the Empress¹⁰² can obtain a seat, or take Her Majesty by the Elbow to make her get up, – or put his arm round the back of Her Majesty's Chair at dinner, – or raise his voice so as to startle the Company, or put his fingers into the dishes, or take food out of his mouth again to look at it, after it has been chewed, – or fling it under the table if it does not suite his taste &c &c &c. and Her Majesty The Empress was pleased to tell me at Potsdam that she ardently desired the departure of these "Barbarians", – a sentiment which all the Members of the Royal family, with the sole exception of Her Imperial Highness the Crown Princess,¹⁰³ appeared to share.

The moral sense of the Court is also shocked by the manner in which the Shah consoles himself for the absence of his harem, and if

⁹⁹The shah visited Berlin from 31 May to 7 June 1873.

¹⁰⁰The shah reached London on 18 June 1873.

¹⁰¹Prime minister Mirza Hosein Khan; the post of grand vizier was abolished in 1871.

¹⁰²Augusta.

¹⁰³Victoria.

all Prince Bismarck says on the subject is founded on fact one cannot but wonder that such proceedings could be tolerated in the Palace.

According to Prince Menchikoff, who has followed the Persians to Berlin, but has declined the Shah's invitation to proceed with him as far as Brussels, His Majesty has telegraphed to his Minister at Constantinople¹⁰⁴ to buy him a Georgian Slave or two, and send them to meet him in London.

I would gladly have refrained from placing these details on record, if I had not felt it was essential her Majesty's Government should know them.

**FO 64/772: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 344, Berlin, 25 June 1873**

[Received 30 June by Messenger Seymour. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate / Paris – secret; G[ranville]]

Interview with Bismarck on his relations with the emperor

Prince Bismarck called on me to take leave before going to Varzin, and said that while he wished for sea-air his Doctor¹⁰⁵ recommended Kissingen water, and he was still undecided which course he should follow at present; in August he intended to pay his respects to the Emperor at Gastein.

He had some important questions to submit to His Majesty, – but it was useless to do so at present, while the Emperor's health rendered him less than ever able to take any decision. At Gastein he hoped to find His Majesty sufficiently recovered to give his attention to business.

I asked whether I might know what questions His Serene Highness referred to?

Prince Bismarck replied that in the first instance some changes had become necessary in regard to his own position in the Prussian Ministry,¹⁰⁶ and in regard to the period at which the Prussian and German Parliaments were in future to meet, so as not to interfere with each other.

The particularistic tendencies of his colleagues delayed the consolidation of German Unity, and he could not in conscience share the responsibility of these delays as German Chancellor. The changes

¹⁰⁴Mirza Muhsin Khan.

¹⁰⁵Heinrich Struck.

¹⁰⁶Bismarck resigned as Prussian minister president in December 1872; however, he retained his post as Prussian foreign minister.

he proposed to make could not be effected for some time to come, the Emperor's health not being such as to be able to bear the usual amount of pressure necessary to make His Majesty take a decision.

The older the Emperor grew the more difficult was it to convince him of the necessity of new measures.

Sad as it was, he could not conceal from himself that the Emperor's confidence in him was growing smaller every day, and His Majesty had written him a letter some days since in terms of undeserved harshness. So long as the policy he had advised his Royal Master to follow was theoretical, he enjoyed the King of Prussia's confidence, but since it had been crowned with perfect success, the Emperor of Germany appeared to have lost all faith and confidence in his Chancellor. It was to be hoped that rest at Ems and Alpine air at Gastein would strengthen His Majesty, and enable him to reflect on the inconvenience to which the want of decision and love of delay of one man could put a whole nation, and that he would consent to delegate larger administrative powers to his Ministers.

Another question was that of the Paris Embassy. Count Arnim had a way of his own of carrying out, or rather of not carrying out, his instructions, which was most inconvenient at an important post like Paris, and he, Prince Bismarck, must recommend the Emperor to give Count Arnim some other occupation after the final payment of the War Indemnity by France in September next.¹⁰⁷ That also was a question to be treated at Gastein.

The best thing, however, he had to tell me was that the visit of the Emperor of Russia at Vienna had been a perfect success, and that the understanding come to at Berlin in September last had been once more confirmed and consolidated between the Governments of Russia and Austria.¹⁰⁸

He had respectfully begged of the Empress on starting for Vienna,¹⁰⁹ who for the first time in ten years had deigned to consult him, to take the occasion to tell the Emperor of Austria that the continuance of this cordial understanding was essential to the peace and welfare of Europe, – because in the event of a serious disagreement between Austria and Russia, it would become the duty of the German

¹⁰⁷The French war indemnity (5 billion francs) was regulated by the Treaty of Frankfurt of 10 May 1871. The last instalment was paid by France on 5 September 1873.

¹⁰⁸On 6 June 1873 Franz Joseph and Alexander II, who visited Vienna from 1 to 7 June, concluded the Schönbrunn Convention, an agreement on the peaceful and mutual settlement of future conflicts, which Germany joined on 22 October 1873 (League of the Three Emperors). For the three emperors' meeting of September 1872, see n. 59 in this section.

¹⁰⁹Augusta visited Vienna from 25 June to 1 July 1873 on the occasion of the International Exhibition.

Government to side with either the one or the other. The Power thus excluded from the alliance of the two others would be the loser by it.

Prince Bismarck added that he felt sure the journey of the Empress to Vienna would fully make up for the Emperor's inability to return the Austrian Emperor's visit,¹¹⁰ and would strengthen the good relations already established between the two Courts.

Finding Prince Bismarck in a cordially communicative mood, I thought the moment favourable to ask him why the German Government had departed from their principle of absolute neutrality in Eastern questions and had bound themselves by Treaty¹¹¹ to offer their good offices to Persia in the event of differences with other Powers.

Prince Bismarck replied that he had done so at the earnest request of the Persians themselves, and in return for a Treaty which would materially promote the Commercial interests of Germany. Besides which Germany as a rising Great Power could not refuse to exert her influence in the general interest of peace – a policy which, he knew, would meet with the hearty cooperation of England.

He added that having received a first letter from Count Münster, he begged to thank Your Lordship for the very cordial reception the new Ambassador had met with at your hands.

After which the Chancellor took his leave, saying that he would not return to Berlin before the beginning of the autumn Session of the German Parliament.

The changes in the Prussian Ministry he alluded to in regard to his own position have already been commented upon in the newspapers, according to which he would intend to resign the seals of the Foreign Office in favour of Herr von Balan, and retain only those of the German Chancellorship.

This newspaper version is however denied in official circles, although Prince Bismarck's colleagues do not profess to know what he really intends, – indeed they say he does not know it himself.

It appears to me that all Prince Bismarck's efforts and attempts tend to the one great object of persuading an absolute Sovereign to govern his new Empire through responsible Ministers as in England, – and that the constant irritation he manifests in Parliament, in the Cabinet, and at Court is caused by the passive resistance he meets with on the part of his Imperial Royal Master, who will not yield a jot of power while he lives.

¹¹⁰This is referring to the Austrian emperor's visit to Berlin in September 1872.

¹¹¹Treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation of 11 June 1873; see n. 92 in this section.

**FO 64/776: Francis Ottiwell Adams to Earl Granville,
No 147, Berlin, 4 October 1873**

[Received 6 October by Messenger Drury. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; G[ranville]]

Enforcement of ecclesiastical laws

The Prussian Government continue to carry out provisions of the new Ecclesiastical Laws, particularly in the Province of Posen, where the Archbishop persists in appointing Priests to Livings, without previously informing the civil authority.¹¹²

It is now stated, that by order of the Kultur Minister,¹¹³ the Ober President¹¹⁴ has directed the Police Authorities to seize the Church Books and Seals at all Parishes to which Archbishop Ledochowski appoints priests illegally, – and that consequently the Church books at Filehne have been taken from the priest Arndt¹¹⁵ by the Police, and forwarded to the Landrath, or Chief Civil Authority¹¹⁶ – A similar proceeding is also reported in the Diocese of Fulda.

All applications for copies or extracts from the Registers must therefore in such cases be made to the civil Authority.

A curious case is reported from Olpe, in the Diocese of Paderborn.

The congregation of that Parish, having elected a new Priest,¹¹⁷ the Bishop of Paderborn¹¹⁸ confirmed the Election without reporting it to the Oberpresident.¹¹⁹ Thereupon the Landrath¹²⁰ of the Circle caused a Notification to be published at Olpe that the Priest elect would not be permitted to perform any clerical functions, and this notification was put up at the Church doors and also on the usual black-board. That on the Church-Doors, however, was removed by some person, and on the morning of the 26th ultimo, it was found that the black board had disappeared, having been blown to pieces by gunpowder, the base-pole alone remaining.

¹¹²The Prussian May Laws of 1873 (Falk Laws) transferred the training and appointment of clergy to state authority (11 May), reformed disciplinary authority over clergy and church members (12 and 13 May), and regulated the civil aspects of disaffiliation (14 May).

¹¹³Adalbert Falk.

¹¹⁴William Barstow Guenther.

¹¹⁵Vicar Arndt was appointed provost at Filehne without prior notice to state authorities.

¹¹⁶Wilhelm von Müffling.

¹¹⁷Johann Wilhelm Schröder.

¹¹⁸Konrad Martin.

¹¹⁹Friedrich von Kühlwetter.

¹²⁰Joseph Freusberg.

**FO 64/777: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville,
Confidential, No 412, Berlin, 30 November 1873**

[Received 8 December by Messenger Harbord. For: The Queen / Gladstone; Qy: Paris / Vienna; G[ranville]]

Relations between Austria, Germany, and Russia; future possibility of war between Austria and Russia; national party interested in dissolution of Austrian Empire

Sir Andrew Buchanan in his despatch N^o 321 confidential of the 17th instant, reports to Your Lordship that Count Andrassy though satisfied “with the amicable relations which he has recently established with Russia¹²¹ has no confidence in their duration and believes that many years may not elapse before aggressive and ambitious aims on the part of Russia render War inevitable between the two Empires”.

Your Lordship may recollect that in my Despatch N^o 222 Secret of the 12th September 1872 respecting the meeting of the Emperors of Austria, Russia and Germany at Berlin, I ventured to predict that the alliance of those three Powers might tend to convert Austria into a vassal of Russia and Germany.¹²²

Little more than a year has since then elapsed and the danger I foreshadowed has become more apparent.

At that time Prince Gortchakow’s advice to Count Andrassy at Berlin was “to maintain the Status quo in Turkey by good advice and noninterference” which meant, he said, “that the Turkish Government should be left to suppress internal disturbances and reestablish order by itself with the moral support of Europe only. Active interference by Austria in the Provinces of the Danube, Russia could never tolerate and must oppose by force”.

In my despatch N^o 344 Secret of the 25th of last June¹²³ I reported Prince Bismarck’s warning to The Emperor of Austria, through The Empress Augusta who was going to visit the Vienna Exhibition that “the continuance of the cordial understanding between Austria and Russia was essential to the peace of Europe because in the event of a serious disagreement between Austria and Russia it would become the duty of the German Government to side with either the one or the other, and the Power thus excluded from the alliance of the other two would be the loser by it”.

¹²¹Schönbrunn Convention of June 1873, see n. 108 in this section.

¹²²For the three emperors’ meeting of September 1872, see n. 59 in this section.

¹²³See pp. 66–68.

Since Prince Gortchakow is prepared to oppose Austria by force in Turkey, that Count Andrassy thinks war with Russia inevitable, and that Prince Bismarck is determined if they quarrel to help one against the other, it is evident that the Allied Ministers have contemplated the possibility of disagreement and its consequences, and the next question to consider is whether Germany would side with Austria or with Russia in the event of War? For my part I am convinced that with prudence and good will peace can be maintained, – but assuming Count Andrassy to be right and war inevitable, it is difficult without a knowledge of its immediate causes to predict which side Prince Bismarck might then be willing to adopt.

The state of Public opinion in Germany on the other hand is easily foretold.

The National party, since they have defeated the Conservatives, the Particularists and the Clericals under Prince Bismarck's leadership, and have got the administration into their hands, no longer conceal their belief in the inevitable dissolution of the Austrian Empire, or their intention to extend German rule not only, as has been done already, from Memel to Metz, but also in the course of time from Hamburg to Trieste.

They consider that Germany has no interests in the East and look upon Turkey as the natural prey of Russia, – as they also consider the German Provinces of Austria the legitimate inheritance of the German Empire, so that in the event of the War anticipated by Count Andrassy taking place, the national party in Germany would feel a far greater interest in the speedy dissolution of the Austrian Empire, than in the prevention of Russian aggrandizement in the East.

It appears to me as I have said before that the very existence of the Austrian Empire depends on the submission of her Statesmen to the will of her Russian and German Allies or Protectors.

**FO 64/777: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, No 438,
Berlin, 17 December 1873**

[Received 22 December by messenger. For: The Queen / Prince of Wales / Gladstone / Circulate / Paris / Rome; G[ranville]]

Analysis of Old Catholics, their political role, and Bismarck's policy against Roman Catholic Church

The old Catholic Bishop D^f Reinkens has published a pastoral letter in answer to the Pope's last Encyclical of the 21st of November, against Old Catholicism, of which I have the honour to enclose herewith

a translation taken from the Official Deutsche Nachrichten of today.¹²⁴

Although D^r Reinkens has nothing new to say on the subject, his arguments are stated with clearness force and courage and will give great satisfaction to his flock, and the closing lines relating to the Emperor William in which he says “what the Pope tells the astonished World of our Exalted Emperor, of whom we can never think without giving praise to God, is so directly opposed to all reality[,] truth and justice, that piety on the one hand, and forbearance on the other, impose here on us silence &c &c.”

will meet with the approval of Government and of the loyal promoters of the Old Catholic movement.

The prospects of the old Catholics, which were somewhat precarious a year ago are now improving, – since their leaders have come to an understanding with Prince Bismarck and that Bishop Reinkens has made his act of submission to The Emperor at Berlin.

Their Ultramontane opponents call them “State Catholics” because they reject the Infallibility of the Pope and Vatican Council, and adhere to The Emperor and the Falk Laws.¹²⁵

The oath of allegiance which was especially worded for Bishop Reinkens has now by Royal Decree been substituted for the one formerly taken by the Roman Catholic Bishops in Prussia. A copy of this new Oath is herewith enclosed. It is said that Ultramontane Bishops can take it as well as old Catholic Bishops.¹²⁶

As a purely religious sect the Old Catholics would probably have succumbed to the absence of funds and the want of dogmatic unity, but as a political weapon wielded by Prince Bismarck against Rome, they may yet be organized into a State Catholic Church if they avoid theological controversy among themselves.

The spirit of the Roman Church is so little understood in Berlin, that even Statesmen and Members of Parliament still believe The Pope will give way to the Emperor – and submit to the Falk Laws.

¹²⁴Enclosure: pastoral letter by Bishop Reinkens, Bonn, 14 December 1873 (English translation). The papal encyclical *Etsi multa luctuosa* – *On the Church in Italy, Germany, and Switzerland* of 21 November 1873 decreed the excommunication of Reinkens, the first German Old Catholic bishop, as well his active supporters. It also addressed the *Kulturkampf* in the German Empire and condemned Freemasonry. For the Old Catholics, see n. 36 in this section.

¹²⁵For the decrees of the Vatican Council of 1870 and the Prussian May Laws of 1873 (Falk Laws), see n. 11 in Munich section and n. 112 in this section.

¹²⁶Enclosure: the new oath for bishops (*Verordnung König Wilhelms betreffend die Vereidigung der katholischen Bischöfe in der Preussischen Monarchie*), 6 December 1873 (English translation). Reinkens, who was acknowledged by Wilhelm I as bishop on 19 September, took the oath on 8 October 1873.

Prince Bismarck's plan of campaign against the Vatican has been explained to me as follows:

The Vatican Council having divided the German Catholic Priesthood into two camps, that is into Priests who obey The Pope before The Emperor and Priests who obey The Emperor before the Pope, – Prince Bismarck is putting them to the test by the Falk Laws, which the former must reject and the latter can accept, both from equally conscientious motives.

The Infallibilists who reject the Falk Laws will be treated as rebellious subjects of The Emperor and will in virtue of these Laws, be imprisoned or banished.

The old Catholics who accept the Falk Laws will then be offered their vacant Sees and livings and the result will be the gradual banishment of the hostile Ultramontane element and the establishment of a loyal State Catholic Church with Bishop Reinkens at its head as German Anti-Pope.

**FO 64/777: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 443, Berlin, 22 December 1873**

[Received 24 December by 2nd Messenger Byng Hall. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Paris – secret; G[ranville]]

Conversation with Bismarck about France; Marshal Bazaine's trial; Chambord candidature; French preparations for war

Prince Bismarck paid me a long visit and talked over the topics of the day with his usual cynical originality. – When, however, he came to talk of the trial of Marshal Bazaine which he condemned in powerful invectives as an act of National Madness, he spoke of the French with more bitterness and contempt than usual.¹²⁷

I asked whether he was not satisfied with the turn affairs had taken in France, and whether he did not think a MacMahon Presidency preferable to a Chambord Monarchy?¹²⁸

He replied that he preferred Chambord to MacMahon, because he was the greater Fool of the two:

¹²⁷The court martial of Marshal Bazaine, for surrendering the French Army of the Rhine and the fortress at Metz to German troops in October 1870, began on 3 October 1873. On 10 December 1873 he was sentenced to death for treason; the sentence was later commuted to 20 years' imprisonment.

¹²⁸Russell is referring to the pretender to the French throne, Henri d'Artois, comte de Chambord.

I said I was thinking of the good of France for her own sake, and not of the advantages Germany might derive from a Fool on her Throne.

Prince Bismarck said that from a purely French point of view he agreed with me, but that he had to think of Germany and the peace of Europe before the welfare of France: –

I said that France was not in a position to disturb the peace of Europe for many years to come:

The Chancellor replied that her Power of making War would depend on the Alliances She was able to contract:

I observed that His Highness had already secured the most powerful Alliances¹²⁹ of Europe for Germany and that there were none left for France to make:–

“That was true,” the Prince said, “if he could be sure of them, which he was not, because Alliances sometimes depended on the Lives of single individuals: [?”]

I asked whether he meant that the French Government were seeking alliances against Germany with any prospect of Success?

He said, of course it was their duty to do so, – as it was his to watch their proceedings, and their proceedings were imprudent and unwise:

I asked what he meant?

Prince Bismarck rose from his chair, walked up and down the room, and then, lowering his voice, said, that the French Government were sending Military Agents in plain clothes into Germany to study the ground with a view to a future campaign, – that they had even taken Soundings along the coast of Holstein to ascertain the best places for landing troops, – but that he was having them carefully followed and watched.

That did not look like peaceful intentions, he said, and if they intended revenge, he would greatly prefer to fight it out at once and declare War tomorrow, than wait until they were prepared to attack:

I said that the weakened State of France precluded every excuse for War:

He replied that an excuse for War was easily found, if wanted, – he had some experience in such matters: –

I said I was extremely sorry to hear him say so, because Germany would lose the Sympathies of all the World if she rushed into an unjust and unnecessary War:

Prince Bismarck said that security for Germany and Peace for Europe were the objects he had at heart, – the unwise proceedings of the French Government irritated him, – but he hoped he might

¹²⁹League of the Three Emperors, see n. 108 in this section.

be mistaken, as he had been in the days of Louis-Philippe, when he thought for several years that war was inevitable between France and England, – but that danger had passed away and had been followed by the Alliance of the two Countries, – and he sincerely hoped that time and circumstances might prove as favourable to Germany.

Our conversation was interrupted by a Message from The Emperor summoning the Chancellor to His Majesty's Presence at the Palace.

**FO 64/801: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 16, Berlin, 9 January 1874**

[Received 12 January by 2nd Messenger Leeds. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; Qy: Paris; G[ranville]]

Remarks on the state of armaments and war preparations in France and Germany; negative effects of Franco-Prussian war on future maintenance of peace

Major-General Walker in his report N^o 2 of the 6th instant enclosed to Your Lordship in my Despatch N^o 13 of the 7th instant, on siege trains and the general progress of Armaments, says that he is anxious to guard against conveying the impression that Germany is preparing for War, – that the army is in fact always prepared “for War”, but that the State of preparation is far more complete than was the case previous to 1870 with a very considerable acceleration of the period required for mobilization, – that is, twelve days instead of twenty-one. General Walker hopes he may not be misunderstood: He is desirous of creating no unnecessary alarm, but at the close of the second Year of Peace, he cannot remain blind to the progress which has been made in perfecting every preparation for War on a scale and with a minuteness of detail which [“]would throw all former efforts into the shade.”

I quite agree with General Walker in thinking that there is no intention of going to War at present however angry the tone assumed towards France by Ministers and Military men, or by the official Press may be: – Say what they will, there is no necessity for a War of defence, and no excuse for a War of Aggression.

At a Military Dinner given the other day by General von Manteuffel, Field Marshal Count Moltke is said to have explained that his suspicion as to the intentions of France had not only been roused by the efforts made to create a much larger Artillery-Force than that of Germany, but also by the formidable nature and intent of the preparations of the French War Department, – preparations which, if carried on for two years more, at the present rate, would

render France strong enough to make the holding of Metz¹³⁰ difficult and doubtful for the German Army, and he believed that the safety of Germany would render another and more decisive War with France inevitable before many Years were over.

He added that under the present circumstances he would look upon any legislator who voted against the New Army Bill as a Traitor to the Fatherland, – which tends to confirm the impression I submitted to Your Lordship, in my Despatch Secret N^o 1. of the second instant, that the present move is merely intended to influence the votes of Parliament.¹³¹

I am told on good authority that at the same dinner, and after General Moltkes explanation, the practicability of Blücher's plan in 1815 to divide France¹³² was seriously discussed by the assembled heroes and Warriors, and a parallel drawn between the past division of Poland¹³³ and the future division of France.

I merely place these otherwise unimportant post-prandial military conversations on record, to show the sort of spirit which is gradually animating the Generals of the new Empire.

But while I share General Walkers confidence in the present maintenance of peace, I do not feel sure of the future.

To my mind, the danger will grow out of the National temptation to complete with so invincible an Army the Unification of the German-speaking population of Europe under one head: – And besides the patriotic aspirations of the people to realize their National Ideal of Unity, it should not be forgotten that unfortunately for other Nations, War has proved to be a profitable business to those who carry it on with a Military System like that of Prussia:

The Prussians have not only tasted glory, – they have also tasted Money: – Their glory has been crowned with wealth:

From a poor Kingdom Prussia has become a rich Empire:

From needy younger sons, their Generals have become wealthy Landowners, having invested their War dotations in landed Estates with titles of Nobility:

¹³⁰Metz was incorporated into the German Empire in the Treaty of Frankfurt of 10 May 1871.

¹³¹The army bill, introduced in the *Reichstag* on 5 February 1874, provided for a perpetual peacetime army of 401,659 men, a measure which would have permanently protected the army from budgetary control by parliament. In the final instance the revised bill, passed on 20 April 1874 and enacted in the Imperial Military Law of 2 May 1874 (the so-called Septennial Law), allocated army supplies until 31 December 1881.

¹³²Prussian plans for the division of France surfaced after Napoleon's return to power in March 1815; they consisted of the creation of separate kingdoms as well as the incorporation of parts of France into Germany.

¹³³Poland was divided into Austrian, Prussian, and Russian territories as the result of three partitions (1772, 1793, and 1795) and confirmed by the Treaty of Vienna of 9 June 1815.

I will cite two instances out of many to illustrate my meaning:

General Roon, who began as a Soldier of fortune, living on his pay, is now the titled owner of four estates in Germany, purchased out of his War indemnity:¹³⁴

Herr von Bismarck whose modest Patrimony before the Austrian War of 1866, was barely worth eight hundred a year, is now a Prince with a clear income of twelve thousand from his War dotation only:¹³⁵ His ambition, like Wallensteins, is said to be the Duchy of Lauenburg, which is still in the gift of the Crown.

Such, and many other examples fire the ambitions of the rising generation of Officers, – whilst the financial World, – so powerful in Modern Germany, – would not object to another War indemnity, of five Millions to revel once more in the delights of sensational speculation.

Military glory and sudden Wealth have not, I fear, improved the Character, or satisfied the Ambition of the Prussians.

FO 64/801: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, Confidential, No 57, Berlin, 29 January 1874

[Received 2 February by 2nd messenger. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; Qy: Paris]

Positive German reactions to 'No Popery' meeting in London

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance attached in Berlin to the “No Popery” Meeting held on the 27th instant in St James Hall, or overestimate the beneficial influence it will have on the feelings and sympathies of the great National Party in Germany towards England.¹³⁶ Their Newspapers are overflowing with exultation, at the commencement of a New Era, – the alliance of the people against Priestcraft in the great cause of liberty, and the final breach with France and Ultramontanism to unite with Germany in the interest of peace progress and civilization &c &c &c.

¹³⁴On 15 June 1871 the *Reichstag* awarded Roon a 300,000 thalers share of the French war indemnity (see n. 107 in this section).

¹³⁵Bismarck received the Sachsenwald estate (Friedrichsruh) near Hamburg as a present from Wilhelm I on 24 June 1871. His ambitions for the Duchy of Lauenstein were in vain; the title of Duke of Lauenburg (which he eventually gained in 1890) was purely honorific.

¹³⁶At this meeting admiration was expressed for the German emperor's letter to the Pope of 3 September 1873, in which, in answer to the Pope's letter of 7 August, the emperor justified Prussian church policy. Those present also found common cause with Germany's resistance to ultramontanism. The resolutions of this meeting were transmitted to the emperor accompanied by a letter from Earl Russell, Odo Russell's uncle.

Prince Bismarck, I am told, is more deeply gratified than words can tell at the prospect of an international understanding founded on common interests, present and future, and Herr v. Bülow called on me to tell me that he had read a Report from Count Münster to The Emperor on the subject this very morning, which had called forth feelings of grateful emotion in His Majesty's heart, so great was the importance He attached to the approval of England to His Church Policy.

**FO 64/802: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, No 96,
Berlin, 27 February 1874**

[Received 2 March by Messenger Robbins. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate; Qy: Paris / Vienna; D[erby]]

Announcement of Disraeli's new administration to Bismarck; Bismarck's reflections on Anglo-German relations

On receiving Your Lordship's first despatches I called on Prince Bismarck, and announced to him officially the formation of Mr Disraeli's Administration, and Your Lordship's acceptance of the Seals of the Foreign Department.¹³⁷

I told His Highness that Your Lordship on entering into official intercourse with his Government earnestly looked forward to a continuance of the friendly relations now existing between England and Germany, and hoped they might prove conducive to the maintenance of peace, and the improvement of the material interests of humanity.

Prince Bismarck replied that he felt much gratified at Your Lordship's message which embodied the wishes he had most at heart, – that he looked upon Germany as the natural Ally of England, and hoped England might reciprocate that feeling, and look upon Germany henceforward as her natural Ally.

Before the formation of the German Empire, England's Allies were Austria and France, but those Alliances need not exclude that of United Germany, whose general interests and tendencies would be the same England had ever sought to promote for the welfare of all.

Germany had at last acquired all she wanted as a United Nation, and Your Lordship would always find him foremost in a policy of peace and progress.

¹³⁷The Disraeli cabinet was formed on 20 and 21 February 1874. The Earl of Derby's first despatches to Odo Russell, Nos 79 and 80, marked circular, are dated 21 February 1874.

**FO 64/803: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, No 149,
Berlin, 1 April 1874**

[Received 6 April by Messenger Leeds. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate; D[erby]]

Arrest of Archbishop Melchers; remarks on Bismarck's church policy

Arch Bishop Melchers was arrested the day before yesterday at seven a.m. in his Palace at Cologne by order of the Government for disobedience to the Falk Laws [and] conveyed to the Civil House of detention.¹³⁸ This is the third Prussian Bishop sent to prison[;] since the beginning of the year all the three Bishops¹³⁹ will have been arrested and imprisoned, and if the Supplementary Falk Law¹⁴⁰ is passed, a considerable portion of the Roman Catholic Clergy will have been “interned” or banished, besides Prince Bismarck's Anti Church policy is, as I have so often said before, calculated to strengthen the Catholic party and the Papal cause in Germany.

The Pope had made his Church ridiculous by the proclamation of the Immaculate Conception, of the Syllabus and of his own Infallibility,¹⁴¹ but these Dogmas were of interest to the faithful only, and in no way concerned or stood in the way of those who chose to ignore them. Germany could afford to smile at them in the name of religious liberty, and the more so as the German Catholic Bishops had led the opposition in the Council of the Vatican.

Prince Bismarck's Anti Church policy has compelled the German Bishops to rally round the Pope and suffer Martyrdom, for discipline's, obedience's and example's sake, and the Church that was ridiculous is becoming interesting to the religious and conservative population of Prussia.

¹³⁸For the Prussian May Laws of 1873 (Falk Laws), see n. 112 in this section.

¹³⁹At the time of the dispatch, in addition to Melchers, the Archbishop of Poznań and Gniezno, Mieczysław Halka Ledóchowski, and the Bishop of Trier, Matthias Eberhardt, had been arrested.

¹⁴⁰Russell is referring to the bill passed by the Federal Council on 17 March 1874, which provided for the banishment and expatriation of illegally employed clergy; it came into effect as imperial law on 4 May 1874. Additional bills that were also enacted included the Prussian law on the administration of vacant bishoprics of 20 May 1874 and the *Deklarationsgesetz* of 21 May (an amendment to the law of 11 May 1873). From April to June 1875 four further Prussian laws aimed at curtailing ecclesiastical rights, including the law of 31 May which dissolved all congregations except those committed exclusively to nursing.

¹⁴¹The dogma of the Immaculate Conception was proclaimed on 8 December 1854; the *Syllabus Errorum* – which contained a list of condemned propositions in philosophical and political thought – was issued on 8 December 1864. The dogma of papal infallibility was included in the dogmatic constitution *Pastor aeternus* of 18 July 1870.

**FO 64/803: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, No 172,
Berlin, 22 April 1874**

[Received 27 April by Messenger Seymour. For: The Queen / Disraeli; D[erby]]

Poisoning of Balan; public apt to suspect Jesuit conspiracies

In his despatch N^o 62 of the 12th April, Her Majesty's Minister at Brussels mentions the report published by the German Papers of the suspected poisoning of the late German Minister Herr von Balan by the Jesuits, which affords a melancholy proof, M^r Lumley adds, of the bitter feelings existing in Germany with regard to the Roman Catholics in Belgium.

It is much to be regretted that the Press should thus poison the minds of the people by encouraging a belief in acts of infamy on the part of the Roman Clergy, for the purpose of facilitating the adoption of the renitent clergy bill by the Reichstag,¹⁴² on the same principle as the "war of revenge" was made use of to pass the Army Bill.¹⁴³ The result of such tactics is to make the Public see a Jesuit conspiracy in every death or disaster that occurs.

Some time since a Lion died in the Zoological Gardens, who was a favourite of the Berliners. A reward of a thousand thalers was offered in the newspapers to anyone who could discover the cause of his sudden death, and the Public jumped at the conclusion that the Lion had been poisoned by the Jesuits.

**FO 64/803: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, No 176,
Berlin, 25 April 1874**

[Received 27 April by Messenger Seymour. For: The Queen / Disraeli; D[erby]]

Passage of army bill seen as victory of constitutionalism; Bismarck blamed in military circles for compromise

The Army Bill on the third reading was passed by a majority of 91.¹⁴⁴ The National party¹⁴⁵ appear well satisfied with, and relieved by, the Compromise, which has saved them from having to vote the new army organization in perpetuity, as The Emperor's birthday speech to his generals, and Prince Bismarck's threats from his bed, to Members of

¹⁴²See n. 140 in this section.

¹⁴³See the following dispatch.

¹⁴⁴For the army bill (Imperial Military Law of 1874), see n. 131 in this section.

¹⁴⁵National Liberal Party.

Parliament had led the public to fear.¹⁴⁶ They attribute their victory, as they call it, to the firm attitude of their able and honest leader D^r Lasker and their spokesman Herr von Beningsen [*sic*] negotiating with the Chancellor through his private secretary M^r Bucher, – and whatever may be insinuated to the contrary, to my mind it is a first and important victory of constitutionalism over the military absolutism of Prussia by the Imperial German Government.

The Military party in Berlin speak with bitterness of their defeat, which they attribute to Prince Bismarck's desire to take the Army from The Emperor's exclusive control to place it under his own, as Chancellor, through the Bundesrath or Council of the Realm.

Politicians about Court assume that Prince Bismarck had it in his power to make the National majority in Parliament vote as he chose, and that it depended on him to keep the Army for the Crown as heretofore free from parliamentary interference and control.

Prince Bismarck himself, when The Emperor went on the 10th Instant to discuss the question with the Chancellor told His Majesty that he saw but two ways of dealing with it, – 1st Dissolve Parliament and appeal to the Country, in which case the result was doubtful as the South might return more Catholics and the North more Conservatives than now sat in the Reichstag which would prolong the conflict, or

2nd Settle the matter for a term of years by a compromise satisfactory to both parties, – which would give His Majesty the peace establishment of 401,659 men, (or one per cent on [*sic*] the population) He desired for his own lifetime, and give Parliament the prospect of rediscussing the Army question after the accession of the Crown Prince¹⁴⁷ to the Throne, to which would be added further conditions regarding the powers demanded by the Executive in dealing with the Catholic Clergy.

After a very long discussion The Emperor consented, reluctantly it is said, and the Chancellor at once sent for the Minister of War, General Kamecke, the President of the Chamber Herr von Forckenbeck and the spokesman of the National party Herr von Beningsen, and closed the bargain, which gave Government the majority of 91 in favour of the Army Bill and will give Government further majorities in favour of the additional Church Bill and Press laws Bill.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶Odo Russell is referring to Wilhelm I's speech on 22 March 1874, and Prince Bismarck's conversation with deputies Dietze and Lucius (both *Deutsche Reichspartei*) on 27 March 1874 in which the chancellor threatened his resignation and the dissolution of the *Reichstag*.

¹⁴⁷Friedrich Wilhelm.

¹⁴⁸Odo Russell is referring to the so-called Expatriation Law of 4 May 1874 (see n. 140 in this section) and the Imperial Press Law of 7 May 1874 (see n. 35 in Dresden section) passed by the *Reichstag* on 24 and 25 April.

The discussions between The Emperor, The Chancellor and Parliament and subsequent compromise were for reasons hitherto unexplained not communicated to the Crown Prince, who only learnt the result accidentally and who has therefore just cause for feeling hurt at such unaccountable neglect.

I shall have to return to this subject in reviewing the Session which is now rapidly drawing to a close.

FO 64/804: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, No 210, Berlin, 18 May 1874

[Received 20 May by Mr Adams. 'This seems unobjectionable, but I should like Lord Tenterden's opinion', D[erby]; 'No answer (see Minutes inside)']

Proposal to present secretary of embassy as minister plenipotentiary during the absence of Russell

In thanking Your Lordship for granting me leave to absent myself from my Post in the course of the next month, I would strongly recommend Your Lordship to authorize me to present the Secretary of Embassy in charge as Minister Plenipotentiary to Herr von Bülow, the Foreign Secretary, according to the former custom, which has been revived with so much advantage to the Service in Paris and in London.

My reasons for recommending this course are as follows:

Since Berlin has become the capital and great centre of activity of all the leading men from the twenty-seven states composing Germany, and since Germany has become a great and powerful Empire of which The Princess Royal of Great Britain¹⁴⁹ will be The Future Empress, the British Embassy has also naturally increased in importance, and the result is that surprise – not to say envy – is keenly felt and constantly expressed by those leading Statesmen of Germany that it should be looked upon, and actually be inferior in rank to the British Embassy in Paris, because they fail to understand why Her Majesty's Government give France a higher rank than Germany among European Nations.

It was the express wish of The Emperor and of the Chancellor that the British Ambassador should be the Doyen of the Diplomatic Body, – because the Crown Princess is of The English Royal Family:

The Secretary of Embassy, however, when he becomes in charge on the departure of the Ambassador on leave, finds himself at once placed at the very bottom of the List, and therefore obliged to take rank below, not only permanent Chargé d'Affaires, such as those of Luxemburg, Honduras, and Nicaragua, but also of all the acting Chargé d'Affaires

¹⁴⁹Victoria.

of other Countries, such as even Japan and Hayti, whose Ministers happen to be absent.

The subordinate position of the “ad interim” Representatives of Great Britain becomes still more marked, when, as was the case last summer, during the visit of The King of Italy, The Crown Princess represented The Empress, who was absent.¹⁵⁰

I need scarcely add that, besides the practical advantages this act of international courtesy offers, it also has the one of not giving any trouble, since it necessitates no change in the existing state of things, and merely consists in my presenting Mr Adams as Minister Plenipotentiary in charge, instead of as Chargé d’Affaires, to Herr von Bülow during my absence.

FO 64/804: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Very Confidential, No 222, Berlin, 30 May 1874

[Received 1 June by Messenger Ball. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Paris / St Petersburg; D[erby]]

Tsar’s favourable impression upon visit to England; Russo-German-English alliance

Herr von Bülow informed me to-day in strict confidence that The Emperor had told him this morning, in speaking of His meeting with The Emperor of Russia at Ems last week that His Majesty appeared most highly gratified by His Visit, and the Reception He had met with in England,¹⁵¹ – that He had spoken in terms of high and grateful appreciation of His communications with Her Majesty The Queen, and of the cordial Reception The Duchess of Edinburgh had enjoyed at Her Majestys hands,¹⁵² – that His conversations with Her Majestys Ministers had convinced Him that they desired as intimate and as friendly relations with Russia as He Himself desired with England, and that He had departed with the happy conviction that England, Germany and Russia were natural Allies for Peace and Progress in Europe.

¹⁵⁰King Vittorio Emanuele II visited Berlin from 23 to 26 September 1873. At the time, Augusta was staying at Baden-Baden.

¹⁵¹Alexander II visited England from 13 to 22 May 1874; he met with Wilhelm I at Ems on 25–26 May.

¹⁵²Maria Alexandrovna and Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, Victoria’s second son, married at St Petersburg on 23 January 1874 and returned to England on 6 March 1874. Maria was officially received by Queen Victoria on the occasion of the couple’s public entry into London on 12 March.

Herr von Bülow added that Prince Bismarck, who had that Alliance more than ever at heart, was highly gratified at the Reports he had received of the success of the Emperor Alexander's visit to England.

I will add and repeat what I have said before that the reports which have gone abroad of any jealousy existing on the part of Prince Bismarck in regard to a cordial understanding between England and Russia are totally unfounded, and the reverse of the truth: – I firmly believe that Prince Bismarck in the interest of Germany desires the establishment of the most intimate relations between England and Russia, – and the more so if such relations tended to detach England and Russia from France.

**FO 64/806: Francis Ottiwell Adams to Earl of Derby,
No 144, Berlin, 12 September 1874**

[Received 14 September by Messenger Robbins. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate in turn; D[erby]]

Bishop of Mainz's impolitic letter about Sedan Day celebrations

There is no doubt that the assertion of the Bishop of Mayence in his late letter,¹⁵³ that the anniversary of Sedan was only kept by one political party, was both injudicious and untrue. It is sufficient to read the newspapers to be aware of this, and the Bishop's language is reprobated by many German Catholics.

That the anniversary has this year assumed much more the character of a commemoration of German Unity is even in some measure attributed to the impolitic letter of the Bishop, but I fear that this document may also have the effect of still further encouraging the Church Conflict, and may make many a Liberal still more bitter against his German Catholic fellow-citizens.

It was only yesterday that one of those Prussians, who are religious according to the standard of most Protestants in this country, and who aspire after a national non-dogmatic Church, said to me that he and others of his way of thinking were much afraid that such sentiments on the part of the Ultramontanes as were contained in Bishop Ketteler's letter would go far to drive the mass of Liberals into sheer Atheism, and that he now foresaw a conflict which would last our lives, and end, he considered, in some new religious Reformation.

The "Provinzial Correspondenz" of the 9th instant records with satisfaction that patriotic German feelings have been decidedly

¹⁵³See p. 214.

manifested on this year's anniversary in those Federal States¹⁵⁴ on whose bearing, in reference to the question of the German Empire, the adversaries of the national development could formerly found their hopes. The celebration of the day at Dresden is particularly dwelt upon, extracts being given from the speeches of two of the Saxon Ministers¹⁵⁵ at the banquet in that capital.

FO 64/806: Francis Ottiwell Adams to Earl of Derby, No 182, Berlin, 3 October 1874

[Received 5 October by Messenger Robbins. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate in turn / Copy to Admiralty – confidential; D[erby]]

Launch of new ironclad at Kiel; increasing importance of navy in German Empire; implications for foreign and colonial policy

The recent launch at Kiel of the iron-clad frigate “Friedrich der Grosse” built in a German dockyard, seems to mark an era in the history of the fleet of this country.¹⁵⁶

I learn that the Emperor who has hitherto been as it were engrossed with his army of which he has good reason to be proud, and has given little consideration to naval matters, returned from Kiel full of enthusiasm for the arm of the service which is rapidly rising into importance.

Until recently the aim has been to use the fleet simply for defensive purposes. In an account of the navy given in the Times in a letter from its Berlin correspondent¹⁵⁷ of the 19th ultimo, there is an extract from the official “Marine Verordnungs Blatt”¹⁵⁸ in the following words:

“With her present means the German Admiralty must content themselves with the defence of their principal ports and harbours. Torpedo-boats will hover about the shore; corvettes are to watch the enemy; and the iron-clads must issue forth when occasion offers and do battle. At the same time the Alabama corvettes, three of which will be ready next summer, while a fourth and fifth are building, are to cruise in foreign seas and capture and sink as many vessels as possible.”

The rapid increase of this fleet, now beginning to be regarded with pride by the Emperor and the nation, will enable the Government

¹⁵⁴The *Provinzial Correspondenz* of 9 September 1874 mentions Bavaria, Saxony, and Württemberg.

¹⁵⁵Karl von Gerber and Alfred von Fabrice.

¹⁵⁶The ship was launched at the Kaiserliche Werft Kiel on 20 September 1874.

¹⁵⁷Carl Abel. The letter was published in *The Times* on 22 September 1874.

¹⁵⁸*Marine-Verordnungsblatt*, No 17, September 1874.

to send squadrons to various parts of the world for the protection of German subjects engaged in trade, and will make the nation, and indeed the world feel not only that the German navy is no longer confined to defensive purposes at home, but that probably, in no distant future, it will be able to be used for offensive purposes. With its growth the question of German Naval Stations or Colonies in distant countries seems likely to present itself seriously. I do not wish to throw doubt on the oft-repeated official assurances of this Government that Germany requires no colonies, and that she is not seeking to acquire Porto Rico or some other island, but will not a time come when her subjects will call for such an eventuality?

**FO 64/806: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Secret,
No 236, Berlin, 16 October 1874**

[Received 19 October by Messenger Ball. For: The Queen / Disraeli; D[erby]]

Account of Bismarck's 'private and personal policy'

I have recently had occasion to notice that while the political power which enables Prince Bismarck to carry out his patriotic policy is discussed and appreciated in England, the private policy he has pursued to acquire, establish and consolidate the personal power necessary to overcome the opposition his innovations might call forth, is less familiar to men's minds than I thought, and seeing now how imperfectly his blow at Count Arnim¹⁵⁹ is understood by our Press, I fancy that a rough and rapid sketch of his past private and personal policy, showing how he acquired his present irresponsible power, may serve in part to facilitate an understanding of the future surprises his genius may create.

Prince Bismarck's public acts are well known – no one can doubt his great genius and patriotism, but the means he employs to carry out the gigantic task he has at heart in spite of the instincts and hesitations of the Sovereign he serves, can only be accounted for by a deeprooted conviction that his mission on earth is to unite the Germans in Europe, and make them the dominant race in the world, – that absolute power is indispensable to him to fulfil his mission, and that to secure absolute power and consolidate his tenure of Office against all opposition, the employment of cunning and force are justifiable.

¹⁵⁹On 4 October Arnim, conservative adversary of Bismarck, was arrested on the charge of embezzling diplomatic documents which he had retained in his personal possession following his recall as ambassador to Paris, in February 1874.

The freedom or cynicism of his language in regard to his own plans, the frankness or severity of his criticisms of the Emperor and Royal Family, and of his colleagues are at all times startling, and partly no doubt serve to conceal the deep cunning of his nature, on which, when force would be of no avail, the strength of his policy is based. Even when giving vent to his violent temper he never says more than he intends, and when he wishes to please or persuade no one can be more irresistibly fascinating than Prince Bismarck.

When in 1871 his genius had finally triumphed over his Sovereign's indecision of character and love of procrastination, and that he had acquired for himself the confidence of the great national Party by forcing His Majesty into three successful campaigns against the foreign obstacles to German Unity in Denmark, Austria and France,¹⁶⁰ he felt that the time had come to overcome also those obstacles within the great Empire he had called into existence, which might stand in the way of the accomplishment of his patriotic designs.

He knew he could rely on the national Party, whose cause he had espoused with such brilliant results, as well as on the Army by keeping up their hope in further glories and honours, rewards and wealth. But the obstacles which might impede the free exercise of his policy in the interest of German Unity he conceived to be in the unbroken and undivided powers of the Crown, the Aristocracy, and the Church.

From the Crown he had to fear the possibility of dismissal, due to the antagonistic influences of the Empress,¹⁶¹ the Royal Family, the reigning German Princes, and the conservative supporters of the Throne who viewed with alarm the astounding growth of the power he had established over the mind of his aged Sovereign, And his "Unholy" alliances as an ex-conservative or "Junker", with what had hitherto been looked upon by them as the revolutionary party in Germany.

From the Aristocracy, whose cause he had gradually abandoned to take the lead of their liberal or "revolutionary" opponents, he had to fear the spirit of Particularism so hostile to the formation he had undertaken of a United Germany.

From the Church he had to fear the spirit which places God before the State, and abhors the Philosophy of Young Germany¹⁶² of whom he had assumed the leadership.

¹⁶⁰Wars of 1864, 1866, and 1870–1871.

¹⁶¹Augusta.

¹⁶²Odo Russell is alluding to the literary movement *Junges Deutschland* (Young Germany) of the *Vormärz* period whose adherents supported social and anti-feudal ideas, and aspired to a republican German nation-state.

To combat and neutralize these obstacles before him he proceeded as follows: –

By his persuasive eloquence he roused the Emperor's suspicions against the Royal Family, the Prussian House of Lords, and, the Clergy: he represented the Empress, whose sympathies for Romanism are notorious, as secretly supporting the Church against the State, and the Crown Prince¹⁶³ as impatiently awaiting his succession, so as to establish a complete estrangement in matters of state and politics between them, and keep them in absolute ignorance of the measures he was persuading the Emperor to adopt.

The influence of the Aristocracy and landed gentry was great at Court because of their unbounded loyalty, their high military qualifications, and long proved readiness to offer up their lives in battle for the House of Hohenzollern.

To weaken that influence on which the Crown could at any time rely against the national party, Prince Bismarck first proceeded to estrange the Aristocracy from the Sovereign by undermining their loyalty. He prevented the Emperor from creating a German House of Peers that their voice might not be heard in the Councils of the nation, and he invented the Bundesrath¹⁶⁴ to take their place, which he composed of representatives of the minor German states selected from the liberal national party more or less subservient to his will, and trained them to obey him implicitly.

He next proceeded to promote, through the Prussian House of Deputies, the abolition of the last remnants of feudal rights and privileges to which the Aristocracy attached vital importance, and when a majority in the Prussian House of Peers endeavoured to resist the measure, he persuaded the Emperor to create a batch of five and twenty Peers, selected from among the minor government officials, such as Under Secretaries, Heads of Departments, Chief Clerks etc etc, willing to vote under instructions, and he made His Majesty send for the President¹⁶⁵ of the "Herrenhaus", and tell him that the House would be packed whenever a majority was wanted.¹⁶⁶

Disgusted at their Sovereign's ingratitude, the old conservatives, powerless and heartbroken, abandoned Berlin to return to their Castles, vowing to sacrifice the blood of their sons no more for the House of Hohenzollern.

¹⁶³Friedrich Wilhelm.

¹⁶⁴Federal Council (established according to Articles 6 and 7 of the imperial constitution of 1871).

¹⁶⁵Otto Graf zu Stolberg-Wernigerode.

¹⁶⁶For the *Kreisordnung* of 13 December 1872 and the so-called *Pairsschub*, see n. 82 in this section.

To paralyse the Church Prince Bismarck introduced the Falk Laws,¹⁶⁷ which are alike distasteful to all church Communities in Germany, and consequently popular with the young German national party, who look upon the Clergy as the natural enemies of progress and civilization.

By offering pecuniary assistance and the spoils of the Ultramontane Clergy to the new “Old Catholic” sect¹⁶⁸ in return for their support of the Falk Laws, he created an element of religious discord in the Roman Church, which he can turn to account or not in the future according to circumstances.

By prevailing on the Emperor to sign the Letters, instead of signing them himself, he had composed and addressed to the Pope and to Earl Russell on the religious question,¹⁶⁹ he committed the Sovereign personally to an Anti Church policy which did not represent the Emperor’s real feelings, but which was well calculated to alienate the orthodox Aristocracy and the loyal Clergy from a Sovereign they had hitherto looked up to as the patron of religious toleration.

On the other hand, Prince Bismarck with the help of the sixteen millions of Thalers confiscated from the Ex King of Hanover, and granted to him by the Emperor for secret service, employed the Press to convince the National Party that without their unconditional support of his policy, the unity, freedom, and progress of Germany would be destroyed by the hostile influences of the Royal Family, the Aristocracy, and the Clergy on the Emperor’s mind.¹⁷⁰

By endless cunning devices too long to relate in detail, he persuaded the Emperor to pension those of his ministers who had aristocratic connections, conservative sympathies, or independent tendencies, and replaced them by men from the bureaucracy trained to understand and accustomed to obey him. I regret to have to add that Prince Bismarck is also in the habit of employing Spies at Court, in Parliament, and in all Classes of Society, but I refrain from details I am not at liberty to enter into.

I now come to Prince Bismarck’s boldest stroke of policy to make the Crown dependent on his will – I mean the compromise on the Army Bill.¹⁷¹

The Army Bill had been drawn up by the Emperor and Field Marshal Count Roon without the Chancellor’s cooperation. Its object

¹⁶⁷For the Prussian May Laws (Falk Laws) of 1873 and 1874, see nn. 112 and 140 in this section.

¹⁶⁸For the *Altkatholiken*, see n. 36 in this section.

¹⁶⁹Letters of 3 September 1873 and 18 February 1874; see n. 136 in this section.

¹⁷⁰For the ‘Guelph fund’, see n. 40 in Dresden section.

¹⁷¹For the army bill (Imperial Military Law of 1874), see n. 131 in this section and pp. 80–82.

was to obtain the sanction of parliament to a peace establishment of four hundred thousand men in perpetuity. Prince Bismarck told the Emperor he would give his full support to the bill, or dissolve Parliament if it did not pass, and he told the Leaders of the national Party that the bill was not his, but the Emperor's, and must be discussed by them in Parliament.

The debates having proved unfavourable to the Bill, the Emperor availed himself of the presence of his Generals, who had come to congratulate him on his birthday,¹⁷² to make them a speech, and say that if Parliament did not pass the bill, a conflict might ensue which would compel him to call on the Army for assistance against Parliament.

The astonished and puzzled leaders of the National Party waited on Prince Bismarck,¹⁷³ who was ill in bed, and solicited instructions or advice, – they said they could not in conscience inflict the Emperor's peace establishment in perpetuity on the country, but, on the other hand, they had no wish to be dissolved. Prince Bismarck then proposed his famous compromise, and promised to save them from dissolution if they could make up their minds to vote the Emperor's Bill as it stood, unchanged and unmodified, not in perpetuity but only for their old Emperor's lifetime – say seven years – a septennate, and in return he would do his utmost to prevail upon the Emperor to yield on the question of perpetuity. The leaders who have not dared to expect such easy conditions, after the Emperor's speech to his Generals, joyfully agreed, and proclaimed a triumph to their party.

The Emperor in dismay called on his Chancellor, who from his bed explained that thanks to his personal influence in Parliament he had managed to save the principle of the bill, and secure the Emperor's Glorious Army against mean reductions and ignorant Parliamentary interference during His Majesty's life time, without conflict at home or scandal abroad; – more he could not do, and if this signal service to the Crown did not meet with his Sovereign's approval he begged to resign, and make room for others.

The Emperor on reflection acknowledged his obligation to the Chancellor's skill, whilst Prince Bismarck secured the double advantage to himself of increasing the confidence of the National Party in his power to coerce the Crown; and of making the future Sovereign of Germany dependent for the continuance of the Prussian Military System, on which the strength of the House of Hohenzollern is based, on the votes of the National Party of which he is the all powerful Leader.

¹⁷²On 22 March 1874.

¹⁷³See n. 146 in this section.

Prince Bismarck has thereby, and by his whole previous personal policy, made himself as indispensable to the Emperor William as to his immediate successor, who will find it impossible to form a lasting Administration without him, while he lives.

**FO 64/807: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Secret,
No 262, Berlin, 1 November 1874**

[Received 6 November by Messenger Robbins. For: The Queen / Disraeli; D[erby]]

Arnim affair in press, public, and political circles; Bismarck's opinion on the case

The newspapers continue to give full accounts of everything that is known about the Arnim case.¹⁷⁴ No one individually seems to know more than the public in general, but everybody talks about it, and the great majority approve everything the Government has done.

The correspondence between Herr von Bülow and Count Arnim, mentioned in my last report¹⁷⁵ on the subject, has been published by the Editor¹⁷⁶ of the "New York Herald" in the English Papers.¹⁷⁷

The Editor of the New York Herald had sent his Paris Correspondent, Mr Eustace Clare Grenville Murray, who also writes for the "Daily News", "Pall Mall", and the "World", to Berlin with an unlimited supply of money to buy the missing despatches from the Arnim family. In this he naturally failed, but somehow or other obtained copies of the Bülow Arnim correspondence which is now before the Public.

The official papers in Berlin have not reproduced it, but some of the smaller have, and it has certainly done Count Arnim more harm than good.

The officious press attributed Count Arnim's release on bail¹⁷⁸ to the alarming state of his health, which did not, however, prevent the authorities from fixing the amount of bail at one hundred thousand Thalers or fifteen thousand pounds, a very large sum even in Berlin. He now lives in the house of his mother in law¹⁷⁹ on the Pariser Platz,

¹⁷⁴For Arnim's arrest, see n. 159 in this section.

¹⁷⁵FO 64/806, Russell to Derby, Most Confidential, No 243, 20 October 1874; not included in this volume.

¹⁷⁶James Gordon Bennett, Jr.

¹⁷⁷On 27 October the *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily News* printed parts of the correspondence between Bülow and Arnim of July–August 1874; on 29 October 1874 the *New York Herald* printed a summary of the correspondence.

¹⁷⁸On 27 October 1874.

¹⁷⁹Auguste von Prillwitz.

and takes daily rides in the Thiergarten, from which I conclude that he is not so ill as the officious Press was told to say.

His son, Count Henning Arnim, told me some days since that at the last perquisition made in Countess Arnim's house the police seized the draft of a letter his father, Count Arnim, had been drawing up to the Emperor, in which he criticized Prince Bismarck's police with great severity. This letter, Count Henning feared, would add to his father's sufferings as the police would undoubtedly communicate it to the Chancellor, together with many other private family letters not intended for Prince Bismarck's perusal.

Prince Bismarck's friends are at great pains to prove that he had nothing to do with Count Arnim's imprisonment and that he was even surprised and distressed at the severity with which the Police were treating the Ex Ambassador, but did not feel justified at interfering with the course of the law, however much he regretted it.

These oft repeated assurances on the part of the highest and best authorities appeared to me so surprising that I resolved to clear up my doubts by asking Prince Bismarck himself if he gave me an opportunity to do so.

The opportunity occurred today, and I told the Prince how sorry I felt for my old friend and former colleague. Prince Bismarck replied that Count Arnim, as a man of great social talents, was doubtless a pleasant colleague; but if I could hear the reports of his subordinates I would learn that he was the worst of chiefs without political tact or honesty, and if I had known him as he did I would agree that he was "ripe for the rope" and ought to have been hanged long ago. On my expressing great surprise, the Chancellor continued to explain that Count Arnim was a man who would poison his own father or steal a silver spoon without compunction, as he had told the Emperor last year, but His Majesty had refused to believe it and had continued to support Arnim against himself, Bismarck.

Happily the Emperor's eyes were open at last and he felt the injustice he had done to his Chancellor, and had allowed the law to deal with Arnim as he deserved, or rather not as he deserved because he would not be hanged only imprisoned.

Seeing that Prince Bismarck was speaking with calm conviction and without apparent excitement, I begged he would be more explicit and tell me what I could really believe about this distressing case.

Prince Bismarck replied that he hoped he might not be compelled to make known the whole truth to the public, but he would now tell me enough to show that he had not done Arnim injustice.

Arnim, he said, not only made use of his position and knowledge to make an enormous fortune by speculating in the funds, but he actually falsified and altered the text and sense of his instructions to influence

the fluctuations of the “Bourse” in his favour, and, what was more, he enlisted the Duc Decazes as a partner in these infamous transactions, and shared the profits with him.

Prince Bismarck ended this painful conversation by deploring the absence of honesty in French Statesmen generally, but he excepted Monsieur Thiers for whom he had always entertained an affectionate respect.

**FO 64/807: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby,
Confidential, No 313, Berlin, 30 November 1874**

[Received 7 December by 2nd Messenger Robbins. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Paris / Vienna; D[erby]]

Austro-German alliance; probable effects on policy should Andrassy's administration fall

I see by the Newspapers that Count Andrassy's position in Austria is not as strong as it was, and that certain contingencies might lead, it is thought, to his retirement from office.

I know not what truth there is in these reports, but so much importance is attached to his tenure of office by the German Government that Prince Bismarck is sure to use every influence he possesses to prevent a change of Government in Austria, as long as possible.

As, however, Prince Bismarck's influence may not always be sufficient to keep his Austrian Ally in office, it is as well not to lose sight of the German “Standpoint” respecting Ministerial Changes in Austria, so as to guard against surprises.

The German National Party hold that the exclusion of Austria from the German Confederation by the war of 1866 has weakened the strategical position of the new German Empire; – because in the event of War, Austria, as a non-German Power, can throw her weight either on the side of Russia, or of France, or of both against Prussia, which, as a Member of the German Confederation, Austria could not do before 1866.

The closest alliance with Austria is therefore necessary to the Peace and safety of Germany.

But as the national interests of Austria and Germany are not absolutely identical, that close Alliance must be sought in the identity of purpose of the Statesmen who govern the two Empires.

For instance during the late War with France, the neutrality of Austria was doubtful, – her leanings were French, – and it was only after the fall of the Beust Administration that the Alliance between

Austria and Germany became possible through the personal influence of Count Andrassy.¹⁸⁰

But if at any time Count Andrassy should be replaced by an Anti-German or Ultramontane Minister with French, Catholic or Russian sympathies, the artificial ties which now hold Austria to Germany would be rent asunder, international distrust would ensue, and the Imperial Government would have to adopt a policy calculated to satisfy the National Party that Germany had nothing to fear from Austria, and Austria nothing to hope from France or Russia.

From all I can gather on this subject I conclude that there is more reason to apprehend a War with Austria than with France, for the further consolidation and completion of German Unity.

**FO 64/807: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby,
Confidential, No 326, Berlin, 7 December 1874**

[Received 14 December by Messenger Seymour. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Rome; D[erby]]

Reflections on Bismarck's two recent Reichstag speeches; ensuing debates about foreign policy and Kulturkampf

I have the honour to enclose, herewith, translations of Prince Bismarck's speeches in the Reichstag on the 4th and 5th instant.¹⁸¹

The debate of the 4th instant was on the Estimates for the Bundesrath,¹⁸² and the Bavarian Deputy Herr Jörg availed himself of the opportunity to express his regrets that the Committee for Foreign Affairs was not sufficiently consulted so that Prince Bismarck followed a personal policy which did not represent the pacific tendencies of the minor German States. He criticized Prince Bismarck's foreign policy in strong terms as calculated to lead Germany into war. An allusion to Kullman¹⁸³ enabled Prince Bismarck, in the defence he made of his foreign policy, to identify the assassin with the Catholic Party in

¹⁸⁰On 18 July 1870, one day before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, Austria declared its neutrality. Andrassy took over from Beust as foreign minister and chairman of the ministers' council in November 1871. For the Austro-German alliance (League of the Three Emperors of 1873), see n. 108 in this section.

¹⁸¹Enclosures: clippings from *Correspondance de Berlin*, No 76, Berlin 7 December (French translation of *Reichstag* proceedings of 4 December and 5 December).

¹⁸²Federal Council.

¹⁸³On 13 July 1874, at Kissingen, Eduard Kullmann, a fanatical opponent of the anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf*, attempted to assassinate Bismarck. He succeeded only in giving Bismarck a graze wound to the hand.

Germany, a taunt which produced an outburst of indignation on the part of the Catholic and of enthusiasm on that of the National Party.

On the following day, in a debate of the 5th instant, Herr Windhorst [*sic*] found fault with the Government for abolishing the post of German Minister to the Pope.¹⁸⁴ Prince Bismarck, in explaining the motives which had led to this measure, related an anecdote about Monsignor Meglia, the Nuncio at Paris, who had told the Wurtemberg Minister at Munich¹⁸⁵ in 1869 that the Church of Rome was only free in America, England and Belgium, but in all other countries had to look to the revolution for freedom; and speaking of the Franco-German War, Prince Bismarck asserted that he was in possession of proofs that it was the work of the Roman Clergy; that the Emperor Napoleon had resisted to the utmost in the interest of peace, but had finally been overruled by clerical influences contrary to his better convictions.

To my mind these are the only really important points in the two stormy debates which have produced so great and so general a sensation in consequence of the unusually strong language resorted to on both sides of the House. Prince Bismarck's public declarations are important because they carry conviction with them, and are implicitly believed by the majority of Germans, who see them repeated and held up to national admiration by the Official and officious press for weeks and months until they become Household words.

In the present instance Prince Bismarck from his place in Parliament has identified the interests of the Roman Clergy with those of the revolutionary party, and Kullman, the Assassin, with the Catholics of Germany, and he has fixed the responsibility of the war with France on the Pope.

These declarations are calculated to strengthen the growing conviction of the National Party that the Papacy is the greatest living danger to the Unity and freedom of Germany, and that there will be no safety or peace at home and abroad until the Catholic Church is abolished.

Prince Bismarck has no doubt good reasons for nourishing these feelings of hatred and hostility to the Roman Church in Germany, and will turn them to account whenever wanted in support of his policy.

The sudden dismissal of Herr von Nordenflycht, the Governor of Silesia, is another proof of Prince Bismarck's determination to fight the Church. Herr von Nordenflycht endeavoured to resist the execution of the Falk Laws in his province, and to establish a "Modus Vivendi" with

¹⁸⁴Diplomatic relations with the Holy See (Pius IX) were suspended in 1872 (see n. 63 in Munich section); the legation was formally abolished on 5 December 1874.

¹⁸⁵Oskar von Soden.

the Prince Archbishop of Breslau.¹⁸⁶ He was in consequence recalled, and Count Arnim Boitzenburg, a brother in law of Count Harry Arnim, appointed in his place.

The officious Press in lauding the Chancellor's energy expresses the earnest hope that every official who shows leniency to the Catholics may be dealt with in like manner.

Many thoughtful and moderate German politicians hold that it will become the mission of Germany to undertake a religious war for the purpose of destroying the Roman Catholic Church which stands in the way of the progressive Culture of Humanity.

FO 64/807: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Confidential, No 359, Berlin, 31 December 1874

[Received 4 January by Messenger Wynter. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate in turn; D[erby]]

Public opinion on outcome of Arnim trial and Bismarck's purported resignation

Since the termination of the Arnim trial and the "Chancellor Crisis", as it is called, the public mind in Berlin has been almost exclusively occupied with conjectures as to their possible connection and the "secret motives" which led Prince Bismarck to resign.¹⁸⁷ Some think the acquittal of Count Arnim on the charges brought against him by the Foreign Office¹⁸⁸ was the real motive of Prince Bismarck's exasperation and the vote against the arrest of Herr Majunke merely the ostensible excuse.¹⁸⁹ Others that the sentence of the Berlin Metropolitan Court had not affected him, but that he felt the necessity of making his party understand once for all that they could not divide in favour of the Catholics with impunity, others that he sought an opportunity

¹⁸⁶From May 1874 Nordenflycht, who sought to come to an understanding with Prince Bishop Förster on the implementation of the Prussian May (Falk) Laws (see nn. 112 and 140 in this section), tolerated the unlawful appointments of priests. Legal action against Förster was taken only after Nordenflycht's dismissal on 30 November 1874.

¹⁸⁷Bismarck, in an audience with Wilhelm I, tendered his resignation on 17 December 1874; this was declined by the emperor.

¹⁸⁸On 19 December 1874 Arnim – being acquitted of several of the charges (see n. 159 in this section) brought against him – was sentenced to three months in prison. On 19 June 1875 the court of appeal extended the sentence to nine months.

¹⁸⁹Paul Majunke, editor of the Catholic *Germania* and a Catholic Centre Party deputy in the *Reichstag*, was sentenced for lèse-majesté and defamation of the government in June 1874. He was arrested on 11 December 1874, when he returned from England to attend the sittings of the *Reichstag*. On 16 December the *Reichstag*, in a protest motion, affirmed the principle of parliamentary immunity.

to reassert his Power before the world, by making the Emperor, the Crown Prince,¹⁹⁰ and Parliament solicit his continuance in office.

Endless anecdotes are told to illustrate or prove the various theories in circulation, but none appear sufficiently well authenticated to be placed on record.

Reduced to its simplest expression, Prince Bismarck's threatened resignation amounts to a determination not to allow his right to be called in question of putting high officials, and Members of Parliament, or indeed anyone who opposes him into prison.

Herr Majunke will not be released, and the Public Prosecutor¹⁹¹ has appealed against the Arnim sentence, and so Prince Bismarck remains in office.

Count Arnim, it appears, did not intend to appeal, but was obliged to do so at the eleventh hour on learning the steps taken by the Foreign Office. The independent and strictly legal verdict of the Berlin judges has been appreciated all over the world except at Berlin.

The renewal of the Trial, after all that has passed, will give great satisfaction at Berlin but nowhere else.

The Ultramontanes will profit by it.

The enclosed translation of an Article from the "Preussische Jahrbücher" gives the official National Party view of the Arnim Case.¹⁹²

FO 64/824: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, No 58, Berlin, 6 February 1875

[Received 8 February by Messenger Robbins. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Colonial Office, 10 February; D[erby]]

Decrease in emigration from Germany

I have had the occasion to notice that the course pursued by Your Lordship in regard to emigration from Germany, communicated to me in Your Lordship's despatches N^{os} 231 and 232 of November 13 last, is known and has been highly appreciated by the German Authorities.¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰Friedrich Wilhelm.

¹⁹¹Hermann Tessedorf.

¹⁹²Enclosure: *Correspondance de Berlin*, No 83, 31 December 1874.

¹⁹³The Earl of Derby's despatches Nos 231 and 232 contained correspondence regarding the certification of contracts for the emigration of British Consuls in Germany to the Cape Colony, and the notification of plans to recruit 'German navvies of a superior description' for the construction of railways.

To the excessive sensitiveness, suspicion, and anger on the vexed subject of Emigration in Germany has succeeded a general feeling of confidence and satisfaction, amounting in some districts, I am told, almost to gratitude, an expression that will not appear exaggerated to those who have had opportunities of witnessing the sense of helpless despair which overcame landowners, manufacturers, and War Ministers in 1867 and 1871 at the appalling increase of emigration after the Wars with Austria and France.

The official newspapers note with satisfaction the improved state of things, and say that while the average of emigration from Germany from 1854 to 1873 amounted to 75,665, the number reached in 1874 does not exceed 40,000.

**FO 64/826: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby,
Confidential, No 151, Berlin, 28 March 1875**

[Received 5 April by Messenger Johnson. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Paris; D[erby]]

Bismarck's anti-clerical policy unlikely to disturb peace in Europe; relations between France and Germany

Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris¹⁹⁴ in Despatch N^o 226 Confidential of the 12th instant to Your Lordship reports a conversation with the Duc Decazes about the relations between France and Germany in which the Duke said that there were three incidents of recent occurrence which ought, in his opinion to engage the serious attention of those Governments who also were desirous of maintaining peace in Europe.

These were:

1st The threatening representation made by the German Minister at Brussels to the Government of Belgium respecting the language, and conduct of the Ultramontane Party in that country.¹⁹⁵

2nd The communication to the French Government of that representation.

3^{rdly} The prohibition of the Exportation of Horses from Germany.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴Lord Lyons. The conversation between Decazes and Lyons took place on 11 March.

¹⁹⁵In his diplomatic note of 3 February 1875, Friedrich von Perponcher-Sedlnitzky, the German envoy to Brussels, demanded immediate action against three bishops for their anti-German pastorals as well as against Alexandre Duchesne, a Belgian boilersmith who had proposed to the Archbishop of Paris to murder Bismarck for the sum of 60,000 francs. The note was subsequently communicated to all signatory powers of the London Treaty of 1839, which guaranteed the independence and neutrality of Belgium.

¹⁹⁶Imperial prescript of 4 March 1875.

The Duke thought it his bounden duty earnestly to call the attention of those Powers on whom the preservation of peace might depend, to the dangers which appeared to be threatening the tranquility of Europe.¹⁹⁷

I cannot but think that the Duke's apprehensions rest on a misconception of Prince Bismarck's policy.

The war with France which Prince Bismarck required to bring about the establishment of the German Empire is an accomplished fact and need not be repeated, Germany having obtained all, and even much more She could reasonably expect from that War.

Prince Bismarck has nothing more to gain from a second and aggressive War on France which would certainly not have the support of Public Opinion because it could bring no further advantages to Germany.

France is therefore safe from German aggression if She will abstain: 1st from serious preparations for a war of revenge, and 2^{ndly} from seeking to establish Anti-German alliances.

The prohibition to export horses from Germany which the Duc Decazes looks upon as an alarming symptom, is on the contrary intended by Prince Bismarck to act as a peace measure and to put off rather than hasten on an outbreak of hostilities. Prince Bismarck told me himself that he had proofs in hand of the secret orders given by the French Government to their Agents to purchase ten thousand horses in Germany in the Course of the present year, besides the annual supply already bought and paid for, – so he thought it as well to shew the French Government at once that their game was found out.

The sole object, he said, of the measure was to throw difficulties in the way of their Army Organization, delay its completion and thereby put off, as long as possible, the war of revenge the French were so evidently preparing for.¹⁹⁸

The threatening representations made by the German Ministers¹⁹⁹ at Brussels to the Belgian Government respecting the language and conduct of the ultramontane Party in that Country, and the communication²⁰⁰ of that threat to the Governments of France, Austria, Russia, the Netherlands &c &c can scarcely be viewed in the light of a

¹⁹⁷This refers to Decazes's dispatches to the French representatives at London (6 March 1875), Vienna (9 March), and St Petersburg (11 March).

¹⁹⁸On 12 March 1875 the French National Assembly passed the *Loi relative à la constitution des cadres et des effectifs* which complemented the military reform laws of 1872 and 1873. It stipulated the creation of an additional fourth battalion for each of the 144 regiments of the line infantry.

¹⁹⁹Hermann von Balan and his successor Perponcher.

²⁰⁰Odo Russell is referring to Bülow's circular to the German ambassadors of 12 March 1875.

cause for alarm by the Powers of Europe, now that events have proved Prince Bismarck to be without allies in his war against the Church of Rome.

His several appeals to the Catholic Powers for cooperation at the Pope's death have hitherto been met by evasive answers,²⁰¹ and his representations sound to me more like expressions of alarm, than threats. – He assumes that the Church of Rome can injure United Germany, he calls upon her neighbours to assist in keeping down the Clergy, he threatens Governments with his displeasure, but his threats have hitherto produced no practical results. No Government has yet agreed to adopt his Anti-Church policy, he is realizing that his struggle with the Papacy must be a single handed one, and he is alarmed to find that other Governments, blind to the danger of, or illdisposed towards Germany, do not obey his call, and follow his example of imprisoning Bishops, banishing Jesuits, and suppressing convents, because he does not see his way to compelling those Governments to do so by force without incurring the disapprobation of Europe, and perhaps of his own Sovereign.

He might perhaps by repeated threats bring about the downfall of an ultramontane administration in Belgium, France or Italy, – but then his relations with the incoming Ministry would probably for the time being become more intimate and more friendly.

If things come to the worst, he could certainly break off Diplomatic relations with a State whose clergy offended him, but I cannot, for my part, conceive an armed invasion of Belgium, France or Italy for the suppression of the Roman Catholic Church.

I can well imagine the invasion of Southern Germany by Prussian Troops to keep down ultramontane disturbances because the suppression of the Roman Catholic Clergy in Prussia must strengthen the Roman Catholic Church in Germany, and irritate the ultramontane party which cannot after all be suppressed by force, but I do not think that non-German Neutral States, – Austria of course excepted, – have cause to apprehend that Prince Bismarck's remonstrances respecting their ultramontane Subjects, will lead to open hostilities.

On the other hand I can fancy Prince Bismarck disliking the idea of and wishing to prevent the Catholic Governments from combining to lend some appearance of moral support to the Pope and his Church.

²⁰¹In a circular dated 14 May 1872 Bismarck, amongst other things, proposed a scheme for the control and recognition of future papal elections. The secret note, which aimed at securing an understanding between European governments, became public knowledge in the course of the Arnim affair of 1874.

Prince Bismarck might then find it troublesome enough to resist the clerical, Catholic and Protestant, Conservative and extreme Radical elements which would combine in Germany against him, and his party.

Happily for Prince Bismarck there is no danger of the Catholic Powers ever giving their moral support to an infallible Papacy.

FO 64/826: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Most Confidential, No 163, Berlin, 10 April 1875

[Received 12 April by Messenger Wynter. For: The Queen / Disraeli/ Paris / Vienna / St Petersburg / Rome; D[erby]]

'War-in-Sight' crisis; press articles intended to alarm German public opinion

While the French Government appear alarmed at the spirit of Prince Bismarck's communications, Prince Bismarck professes to be alarmed at the Warlike preparations of the French Government.²⁰²

The officious Press has received orders to publish a series of Articles to prove that France having completed her armaments is ready to pounce upon Germany and take her revenge, – that the ultramontane party are at work to bring about an understanding between France, Italy and Austria for the protection of the Pope against Prince Bismarck's policy, – that the alliance between France and the Ultramontane Party in Europe is a serious danger to German Unity and that the people of Germany must be on their guard, and follow implicitly the lead of their great Chancellor.²⁰³

The object of this agitation is to remind the Germans that the existence, and safety of the New Empire is still precarious, and that a great, and final struggle against the Ultramontanes, and their abettors in Europe, will be necessary to make Germany one, and indivisible.

While the Press is keeping the German public mind up to the mark, Prince Bismarck will probably send pacific circulars to the Representatives of Germany abroad to prove that he is working hard to maintain the Peace of Europe, and hopes he may not be forced into an attitude of self-defence by the intrigues of the Jesuits, and their friends.

²⁰²For the French army reorganization, see n. 198 in this section.

²⁰³This political interpretation of French military reform and the government-inspired anti-French press campaign began with an article in the *Kölnische Zeitung* of 5 April 1875; on 8 April the government-affiliated Berlin *Post* published an article under the infamous header 'Ist der Krieg in Sicht?' ('Is War in Sight?').

In another fortnight or three weeks Prince Bismarck will retire to the country at Varzin, and the present agitation in Germany will be over, and the public mind will be looking forward to the Visits of the Emperor of Russia, and of the King of Sweden or some such event.

Meanwhile Prince Bismarck has planted the seeds for the future quarrel with Austria, which he requires for the completion of German Unity, by insinuating, through the officious Press, that the visit of the Emperor of Austria to the King of Italy at Venice may have been turned to account to establish tacit understanding between them in favour of the Pope against Germany, and he has also allowed it to appear that the Italian Law of Guarantee may become the cause of differences between Germany and Italy in the future.²⁰⁴

These questions will soon be dropped again but they can be taken up next year or later when wanted, – against the Church of Rome for the completion of German Unity.

FO 64/827: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Most Confidential, No 192, Berlin, 2 May 1875

[Received 8 May by Count Schouvaloff. For: The Queen / Prince of Wales / Disraeli / Circulate; Approve copies confidential to: Vienna / St Petersburg / Paris / Rome; D[erby]]

Conversation with Count Moltke about likelihood of war with France; implications for peace of Europe

Field Marshall Count Moltke called on me today. I thought it best to begin by discussing indifferent Subjects, and let him, if so inclined, initiate a Conversation on the topic of the day. – The journey of the Crown Prince, and Princess in Italy²⁰⁵ led to Art, and then the Field Marshal observed that art and industry would suffer much from the coming War.

I said I could not believe in it, because I saw neither cause or necessity for war.

General Moltke replied that no one hated War more sincerely than himself but that France would force it on by her armaments.

I said that the French Government denied that the re-organization of their Army implied an intention to break the peace of Europe.

²⁰⁴Emperor Franz Joseph met the Italian king, Vittorio Emanuele, in Venice from 5 to 7 April 1875. The Law of Guarantees of 13 May 1871 settled the rights and prerogatives of the Pope and the Holy See and its relationship with the Italian kingdom, following the takeover of the Papal States in 1870.

²⁰⁵On 12 April 1875 Friedrich Wilhelm and Victoria left Berlin for Italy where they visited Florence, Genoa, and Venice.

General Moltke replied that he was too well informed, and too well versed in Military matters to admit or believe in the sincerity of their peaceful assurances, – and he then entered into the arguments, already communicated to Your Lordship, by the German Ambassador Count Münster,²⁰⁶ on which the apprehensions of the German Government are founded, – namely the formation of the fourth battalions, and the extent, and expense of the peace establishment, which, to a soldier's mind implied the intention to make War.²⁰⁷

He could not but admire and envy the patriotism of the French parliament, ever ready to vote without hesitation the demands of their war department, – whilst the German parliament, with all its evil democratic elements endeavoured to resist, and refuse the most necessary expenses for the German Army.

Perhaps, I observed, the German parliament wished for Peace, and thought their peace establishment sufficient? No doubt, the General explained, Germany wished for Peace, – and had no need for conquest or aggression, but Germany required more than any other Nation an Army organized for defence because She was placed in the centre of Europe, and could be invaded from all sides, – whilst the other surrounding Powers had but one or two vulnerable points to defend. – Parliament should not forget the teaching of history but remember that from her geographical position Germany must ever be ready to anticipate hostile intentions, and alliances on the part of her neighbours.

I said that none of her neighbours had the remotest wish to invade Germany, and that if France ever recovered sufficient strength to attempt it She would find no allies to assist her in breaking the Peace of Europe by being the first to take the field again.

General Moltke said he could not admit that Peace was broken by the Power that marched first, it was the Power that provoked the necessity of defence in others which must be held responsible for War.

That sounded much “I said” like going to War to prevent it, – but – Could not Diplomacy be first allowed to try her skill at keeping Peace between France, and Germany, and had he no Course to suggest which might postpone, if not arrest, the necessity he deplored of an appeal to Arms?

General Moltke replied that as far as Germany was concerned it rested with the Great Powers to postpone or arrest War for ever, by openly siding with her against France, and shewing France the futility of her projected Vengeance; – England especially he said, has

²⁰⁶Münster informed the Earl of Derby of the German position in two conversations on 9 and 16 April 1875.

²⁰⁷For the French military law of 12 March 1875, see n. 198 in this section.

more influence in France than any other Power; and might thereby render the greatest services towards the cause of Peace, – but he had little hope himself from the action of Foreign Diplomacy because Germany, for reasons he could not account for, since the foundation of the Empire appeared to inspire hatred, and suspicion rather than confidence to her former friends and Allies. I said that Germany was hated by no one, – but that the Sensational tone of her officious press was Calculated to awaken Suspicion as to the Sincerity of the pacific intentions of her Government.

General Moltke did not reply to my remark but said that no Government could possibly doubt Germany's anxious, honest, and ardent desire for Peace, – however much they might dislike, her, – and if they did not find means of persuading France to desist from her intended vengeance, and that unhappily Germany met with defeat, – and was unable to impose Peace on France at once, Europe would be plunged into another thirty years War.

I said that I was surprised to hear him talk of the possibility of defeat, when it was certain that Germany was better prepared than ever, – far better than in 1870, – far better than any other Continental Power, besides which she had since the last war secured the alliance of Austria?²⁰⁸ General Moltke replied that success in battle could not be reckoned on with Certainty, and that Austria might, notwithstanding the alliance, become a Cause of Embarrassment to Germany.

I asked him how?

After some hesitation he replied that the German Government might be placed in a very awkward position by the growing desire of the German Subjects of Austria to shake off the rule of the Magyar, and the Slave and become Subjects of the German Empire.

I replied that that Complication appeared to me remote since they were mostly Roman Catholics.

General Moltke admitted the Complication he foresaw to be remote if the Statesmen who governed Austria adhered closely to the present alliances with Germany.

I said that England would be ever ready to exert her influence in the interest of peace, and that I most sincerely hoped he would tell me privately how that influence, in his opinion, could be best turned to account to prevent the dangers he foresaw in Europe.

General Moltke said he hoped much from England because England and Germany united, Could secure the peace of the world.

I have given Your Lordship the chief points of our Conversation, which was long and carried on all the time in a very friendly tone.

²⁰⁸For the Austro-German alliance, see n. 108 in this section.

**FO 64/828: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby,
Confidential, No 248, Berlin, 1 June 1875**

[Received 2 June by Messenger Byng Hall. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Colonial Office – confidential, 10 June; D[erby]]

Conversation with Bülow about Delagoa Bay

With reference to Your Lordship's Despatch N^o 184 confidential of the 25th ultimo on the subject of the Delagoa Bay question, I have the honour to state that I have gathered from several private conversations with Herr von Bülow that the German Government would not accept that territory even as a gift from any Power, there being no wish, or intention, to acquire colonies for Germany on the part of the Emperor or Prince Bismarck.²⁰⁹ His Excellency told me that President Bürger [*sic*] had written a letter enclosing a gold medal to Prince Bismarck which His Highness had accepted, – but that if he came to Berlin “to offer the Transvaal to the protection of the German Empire” he would neither meet with success or even encouragement although he would certainly be civilly received.²¹⁰

The German Government, His Excellency said, would not allow itself to be burdened with the protectorate of any distant Country or with the possession of Colonies so long as Prince Bismarck lived or was in office.

**FO 64/828: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Most
Confidential, No 251, Berlin, 5 June 1875**

[Received 7 June. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Paris – confidential; D[erby]]

Remarks on war scare; German press reactions; relations with France, England, and Russia; diplomatic influence of Russia and Great Britain; public feeling in Germany

I have the Honor to enclose, herewith, copy, and translation of a notice which appeared in the official “Reichs und Staats Anzeiger” of the

²⁰⁹At the time of the dispatch the dispute between Britain and Portugal, over their respective claims to the southern part of Delagoa Bay (Baía de Maputo), had been referred to the President of the French Republic for arbitration. On 24 July 1875 MacMahon decided in favour of the Portuguese.

²¹⁰In his advances to Germany, Burgers, President of the South African Republic, sought to gain support for the guarantee of neutrality of Delagoa Bay and to secure the independence of the Transvaal. Central to his plans was the construction of a railway line between Delagoa Bay and Pretoria.

1st instant in reference to Earl Russell's motion, and Your Lordship's answer in The House of Lords on the 31st ultimo.²¹¹

This is the first, and only official utterance with which the German Government has vouchsafed to favour the German people on the subject of the late "Scare", as it is called, in Europe.

On the other hand the "officious" papers have been at pains, for the last fortnight, to deny everything that at all approached the truth in their independent Contemporaries, and the result has been universal confusion.

The object of the officious Papers was to separate, in the eyes of the Public, the action of the Russian, and English Governments,²¹² – to prove that Russia never interfered or doubted her old Ally Prussia's pacific intentions, and to make out that Prince Gortchacow, and Prince Bismarck had united to dispel by telegraphic messages²¹³ the unfounded alarms of England, and France; due to "petticoat and ultramontane influences" by which the Empress,²¹⁴ and the Grand Duchess of Baden²¹⁵ were meant, who are supposed by Prince Bismarck to be constantly plotting his downfall.

The independent Papers profoundly irritated at the deception practised upon them by the officious Press, and at not hearing the truth, either from their own Government took up a bitterly sarcastic, and critical tone which added fuel to the fire.

²¹¹On 31 May 1875 Lord Derby responded to Earl Russell's motion (requesting that diplomatic correspondence on the situation in Europe be laid before parliament) that it would not be 'in the interest of European peace to give wider publicity and a larger circulation to all the details of the negotiations.' Derby's statement 'that great uneasiness existed a few weeks ago in respect of the relations of the governments of France and Germany' prompted the *Reichs-Anzeiger* to admit that a certain anxiety had been caused by the French military law of 12 March 1875 (see n. 198 in this section); however, it denied any warlike considerations on the part of Germany and calls for France to revoke the reorganization of its army. Enclosures: copy (clipping from *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* of 3 June 1875) and translation of a notice in *Deutscher Reichs-Anzeiger und Königlich Preussischer Staats-Anzeiger* of 1 June 1875.

²¹²Following Lord Derby's telegraphic instructions of 8 May 1875, Russell, in a conversation with Bülow on 9 May 1875, expressed British concerns and offered assistance in resolving the Franco-German crisis. Similar representations were made by Shuvalov – on his return to London – on 6 May and by Gorchakov on 10 May during the tsar's visit to Berlin (from 10 to 13 May).

²¹³Russell is referring to Gorchakov's circular telegram of 13 May 1875, according to which the tsar left Berlin convinced of Germany's peaceful disposition.

²¹⁴Augusta.

²¹⁵Luise.

The only feeling both parties shared in common was exasperation at the language, and tone of the "Times" in regard to Germany since the 6th of May.²¹⁶

Your Lordship's speech has for the present brought about an armistice between them.

The independent Papers are at last in possession of the truth, which the officious Press can no longer withhold or deny, and both Parties are reflecting before they renew the struggle.

The Peace-Party, who fondly believed Germany would in future dictate peace to Europe, are humiliated at having instead, been invited to keep it by Russia, and England.

The War Party are dismayed at finding that they can no longer rely on Russian neutrality or assistance.

The Commercial, and Industrial classes appear grateful, after the losses they had to sustain during the War-panic, at the prospect of prolonged peace with all its blessings, and do not question whom they owe it to.

The admirers of Prince Bismarck, who believe him to be infallible, are convinced that he must have set a trap for Russia, and England into which they fell, and that his triumph will be complete when his secret motives become known to the world.

The Royal Family are said to be deeply annoyed at the results of Prince Bismarck's sensational, nervous, and unaccountable policy which they can neither understand or control, since he explains it to no one, least of all to the Emperor or Crown Prince²¹⁷ who well know that he is indispensable, and that they must submit to his despotic rule while it lasts whether they like it or not.

The departure of the Emperor for Ems,²¹⁸ and of Prince Bismarck for Varzin today will be followed, till the German Parliament meets in Autumn, by a few months of quiet, which the Squabbles of the Newspapers amongst each other will not disturb. – The great excitement produced by the War-panic and the reaction produced by its sudden collapse must for some time to come leave traces of irritation in the belligerent Press, – which will gradually yield to the irresistible feeling of satisfaction that Peace is really secured,

²¹⁶ On 6 May 1875 *The Times* published a pro-French article by its Paris correspondent, Henri Opper de Blowitz, entitled 'A French "Scare"', dated Paris, 4 May 1875; it presented German reasoning for a preventive war.

²¹⁷ Friedrich Wilhelm.

²¹⁸ Wilhelm left Berlin for Ems on 5 May 1875.

and can be maintained at pleasure for many years to come, even though it be by the joint moral influences of Russia and England.

**FO 64/830: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, No 409,
Berlin, 1 October 1875**

[Received 4 October by Messenger Ball. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Paris / Constantinople / Vienna / Rome / St Petersburg / Printed; E.S.S. [Francis S. Stephens]; D[erby]]

Germany's position with respect to Herzegovina insurrection

The article on the Herzegovina insurrection published in the Official Imperial Gazette of the 23rd ultimo, and transmitted to Your Lordship in my Despatch N^o 397 confidential of the 24th ultimo, faithfully represents the policy of the German Government and coincides in every point with the language held by Herr von Bülow on the subject.²¹⁹

The attitude of Germany is at present reserved and expectant, and will in future be influenced by her desire to support the policy of her Austrian and Russian Allies in the maintenance of the peace and prosperity of Europe. Beyond that the Imperial Government will not commit itself to any special line of policy, and Germany will be satisfied to follow the lead of her Northern Allies in her dealings with Turkey. So long as Austria and Russia are agreed, her course is clear – but should any important difference of opinion arise between them, and Germany be compelled to side with either, then political and national passions may be kindled in Germany which it will require all the sagacity and statesmanship of Prince Bismarck to smother.

Happily Count Andrassy and Prince Gortchakow appear to be hitherto agreed on all points in regard to Turkey.

²¹⁹The rebellion of the Christian population in Herzegovina against Ottoman rule began in July 1875; it was the first of the Balkan uprisings which eventually led to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878. The article in the *Deutscher Reichs-Anzeiger und Preußischer Staats-Anzeiger* of 23 September, of which Russell had transmitted a French translation taken from the *Correspondance de Berlin* on 24 September, stated that Germany had no special interests in the East and was in accordance with the desires of Russia and Austria to maintain the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

**FO 64/830: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby,
Confidential, No 438, Berlin, 23 October 1875**

[Received 25 October by Messenger Seymour. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate; D[erby]]

Reticence of foreign office officials to disclose information during Bismarck's absence

The Emperor is expected to return to Berlin from Italy²²⁰ on Monday evening next, the 25th instant, and Herr von Bülow, who accompanies His Majesty will therefore not be accessible before Tuesday the 26th, when I shall be able to communicate Your Lordship's several instructions to His Excellency.

The members of the Diplomatic Body I have lately spoken to complain of the excessive reserve they meet with at the hands of the German Ministers and Under Secretaries, and of the consequent difficulty they labour under of keeping their respective Governments well informed respecting the general views of the German Government on questions of foreign policy.

But the fact is that no one knows or can say what Prince Bismarck's views and intentions really are while he lives in seclusion at Varzin,²²¹ and all Prussian Officials are bound by oath never to speak on the affairs of their respective Departments.

The other day a Diplomatist asked a Clerk of the Foreign Office which Department he belonged to so as to be able to send him a book he wished to read.

The Clerk replied with visible embarrassment that he was not allowed to disclose the name of the department he worked in, but that "Foreign Office Wilhelmstrasse" would find him without further specification.

**FO 64/830: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, No 450,
Berlin, 27 October 1875**

[Received 1 November by Messenger Drury. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate in turn / Munich; D[erby]]

King of Bavaria's actions in Bavarian crisis welcomed by national party in Berlin

The recent events in Bavaria²²² have been followed with interest, and the action of the King has been hailed with enthusiasm by the National Party in Berlin, because His Majesty by identifying himself with

²²⁰Wilhelm I visited King Vittorio Emanuele II at Milan from 18 to 23 November.

²²¹Bismarck stayed at Varzin from 5 June to 20 November 1875.

²²²See pp. 482–485.

his Ministers to crush the opposition has rendered parliamentary government more difficult than it was in the separate States of Germany, and has thereby facilitated the work of unification, which it was in his power to impede. The National Party have every reason to glorify the King of Bavaria, who was the first to offer the Imperial Crown of Germany to the House of Hohenzollern,²²³ and is now sacrificing his own on the Altar of National Unity.

FO 64/831: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Most Confidential, No 488, Berlin, 29 November 1875

[Received 6 December by Messenger Robbins. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Printed; Copy confidential to: Paris / Vienna / Rome / St Petersburg / Constantinople / General Stanton; D[erby]]

Conversation with Bismarck on British purchase of Suez Canal shares; his views on Eastern Question and Herzegovina crisis

Prince Bismarck desired me today in the most cordial terms to congratulate Your Lordship and Her Majesty's Government in having "done the right thing at the right moment in regard to the Suez Canal".²²⁴ He said he gave the measure adopted by Her Majesty's Government his full support and approval, and had lost no time in telegraphing and writing confidentially in that sense to the German Representatives at Paris, St Petersburg and Vienna²²⁵ so as to forestall the expression of any other official opinion, should any such exist.

Prince Bismarck then read me some portions of a Despatch he had received from Count Münster, detailing the circumstances of the purchase of the Suez Canal Shares by Her Majesty's Government, and describing the "enthusiasm with which the measure had been received by all parties, and which would, in his opinion, be unanimously approved by Parliament." Prince Bismarck paused at the word "unanimous", and said that the expression was strong, but he envied a Government that could look forward to unanimous approvals in Parliament.

Count Münster then goes on to pass a high eulogium on Mr Disraeli as the greatest Leader and parliamentary tactician in the history of England, and prognosticates prolonged powers to a Government

²²³See n. 6 in this section.

²²⁴On 25 November 1875 the British government purchased Isma'il Pasha's shares of the Suez Canal Company representing 44% of the capital.

²²⁵Chlodwig Fürst zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, Heinrich VII Prinz Reuß, and Hans Lothar von Schweinitz.

whose far and clear-sighted policy has known when and how to solve the Eastern Question, as far as English interests are concerned, without bloodshed and through the timely exercise of the arts of peace and of high statesmanship.

Prince Bismarck said that it was the privilege of friendly powers to lend each other their moral support in the attainment of National Interests, so long as those interests did not clash, but in the present case the interests of England were those of Germany.

He had on former occasions told me of the apprehensions he entertained lest the interests of England and of Russia in the East should lead to a conflict, and he had more than once pointed out to Prince Gortchakoff and Count Schouvaloff, but without producing the impression he desired, how much that danger might be diminished if the free passage to India through Egypt were guaranteed to England, to which she had among all nations the greatest claim and the clearest right.

He could not but hope that the security England would now enjoy in regard to her communications with India would in course of time deprive the inevitable extension of Russia in Central Asia of much of its supposed importance or threatening aspect in the eyes of Englishmen and would facilitate the establishment of those intimate and cordial relations between England and Russia which were so essential to the maintenance of peace and the interests of civilization. He, therefore, would give his most hearty support to the policy Her Majesty's Government had now inaugurated by the purchase of the Khedive's shares in the Suez Canal.

I thanked Prince Bismarck for the friendly feelings he expressed towards England and Her Majesty's Government which I said I would at once communicate to Your Lordship, and in the course of the conversation which ensued, I asked him his opinion on the prospects of the Herzegovine Insurrection.²²⁶

Prince Bismarck replied that the Emperor had asked him the same question a few hours ago, and he would give me the same answer.

Germany has no direct interests in European Turkey, but indirectly the greatest in preventing Austria and Russia from quarrelling over the Sick man's inheritance. Germany must, therefore, adhere strictly to the part of peace maker, and never side so completely with either of her allies as to make two against one in a tripartite alliance.

In regard to the Herzegovine he believed that Count Andrassy and Prince Gortchakow agreed in substance, and differed only about words and expressions, and that the last Austrian proposals awaiting the arrival of Prince Gortchakow at St Petersburg would be accepted

²²⁶For the rebellion in Herzegovina, see n. 219 in this section.

by him after he had corrected Count Andrassy's wording of the Draft to his own taste.²²⁷

Prince Gortchakow was expected tonight in Berlin, and he would see him and do his best in conversation tomorrow to promote the good understanding now existing between Austria and Russia, and to make it as lasting and as sincere as possible.

It was clear that Count Andrassy and the Hungarians were against an annexation policy, which could bring them no advantage and might possibly weaken their position in Austria, and Prince Gortchakow was as clearly against a breaking up of Turkey and the inevitable conflict which would follow, for which Russia was not prepared at present. What Russia might do in the remote future, he was of course not prepared to say. But as far as the present question was concerned, he believed in the sincere desire of both Prince Gortchakow and Count Andrassy to find a peaceful solution, acceptable to the Sultan as well as to the European Powers, and beneficial to the populations concerned, so that he did not anticipate any serious trouble or complications in the last at present, while Count Andrassy held office in Austria.

I asked whether Count Andrassy's position was a strong one?

Prince Bismarck said it happily was, but there existed a party in Austria who were intriguing against him, and trying to get the Emperor to put Baron Hübner in his place and Count Beust at the Paris Embassy.

The Emperor was open to new influences, and among the Archdukes there were partizans of an annexation policy, who represented Count Andrassy to His Majesty as being too German. When an Archduke last year published a pamphlet against Germany,²²⁸ Count Andrassy persuaded the Emperor to reprimand him, and when an Austrian Officer, Colonel Labe, wrote another Pamphlet in favour of Germany,²²⁹ the Archdukes persuaded the Emperor to punish him also, which showed that His Majesty was open to contrary and conflicting influences.

On taking my leave, Prince Bismarck begged I would consider what he had said as Confidential.

²²⁷In his proposal of 16 October 1875 (repeated in the communication to Russia of 16 November) Andrassy advocated specific concessions for Bosnia and Herzegovina (religious equality, abolition of the *corvée*, tithes, and tax farming); the reforms were to be imposed on Turkey by the European powers.

²²⁸*Betrachtungen über die Organisation der österreichischen Artillerie*, anonymously published by Archduke Johann Salvator in January 1875. Archduke Johann was reprimanded by the Austrian emperor on 5 February 1875.

²²⁹The details of the pamphlet could not be established.

**FO 64/850: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Secret,
No 9, Berlin, 3 January 1876**

[Received 10 January by Messenger Byng Hall. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate; D[erby]]

Conversation with Bismarck on alliance between Germany and England

In closing my preceeding [*sic*] Despatch N^o 8 Secret of yesterday's date, I had to solicit Your Lordship's indulgence for the short comings of a Report written in haste to catch the Post, in which I endeavoured to give as correct a Précis of a long and important conversation as I could within a given space of time.²³⁰ In reading it over today I am relieved to find little to regret in substance, although much I should like to have expressed better and more clearly. I find also that I omitted to mention an incidental observation made by Prince Bismarck, which is curious.

He said that from his private information it resulted that Prince Gortchakow boasted of having established more intimate and confidential relations with Her Majesty's Government than had ever existed between Russia and England before, whilst on the other hand Count Andrassy manifested a deep rooted distrust of England, difficult to explain or account for. He asked if I could account for it, – I said I could not.

The impression left on my mind by this conversation is that Prince Bismarck means what he says, and really desires a frank and cordial understanding with England for the following reasons: –

When he invented the alliance of the three Northern Powers, he intended to play his two Allies against each other, using both to bully Europe for his own glory.²³¹

Outwitted by Prince Gortchakow last May, he had the humiliation before all the world to be bound over to keep the peace by Russia.²³²

From that moment Russia commanded the sympathies of the Peace-loving Powers and took the lead of the Northern Alliance, – Austria grew more intimate with Russia than with Germany, Prince Bismarck felt isolated, the tripartite Alliance became a burden to him, and he vowed revenge.

²³⁰In his dispatch No 8 of 2 January 1876 (not included in this volume) Russell informed Derby of Bismarck's views on the state of the Balkan crisis. In conversation with Russell, Bismarck had expressed his wish for Anglo-German co-operation and for an understanding on the so-called 'Andrassy note' of 31 December 1875, in which Austria, in agreement with Germany and Russia, proposed reforms in the Ottoman Empire.

²³¹For the League of the Three Emperors of 22 October 1873, see n. 108 in this section.

²³²Russell is referring to Gorchakov's conduct during the 'War-in-Sight' crisis; see p. 106.

And now he thinks he sees his way to it in Turkey.

If Russia alone, or Russia and Austria combined, wanted something in Turkey England objected to, – he could throw over his Northern Allies and in the name of Peace and of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, give the full moral support of Germany to England to maintain the “status quo”. – If then, in his turn, he could bind over Russia to keep the peace, his revenge would be complete.

Should, however, the combination not be realized, he has at least laid the foundation stone of a cordial understanding with England in the interest of peace, threatened at present by a revival of the Oriental Question.

Allied to Russia and Austria alone, – Germany can be dragged by them against her wish and will into War.

United with England to prevent War in the East, Germany regains her independence and her control over Russia and Austria.

FO 64/850: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Confidential, No 86, Berlin, 25 February 1876

[Received 28 February by Messenger Harbord. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Mr Hill / Mr Petre; D[erby]]

Individual states' opposition to imperial purchase of railways

Your Lordship has learnt from M^r Morier's despatch N^o 11 of the 27th January, and from Mr Petre's despatch N^o 7 of the 11th instant²³³ that Prince Bismarck's project for acquiring all the German State Railways, as well as those belonging to private companies, and vesting them in the Empire, has not been favourably received by the Bavarian and Wurtemberg Governments. The same may be said of Saxony, Baden and indeed of all the Individual States composing the Empire.²³⁴

The project has also met with some opposition in Berlin. Herr Camphausen, the Minister of Finance, and several other high officials are against it.

²³³Dispatches are not included in this volume.

²³⁴Bismarck's railway project, set forth in his memorandum of 8 January 1876, aimed for a unified network of imperial railways that would be centrally administered. This was to be realized by the purchase of existing railways. On 26 April 1876 a bill authorizing the sale of the Prussian state railways to the German Empire was introduced in the house of deputies of the Prussian *Landtag*; the law was passed on 2 May and came into effect on 4 June 1876.

On the other hand it has met with the entire approval of the Emperor, the Crown Prince,²³⁵ a large majority of the National Party,²³⁶ the entire body of Railway Officials, and the financial world.

The Emperor and Crown Prince see strategic advantages in it, the National Party a means to greater national Unity, the Railway official a prospect of decorations, stars, crosses, Ribbons, and pensions, and the financial world improved security for invested capital.

I had occasion to speak to Prince Bismarck on the subject, and from him I learnt that he had no intention of acting against the inclinations, or of overriding the opposition which the project meets with on the part of the German Governments at present.

But he intended to ask the Prussian Landtag for power to sell, and the Reichstag for leave to purchase the Prussian Railways for the Empire. He would also propose in like manner to acquire the railways belonging to private Companies willing to sell them to the Empire, and he would leave the realization of the whole project to time, and the riper judgment of the individual German States and Statesmen.

FO 64/851: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, No 177, Berlin, 28 April 1876

[Received 1 May by Messenger Seymour. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Munich / Stuttgart; D[erby]]

Imperial acquisition of German railways a matter of time

I have read M^r Strachey's Despatch N^o 22 of the 20th instant, herewith returned, with great interest.²³⁷ – The opposition made by Saxony, Bavaria, Wurtemberg and Baden to the Bill now under discussion in the Prussian Landtag for the gradual purchase of the German Railways by the Empire will, in the end, prove as impotent as the opposition made formerly to the creation of the Zollverein and of the North German Confederation.²³⁸

The acquisition of the whole German Railway system by the Empire is merely a question of time.

²³⁵Friedrich Wilhelm.

²³⁶National Liberal Party.

²³⁷Strachey's No 22 (not included in this volume) outlined the plans for the Saxon purchase of the Leipzig and Dresden railway as a counter move to the Prussian railway project (see n. 234 this section).

²³⁸In 1833 (Customs Union) and 1866 (*Norddeutscher Bund*).

FO 64/853: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Most Confidential, No 263, Berlin, 8 June 1876

[Received 12 June by Messenger Hare. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Paris – confidential / Print; D[erby]]

German alarm at Anglo-French alliance in Eastern policy

The first Leader in the “Times” of Friday the 2nd instant, recommending that England and France should unite to make known to the Northern Powers what settlement they think most equitable for the pacification of the revolted Provinces of Turkey,²³⁹ has created some alarm in Berlin, because it is assumed to mean that the Anglo-French Alliance is about to be revived in opposition to the Northern Alliance.

The alarm has been increased by the telegraphic summary of another Leader in the “Times” of the 5th instant announcing the existence of a resolve that Russia shall not tear the Treaty of 1856 with impunity.²⁴⁰

The friends of Russia in Berlin having succeeded in disquieting the mind of the Emperor William in regard to the policy of England with these articles, I was glad to be able to tell Prince Bismarck, and Herr von Bülow that I had a telegram from Your Lordship stating that there was no foundation for the report in Berlin of a revival of the Anglo-French Alliance in opposition to the Northern Powers.²⁴¹

Prince Bismarck told me in strict confidence that the Emperor William had been so much alarmed at the report that His Majesty had written him an autograph Note, which he shewed me, asking what should be done under the circumstances.

He, Prince Bismarck, had explained to the Emperor that the “Times” was not a “Ministerial Paper” and that the anonymous writers of those articles were probably engaged, like the rest of the Press of Europe, in stockjobbing speculations. – He was much obliged for Your Lordship’s communication which he would at once submit to the Emperor in confirmation of his own assurances that the report was totally unfounded.

²³⁹The Balkan crisis, which started with the Herzegovina Uprising in July 1875 (see n. 219 in this section), was further aggravated by the April Uprising in the Bulgarian provinces in 1876. This was brutally suppressed by Ottoman forces in May 1876.

²⁴⁰The Treaty of Paris, of 30 March 1856, ended the Crimean War and guaranteed the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire. It led to the creation of the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia – nominally under the rule of the Porte until 1878 – as a buffer between the Ottoman Empire and Russia.

²⁴¹Telegram, Derby to Russell, 6 June 1876, 5.40 pm (draft in FO 64/848).

**FO 64/853: Hugh Guion MacDonell to Earl of Derby,
No 300, Berlin, 7 July 1876**

[Received 10 July by Messenger Harbord. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Print; D[erby]]

Offensive German press articles about England; Treitschke's political pamphlet on Eastern Question

A number of leading Articles have appeared during the past months in local and so-called semi official papers throughout this Country in which the most fulsome praise of Russia alternates with sneers and even offensive language towards England. Latterly the Attitude taken up by England in Eastern Affairs has furnished the principal theme for the attack made upon it by the Journalists.²⁴²

I have not thought it necessary to trouble Your Lordship with translations of these Articles, which appeared principally in the "National Zeitung", as I had good reason to believe that the bulk of them were written by a Russian subject, resident in Germany,²⁴³ and represented rather the feelings he sought to inspire amongst his readers than the feelings of the Country itself. There is no denying that a feeling unsympathetic towards England, does exist among the less educated, or lower middle classes in this Country and this feeling has been sedulously cultivated and nourished by several organs of the press for many months past.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, however, this feeling, arising partly from a sentimental grievance as to the supposed benevolent neutrality shewn by England towards France in the late War and assisted by a certain commercial jealousy is really superficial; and if Local and even Semi Official Newspapers have encouraged and fostered it, it was more to call attention to the gratitude Germany owed to the person of the Czar for his attitude in 1870 than from any wish to sow distrust in German minds towards England.²⁴⁴

The perpetual reiteration of the same statements is, however, producing a certain effect. The tone of these newspapers may fairly be said to be prompted by a wish to show Russia openly how much she is

²⁴²Britain was criticized particularly with regard to Disraeli's rejection of the Berlin Memorandum of May 1876, in which Austria, Prussia, and Russia proposed a reform scheme for Turkey and a temporary armistice in the Balkans. On 30 June the Eastern crisis further escalated with the Serbian declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire; on 2 July Montenegro joined Serbia.

²⁴³Name not traceable.

²⁴⁴During the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, Russia followed the policy of benevolent neutrality towards Germany; as part of this strategy Alexander II awarded orders to high-ranking German military personnel and made the German crown prince, Friedrich Wilhelm, a Russian field marshal.

appreciated by Germany, and the author of these Articles interpolates the praises of his Sovereign with denunciations of English treachery and barbarity such as appeared in the Russian Papers before the War of 1854.²⁴⁵

The last effusion of this description, and one taking rank far above any mere newspaper Article, is a Pamphlet²⁴⁶ published by Professor von Treitschke an eminent member both of the Reichstag and Prussian Landtag, a strong Liberal and devoted follower of Prince Bismarck, to whom since 1864 more especially he, the first essayist in Germany, has devoted his pen and to whose literary Power innumerable converts to the idea of German unity have been attributed.

Coming from such a source this Pamphlet has excited considerable Attention, although there is no reason to believe that Prince Bismarck was even cognizant of its publication. Some very remarkable extracts, translation[s] of which are enclosed, are reproduced in the “Nord Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung” of the 2nd instant, one of the so-called semi-official Papers of which he is part proprietor and Editor.²⁴⁷

Your Lordship will notice that the same number of the Paper that publishes this diatribe [*sic*] against England, reproduces as a “Feuilleton” the story of the Duke of Anhalt, – and the defection of England from Germany under the Duke of Ormond in the beginning of the 18th century.²⁴⁸

I would however point out to Your Lordship that the author of this Pamphlet in spite of his great talent is a fanatical enthusiast, has been stone deaf for many years, and is Considered by many to be almost in his dotage. Some bitter rejoinders have already appeared in the “Volks=” and “Vossische[?]” Zeitungen and others will doubtless follow.

I have thought it advisable to forward this translation and explanation to Your Lordship in the event, far from unlikely, that the attention of the English Public should be called to this publication by overzealous correspondents not too well acquainted with its real history, by means of which it might acquire an exaggerated importance.

²⁴⁵Crimean War of 1854–1856.

²⁴⁶*Die Türkei und die Großmächte*, published in *Preussische Jahrbücher*, Vol. 37 (1876).

²⁴⁷Enclosure: ‘Turkey & the Great Powers’ (translation). The original clipping from the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* is not included in FO 64/853.

²⁴⁸The article in question was published on the 200th anniversary of the birth (3 July 1876) of Leopold von Anhalt and refers to the War of the Spanish Succession in 1712 when the Duke of Ormonde, commander-in-chief of the forces, withdrew British troops at the instigation of the Tory ministry who took up negotiations with France.

**FO 64/855: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Secret,
No 484, Berlin, 3 November 1876**

[Received 6 November by Messenger Johnson. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Print; Copies confidential to: Paris / Vienna / St Petersburg / Constantinople / Rome; D[erby]]

Prince Bismarck's policy with regard to powers interested in Eastern Question; Manteuffel's warning that England and Russia are becoming too close

In my previous correspondence I stated that Field Marshall Baron Manteuffel, on returning from his Mission to Russia,²⁴⁹ had warned The Emperor and Prince Bismarck that England and Russia were growing too intimate, in his opinion, and that if France were to join them, other Powers might follow and Germany would be isolated. [“]Russia could be reckoned on when other Powers could not, and was too old and valuable and tried a friend to be neglected for new ones.”

Various circumstances appear to have contributed towards awakening the suspicion in Prince Bismarck's mind that Baron Manteuffel was right and that England and Russia understood each other better than he liked. Their mutual endeavours to settle the Christian question in Turkey, contrary to his calculations, seemed to bring them together, and to promote relations he could not quite account for without suspicion. But when the German Chargé d'Affaires at S^t Petersburg²⁵⁰ telegraphed that Her Majesty's Ambassador was going to Livadia, – Prince Bismarck concluded that it was high time to send General von Schweinitz after him.²⁵¹

Lord Augustus Loftus will have reported to Your Lordship what his German colleague was instructed to say to the Russian Chancellor;²⁵² – all we know here is that it has produced a letter²⁵³ from the Czar

²⁴⁹From 2 to 8 September 1876 Edwin von Manteuffel was sent on a special mission to Warsaw with an autograph letter from Wilhelm I to Alexander II. In this Wilhelm assured the tsar of Germany's benevolent neutrality in the event of a Russo-Turkish war; however, Russia's proposal for an international congress in Berlin was declined.

²⁵⁰Maximilian Graf von Berchem.

²⁵¹In answer to Russia's enquiry regarding Germany's position towards Austria and Russia, Schweinitz, on 23 October 1876, was charged to convey that Germany would strive to keep peace between the two empires. Furthermore, Germany, in case of war, would stay neutral, as long as her interests were not affected by Italian and French involvement, or Austria's integrity and role in the European equilibrium were not endangered. For Loftus' mission to Livadia, see n. 168 in Dresden section.

²⁵²Alexander Gorchakov.

²⁵³Autograph letter, dated Livadia, 2 November 1876, in which Alexander II expressed exasperation at the failure of the European cabinets and willingness to act on his own.

which General von Werder has been charged to bring to the German Emperor at Berlin.

It is well known that when Prince Bismarck has an object in view, – he never hesitates to modify or alter his tactics until it is attained.

Now in regard to the Eastern complication he took it for granted that the common interests of England and Austria in Turkey would unite them against Russia and that by joining them he would have the casting vote in his power.

Subsequent events not having justified his expectations, and seeing that Russia supports the advice of England at Constantinople and has acquired the position he wanted Austria to hold, he thinks it prudent to drop Austria and turn to Russia, so as to find himself at the end, as he now thinks, on the winning side.

FO 64/856: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Most Confidential, No 537, Berlin, 6 December 1876

[Received 11 December by Messenger Dering. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Print; D[erby]]

Bismarck's views on Eastern Question

Well informed critics think that the newspapers attach too much importance to Prince Bismarck's table talk, while his guests give very different versions of what they individually understood him to say.²⁵⁴

Be that as it may, the speech Prince Bismarck made yesterday in the Reichstag, of which a French translation is herewith enclosed, has set aside and superseded every other private utterance attributed to him by the Press on the Eastern Question, and the public are in possession of an authentic declaration of the German Chancellor's policy, which is sure to be well received in Germany.²⁵⁵

Her Majesty's Government have been acquainted with Prince Bismarck's views since January last, and he has said nothing new on the present occasion, although he has not said all, and indeed he declares plainly in the last sentence of his speech that he must reserve his opinion for the present as to a future settlement of the Eastern

²⁵⁴Russell is referring to a parliamentary dinner given by Bismarck on 1 December 1876 in which he renewed his assurances of Germany's neutrality in the event of war. At the time of the dispatch further attempts at preserving peace between Russia and Turkey were made by the convocation of a conference of the Great Powers – Britain, Russia, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy – at Constantinople (23 December 1876–20 January 1877) to discuss political and administrative reforms in the Ottoman territories.

²⁵⁵Enclosure: *Correspondance de Berlin*, No 51, 8 [!] December 1876.

Question if the Powers should fail to localize the war between Turkey and Russia.

What he thinks, but did not say, is: that the Porte cannot guarantee that the improved “status quo” the Powers demand will be lasting or peaceful, but that on the contrary the Powers, to guarantee the existence of Turkish rule in Europe, will have to agree to prop up the crumbling edifice by territorial occupations, as the Catholic Powers guaranteed the existence of the Pope’s temporal rule from 1849 to 1870 by occupying Ancona and Rome.²⁵⁶

Ultimately he hopes that Austria will extend her protectorate along the Danube and over the Slave population of European Turkey, whilst England establishes her influence over Egypt and Syria, so that both Austria and England may have less to apprehend from the progress of Russia round the Black Sea.

To prevent the frequent recurrence of the Eastern Question and the danger to which it exposes the peace of Europe, the temporal power of the Sultans (like that of the Popes) could be kept up for many years to come by a joint occupation of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus.

These are the views Prince Bismarck is believed to hold by those who know him best, and which he will gradually bring forward, modified according to the requirements of the situation.

FO 64/876: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Most Confidential, No 59, Berlin, 9 February 1877

[Received 12 February by Messenger Wynter. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Commercial Department / Paris; D[erby]]

Germany to abstain from Paris exhibition planned for 1878

I am assured on very good authority that the German Government, having declined to be represented at the Paris Exhibition next year are not only anxious that their Russian and Austrian Allies should equally abstain, but have also taken steps to persuade Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark and Holland to follow their example.²⁵⁷ The truth of this report appears to me to be doubtful, to say the least of it, but

²⁵⁶ On 3 July 1849 French troops occupied Rome and put an end to the short-lived Roman Republic; the French garrison was finally recalled in July 1870. Ancona was under direct papal rule until it was made part of unified Italy in 1860; from 1849 until 1859 Austria maintained a garrison there.

²⁵⁷ The third Paris World’s Fair (*Exposition Universelle*) took place from 1 May to 10 November 1878. Germany declined the French invitation in early December 1876, officially for economic reasons.

there can be no doubt that the Paris Exhibition is a very sore subject at Berlin.

The military Authorities appear to suspect that the invitation to the Exhibition is a mere blind to conceal the preparations France is making to invade Germany as soon as she is ready, and it is asked by them why Prince Bismarck has not yet summoned France to withdraw the forces she is collecting on the frontier of Lorraine before it is too late.

In the lobbies of the Prussian Parliament, Members are heard to talk vaguely of a Coalition against Germany which France and Russia are supposed to be seeking to organize, – but with what object does not appear.

Perhaps the financial and commercial depression of Germany which is now being felt in all classes of Society may account in part for the general uneasiness of the public mind in Berlin.

FO 64/877: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Secret, No 92, Berlin, 9 March 1877

[Received 12 March by Messenger Leeds. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Print; D[erby]]

Bismarck and empress appreciative of discretion in Blue Books

In the course of conversation the other day Prince Bismarck said that he wished to express his sincere thanks to Your Lordship for the discretion with which he had been treated in the English Blue-Books.²⁵⁸ He had rather dreaded the publication of the Correspondence on Eastern Affairs and had since read it with a sense of grateful relief. – He supposed that the British Public scarcely realized how embarrassing the disclosures in the Blue Books and how distasteful in consequence they were to Statesmen abroad. The dread of compromising ones friends and allies by indulging in an intimate exchange of ideas which was liable to publication stood in the way of international policy, whilst the publication of such intimate conversations led to personal estrangement and distrust which reacted in an injurious manner on public affairs. – Some years ago one of his predecessors, in office had fallen a victim to the indiscretion of Blue-Books,²⁵⁹ – whilst the

²⁵⁸Between 8 and 23 February 1877 six volumes of the *Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Turkey: 1876–1877* were printed and presented to both Houses of Parliament.

²⁵⁹Russell is referring to the publication of Lord Bloomfield's No 3 to Lord John Russell of 3 March 1860 in *Further Correspondence relating to the Affairs of Italy, Part III* (March 1860), which contained an account of a confidential conversation with Schleinitz on the Savoy question.

relations of Count Andrassy with the Russian Government had not been seriously injured by the publication of his “Confidences” to Her Majesty’s Ambassador at Vienna,²⁶⁰ – a most regrettable occurrence [*sic*] at the present juncture.

At a court concert last night Her Majesty the Empress²⁶¹ spoke to me in the same sense, and said that the Emperor had highly appreciated the reserve so tactfully observed by Her Majesty’s Government in regard to Germany in our recent Blue-Books on Eastern Affairs.

Similar observations were made to me by several members of the German Government in the course of the last few days.

FO 64/877: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, No 107, Berlin, 17 March 1877

[Received 22 March by post. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

Failed petition by Alsace-Lorraine deputies against the expulsion of French reservists

The Alsace Lorraine Deputies Messrs: Besançon, Dollfus, Jaunez, Abel and Germain petitioned the Emperor for an Audience to “entertain His Majesty on the subject of the consequences of the expulsions recently ordered in the Provinces”; but the Petition has not been granted as Your Lordship will see from the enclosed correspondence which appeared in today’s Official Gazette.²⁶²

M^r Besançon spoke on the 12th instant in the Reichstag about the grievances of Alsace Lorraine and in favour of restoring those Provinces to France – but with little effect.

There is not much sympathy at Berlin for the individual grievances of the present generation of Alsace-Lorrainers, and the complaints they occasionally utter are attributed to French or clerical influences.

The order that all members of the French Reserve under thirty years of age must gradually leave the annexed Provinces is generally approved, and an increase of the German forces in Alsace-Lorraine is thought desirable as a precautionary measure while the French Government continue to mass their cavalry on the German frontier.²⁶³

²⁶⁰ Andrew Buchanan.

²⁶¹ Augusta.

²⁶² Enclosures: originals (newspaper clippings) and translations: ‘Deputies Bezanson, Dollfus, Jaunez, Abel, Germain to the Emperor’, 4 March 1877 (*Immediatseingabe*); ‘Bismarck to Deputies Dollfus, Bezanson, Abel, Jaunez, and Germain’, 8 March 1877.

²⁶³ The order of the imperial chancellor of 15 March 1877 regulated the naturalization of former members of the French army who had previously, under the provisions of the Treaty of Frankfurt of 10 May 1871, opted for French citizenship, yet wished to return to

FO 64/877: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Most Confidential, No 142, Berlin, 12 April 1877

[Received 16 April by Messenger Wynter. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Mr Hardy; 'Would Lord Derby wish an opinion to be expressed on this to Mr Hardy?', H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; Qy: 'Leave it to him', D[erby]]

Bismarck's support for continuing post of British military attaché at Berlin

With reference to my Despatch No 100 "very Confidential" of the 12th ultimo respecting the post of military Attaché at this Embassy²⁶⁴ and the hope expressed by Prince Bismarck that Her Majesty's Government would not abolish that post but would once more at least put the readiness of the Minister of War²⁶⁵ to meet the wishes of Her Majesty's Government to the test, I have the honour to report that the hope expressed by the Chancellor is shared by the Emperor and his Generals and by the leading members of his Government.

I confess I am agreeably surprised to find how much importance is attached to the presence of an English military Attaché at Berlin, and how much trouble is taken to prove that General Walker was specially favoured with more confidential information than any of his Colleagues; which in truth is not saying very much, since his colleagues tell me in Confidence that they get no information at all from the German War Department.²⁶⁶

It is whispered that the two late military Attachés of Austria and Sweden,²⁶⁷ who were rather suddenly and unexpectedly recalled, had both been suspected of bribery and had in consequence been denounced to their respective Governments by the German military Authorities.

Prince Bismarck tells me that in Russia, the Government appoints men specially to be bought or bribed by Foreign military attachés and who furnish them with the information the Russian Government wish foreign Governments to have and no more.

In Prussia bribery is so severely punished it has become a very rare offence both in the Army and in the Civil Service.

the Imperial Territory of Alsace-Lorraine. Residence for active French soldiers was still prohibited.

²⁶⁴Walker was granted 'leave' from his post as military attaché to Berlin in February 1877 due to the communicative reticence of the German military authorities.

²⁶⁵Georg von Kameke.

²⁶⁶Russell is referring to the Prussian ministry of war.

²⁶⁷Zeno Graf Welsler von Welsersheimb and Georg von Ramel Michelet.

As regards the present question I have no doubt that an English military Attaché will always be received with distinction and cordiality by the Prussian Court and by the German military Authorities and that his wish for information will be courteously met, as far as the German military system admits of, but that system is based on secrecy which does not admit of many indiscretions without a special order from the Emperor.

So many persons in high and influential positions desire that no interruption should be made to the succession of General Walker at Berlin, for the sake of friendly, cordial and intimate relations that I dare say the question will be again submitted to the consideration of Her Majesty's Government with a request to try once more before totally abolishing the post of military Attaché, and in the event of Her Majesty's Government yielding to the wishes of the German Emperor and of his Government, I would venture to point out that an essential element of success in military Attachés at Berlin is a practical knowledge of the German language.

FO 64/877: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Very Confidential, No 153, Berlin, 20 April 1877

[Received 23 April by Mr Edwardes. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Print; D[erby]]

Feeling in Germany with regard to Eastern Question

The semi-official "Provinzial Correspondenz" publishes the enclosed article on the prospects of the Turco-Russian War and concludes that if it can no longer be put off "the Powers will no doubt use their best efforts to prevent the war from taking any larger extension".²⁶⁸

I have been confidentially informed on the best authority that the Emperor has said to his Generals that if he could follow his impulses and act up to his convictions, he would materially assist his nephew the Czar and the cause of Christianity against the infidel Turk, but that he is bound for the present to adopt Prince Bismarck's opinions who insists on the necessity of the neutrality of Germany, an opinion

²⁶⁸Enclosure: undated clipping from *Correspondance de Berlin* (French translation of an article which appeared in the *Provinzial Korrespondenz* of 18 April 1877). According to the *Provinzial Korrespondenz* war was imminent due to the Turkish rejection (9 April) of the London Protocol (31 March), which called for reforms and demobilization.

which His Majesty adds he personally looks upon as mistaken and ungenerous.

To judge from the general exultation in Berlin from the Emperor to the youngest cadet the war is really popular and the hope that this time, at last, the Turk may be driven out of Europe and the Oriental Question closed for ever is openly and earnestly expressed even by persons in the most responsible positions.

Any attempt at the present moment to assist Turkey against Russia would be deeply resented by Public opinion in Germany.

FO 64/878: Hugh Guion MacDonell to Earl of Derby, Confidential, No 247, Berlin, 16 June 1877

[Received 18 June by Messenger Johnson. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Constantinople; D[erby]]

Humanitarian responses to outbreak of Russo-Turkish War

Since the commencement of hostilities between Russia and Turkey²⁶⁹ the principal societies of the Red Cross in Germany have displayed great activity and at their last meeting adopted some important resolutions – as stated in the inclosed French translation of a report published in the “moniteur de l’Empire Allemand”[.]²⁷⁰

I may here state that a sanitary train of sixteen waggons with all the necessary appliances is about to leave Berlin for Roumania and that a second one is in course of formation.

The first of these trains, which has been principally organised by Russian Residents and Russian sympathisers, leaves under the direction of Baron Kreutz a member of the Russian Embassy here.

Although reference is made, in the inclosed report, to the assistance to be given to the Turkish sufferers, I fear little or nothing will be done in that direction, the societies at Berlin being under the auspices of persons known for their Russian proclivities.

²⁶⁹Russia declared war on the Ottoman Empire on 24 April 1877.

²⁷⁰The meeting in question took place on 25 May 1877. Enclosure: undated clipping from *Correspondance de Berlin* (French translation from *Deutscher Reichs-Anzeiger und Königlich Preussischer Staats-Anzeiger*).

**FO 64/878: Hugh Guion MacDonell to Earl of Derby,
Confidential, No 269, Berlin, 23 June 1877**

[Received 25 June by Messenger Seymour. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Print; D[erby]]

Partial change of German opinion with regard to the Russo-Turkish War

The dilatoriness of the Russian military movements on the Danube appears to be slowly but gradually working a change in the current of public opinion in Germany.

Whilst in April last Lord Odo Russell reported to Your Lordship that, “to judge from the general exultation in Berlin, from the Emperor to the youngest cadet, the war was really popular”²⁷¹ – a feeling akin to disappointment is now manifesting itself at the slow progress of the operation, if not at the inability of the Russian Commanders – this feeling being perhaps more apparent in military circles than with the general public.

The idea moreover is gaining ground that, owing to their want of foresight, the Russian authorities have exposed the army to a perhaps greater enemy by allowing it to linger unoccupied on the banks of the Danube, where sickness and privations may be the cause of some serious check, the moral effect of which would be equal to a defeat.

It is feared moreover that with the Russian army in its present condition the passage of the Danube and its subsequent march on the Balkan will, to be successful, require a greater sacrifice of life and a larger supply of men than Russia has at present at her command.

It is evident also that the determined and resolute attitude of Turkey has not failed, of late to enlist sympathisers in Germany, and, if she has not risen in the consideration of the German nation, she has not fallen in the estimation of military men as Russia is perceptibly doing.

The Emperor, if I am correctly informed, continues more strongly to deplore the neutral policy of Prince Bismarck to whom His Majesty attributes anti Russian sympathies and would be disposed to support the demands of Russia, if peace could be concluded before an attempt were made to cross the Danube.

His Majesty’s entourage whilst deploring the adverse circumstances which have hitherto attended the progress of the Russians, continue to look upon the invasion of Turkey as a *fait accompli*; that the terms Russia must exact from Turkey must be proportionate to her sacrifices, and that the successful issue of the campaign is the only safeguard against the Slav and other revolutionary committees in Russia.

²⁷¹ Russell’s No 153 of 20 April 1877; see pp. 125–126.

The German military authorities who anticipated, when war was declared,²⁷² that the passage of the Danube would be effected with no very great difficulty or loss of time are now disappointed at the value they at first set on Russian military organization; on the other hand they are not sorry to see the Russian army put to the test and its weakness exposed.

The passage of the river though a certainty in their opinion cannot now be accomplished without having to overcome difficulties which should never have presented themselves.

They also think that the advantages gained in Asia might eventually prove fruitless if the insurrection in the Caucasus be allowed to extend,²⁷³ and they think it not impossible that the movements of the Turkish Commander in Chief,²⁷⁴ in luring the Russians from their base of operations to, and beyond, Erzeroum, may indicate his intention to embark a large force at Samsoun or Trebizonde to make a dash on their communications between Poti and Tiflis.

In short the general tone of the Press is apparently less antagonistic to Turkey and that of the Official or Semi-official papers less obsequious to Russia.

FO 244/305: Draft, Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, No 440, Berlin, 6 December 1877

[No docket]²⁷⁵

German colonial aspirations

I have the honour to ack. the rec^t of Y.L. Desp N^o 402 Conf. of the 26 Ultimo instructing me to obtain trust worthy information in regard to M^r Consul Palgraves Desp. N^o 4 of 30 July respecting the alleged endeavours of Germany not only to extend her trade but to establish a territorial settlement within the Pacific region and more especially

²⁷²See n. 269 in this section.

²⁷³At the time of the dispatch, Russia, which began its Asian campaign with the capture of Doğubeyazit in late April, had advanced into the regions of Ardahan and Kars. Insurrections against Russian rule by the Muslim population in the Caucasus took place in Abkhazia, Chechnya, and Dagestan.

²⁷⁴Ahmed Muhtar Pasha.

²⁷⁵No docket to this dispatch as the original is not included in the general correspondence from Berlin in the year 1877. A copy of the dispatch is enclosed in FO 64/1148: Edward Malet to Earl Granville, No 81, Berlin, 12 February 1885. Letters and words crossed out in the draft version have not been transcribed.

among the islands that lie on direct ocean track between Australia & New Zealand on the one hand and China on the other.²⁷⁶

The details given by M^r Consul Palgrave respecting the trading establishments made by the House of Goddefroy of Hamburgh and others, in some of those islands, are as far as I have been able to ascertain correct. I am assured also that to judge from the rapid development of German trade in the Pacific Region, and from the spirit of enterprise which now animates these great German Commercial Houses, many more such establishments will be created by them, wherever Cocoa nut trees can be cultivated with advantage in the Islands of the Pacific. The German Gov^t, naturally anxious to encourage German trade, send as many Men of War as they can to the Pacific Station for the protection of German subjects and German interests, – and they have already made a Treaty with the Sovereign²⁷⁷ of the Tonga islands (?) as reported in my Desp. N^o 198 of the 12. May last for the establishment of a German Coaling Station at Tonga.²⁷⁸

Very stringent orders have been issued by the German Admiralty to Commanders of ships on that Station to exercise their protection of German interests in dealing with the Natives with justice and impartiality and there can be no doubt that the wanton destruction of Cattle by a German Crew on the Island of Corora, as reported by Mr Consul Palgrave, will be severely punished by the Home Authorities. Although persons in high or influential positions, at Court and in Commerce, are not wanting, anxious to urge the acquirement of Colonies and the establishment of penal Settlements &c &c, their wishes meet with no encouragement from Prince Bismarck who is averse to burdening Germany with transatlantic possessions while her fleet is in its infancy.

M^r Consul Palgrave says truly that German Trade is extending in the Pacific, but I doubt whether territorial occupation will be sanctioned by Prince Bismarck in the name of the German Gov^t during his tenure of office.

Later on, no doubt, his Successors will have to yield to the pressure of public opinion in regard to the establishment of German Colonies in the Pacific and elsewhere, – a contingency we may look forward to some fifteen to twenty years hence.

²⁷⁶Palgrave wrote his dispatch No 4, Manila, 30 July 1877, marked political (copy enclosed in FO 244/308: Derby to Russell, Confidential, No 402, 26 November 1877) 'at the expressed desire of their Excellencies the Governors of Singapore and Hongkong'.

²⁷⁷Siaosi Tupou I.

²⁷⁸Treaty of Friendship of 1 November 1876; amongst other things, it stipulated the right to establish a coaling station on the Vava'u island group.

**FO 64/881: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Secret,
No 449, Berlin, 8 December 1877**

[Received 10 December by Messenger Robbins. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Paris – secret / Brussels – secret; D[erby]]

Rumours of French and German designs on Belgium and Holland; national party considers annexation of German Austria inevitable

I fully agree with Lord Lyons in thinking it “difficult to believe that Prince Bismarck ever intended to promote the annexation of Belgium to France as a condition of the annexation of Holland to Germany” – as stated by His Excellency to Your Lordship in His Despatch N^o 928, marked Secret, of November the 20th.

Prince Bismarck cannot wish to strengthen France in Europe, and I have heard him say that Belgium is now safer than ever, having become a German as well as an English interest since the formation of the German Empire.

On the other hand, I have heard Prince Bismarck also say that if France could be conciliated, and occupied out of Europe by annexations in the East, – such as Tunis, – he would not object.

The annexation of Holland by Germany is not contemplated or desired by any party in Germany; whilst the future incorporation of the German provinces of Austria is looked upon as a mere question of time by the national party.

It is very generally believed in Berlin that Monsieur Gambetta has made overtures to Prince Bismarck which have not been discouraged.²⁷⁹

**FO 64/901: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, No 17,
Berlin, 10 January 1878**

[Received 12 January by post. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Print; D[erby]]

German views on English attitudes to Russo-Turkish War

“The Prussian Correspondent” in the “Times” of the 7th instant, writing from Berlin says that: “notwithstanding the serious attitude

²⁷⁹In October 1877, Gambetta, leader of the party *Union républicaine*, was in contact with Bismarck via Guido Henckel von Donnersmarck and Bismarck’s son, Herbert von Bismarck. However, no offers were made.

assumed by the British Cabinet German Public Opinion disbelieves the earnestness of the intentions entertained by Lord Beaconsfield and his colleagues &c, &c.²⁸⁰

This view of the present state of public opinion in Germany is perfectly correct. The fact is that our “conditional neutrality” has been misunderstood.

It is assumed that because England has been neutral during the war, England will continue to be neutral during the redistribution of power in Turkey.

The people of Germany, as Your Lordship knows do not share the Sympathy of their Government for the success of Russia in the East, and they would welcome any check put upon Russian aggression by neutral Powers as good news.

Seeing however that Russia has been allowed to have her own way in making war upon Turkey, Public opinion concludes that neutrality is synonymous with inaction and that Russia will be equally allowed to have her own way in making peace with Turkey.

Under these circumstances I think it necessary to repeat over and over again in conversation with those who ask me, that Her Majesty’s Government, animated by the desire to avoid a General European Conflagration, have adopted, while the war lasts, a policy of conditional neutrality, which they will carry out impartially so long as Turkish interests alone are involved; but should at any moment British Interests be imperilled by the operations of war or the pretensions of the Victor, then Her Majesty’s Government would be equally bound and determined to protect, defend and secure those interests by all the means in their power.

The announcement that, thanks to the successful mediation of Her Majesty’s Government an Armistice is about to be negotiated between the Belligerents has given universal satisfaction,²⁸¹ and I note that it is the opinion of all those who know Russia well that her progress in Turkey can now only be checked by the firmness of England.

²⁸⁰Carl Abel, in his telegram from Berlin, dated 6 January 1878, referred to mediation initiated by the British government following the appeal of Turkey to Britain, Germany, and Austria-Hungary on 12 December 1877.

²⁸¹On 9 January 1878 Turkey appealed for an armistice – Russia’s precondition for peaceful settlement of the Russo-Turkish War. Russia agreed on 31 January.

**FO 64/901: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Secret,
No 22, Berlin, 12 January 1878**

[Received 14 January by messenger. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Prince of Wales / Print Mediation Series; Qy: St Petersburg – secret / Constantinople – secret; D[erby]]

Remarks on British mediation in Russo-Turkish War; Bismarck on recent Russian successes

Prince Bismarck is still absent and Herr von Bülow is again ill I regret to say, but I hope to be able to see His Excellency early next week. I am however glad to say that the success of Her Majesty's Government in bringing about an Armistice has given general satisfaction and has been most favourably received by all parties.²⁸²

The semi official Papers express the belief that the course now pursued by England is calculated to bring about the re-establishment of Peace. – Russian military honour is satisfied. The German Emperor has telegraphed his congratulations to the Czar on the brilliant victories of Sofia and Shipka.²⁸³ England it has said has taken the lead and thanks to her conciliatory policy Europe may look forward to a sound and lasting peace, to which should be added that Prince Bismarck is generally reported to be well satisfied with the course events are taking.

From a private and confidential source I learn that Count Andrassy writes to Prince Bismarck not to fear complications because they can rely on England not taking any warlike measures to check the policy of their Russian Ally, without being previously assured of the cooperation of Austria, and as it has been settled that Russia is to respect the interests of England as well as those of Austria, the final settlement of Eastern Affairs can be effected, safely and peaceably by negotiation alone, and to every body's satisfaction[.]

It is the prospect of a peaceful settlement which will equally satisfy England, Russia, and Austria that makes Prince Bismarck declare himself officially satisfied with the course events are taking.

But it has privately come round to me that Prince Bismarck, in an after dinner conversation, admitted that he was in truth now less satisfied than he had been before the victories of Sofia and Shipka. "Those victories were not, he said, necessary, and might have been dispensed with, and he feared the Russians had now had more military

²⁸²For the British mediation in aid of, and the Turkish request for, an armistice cf. nn. 280 and 281 in this section.

²⁸³Russian troops captured Sofia on 4 January and defeated the Ottoman army in the fourth and final Battle of Shipka Pass from 5 to 9 January. Wilhelm's telegram is dated 11 January 1878.

successes than was good for them, or for Europe. Those victories could make them “bumptious”, and overbearing, and he therefore could no longer be sorry if some complications arose after all which would compel England to fight the Russians and check their aggressive pride”.

“The military defeat of Russia by England would be a good thing, because it would re-establish the balance of power in Europe. England by proving herself to be as strong and as mighty as ever would throw the rising power of Russia once more and altogether into the background. England would then again hold a commanding position, and allied with Germany would dictate peace and order to Europe by sea and by land for years to come.”

Although I cannot vouch for the accuracy of his words I have every reason to believe that Prince Bismarck really entertains these sentiments which have long been “his dream”, as he told me himself on more than one occasion.

As matters now stand, if complications arose, I believe that Prince Bismarck would adhere to his present neutral policy, even though he might look forward with secret satisfaction to the defeat of Russia by England.

FO 64/903: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Confidential, No 152, Berlin, 2 March 1878

[Received 4 March by Messenger Wynter. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

Bismarck and the National Liberal Party; rumoured dissolution of German Reichstag

I send Your Lordship by today’s Messenger some interesting reports on the late incidents in the Reichstag by Mr Consul General Crowe, whose personal acquaintance and friendship with many of the leading members of Parliament has so often proved to be of great value to Her Majesty’s Embassy.²⁸⁴

Your Lordship will recollect that Prince Bismarck negotiated last autumn at Varzin with the leader of the National party Herr von Benningsen [*sic*] to obtain the support of his friends in carrying certain measures, with a view to increased taxation and the creation of Imperial Ministries.

²⁸⁴No enclosure in FO 64/903. Crowe reported on the *Reichstag* debates of 21 to 23 February 1878 in which all but one of the bills on taxes – including the taxation of tobacco – met with a majority refusal and were transferred to the budget commission.

The negotiation failed because Prince Bismarck had only one seat to offer Herr von Benningsen in the German Cabinet, while his party claimed three or four, before they would agree to the almost unconditional support, Prince Bismarck claimed at their hands in the Reichstag.²⁸⁵

The recent debates proved that Prince Bismarck was ready to throw over the National party altogether, which led to a declaration on their part that they would oppose the Government bills and measures.²⁸⁶

It is now thought not impossible that Prince Bismarck, if a compromise cannot be effected, will dissolve the Reichstag, and appeal to the country for the Tobacco monopoly in return for the abolition of the salt tax, an appeal which would probably give him the majority he requires in the Reichstag.

If the dissolution of Parliament is decided upon, it would not take place before the autumn.

FO 64/903: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby, Secret, No 213, Berlin, 17 March 1878

[Received 21 March by post. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Print for Cabinet / Embassies – secret / Lord Lyons; D[erby]]

Positions of the Powers in proposed congress to settle Eastern Question

Although I am not yet acquainted with the policy Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue, I venture to submit to Your Lordship the reasons for which I am inclined to think that the pending discussion of the Eastern Question in the coming Congress is more likely to be formal than real.²⁸⁷

Setting aside all illusions in the matter, it must be admitted first that Russia is in possession of Turkey, and:

Second, that the Treaties of 1856 and 1871 have been practically superseded by the Turco=Russian Treaty of S^t Stefano.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁵Talks between Bismarck and Benningsen took place in July, October, and December 1877; Bismarck offered Benningsen a post in the Prussian cabinet – most likely the ministry of finance.

²⁸⁶In a parliamentary party meeting of 24 February 1878 the National Liberal faction in the *Reichstag* declared that any further negotiations with Bismarck were to be abandoned.

²⁸⁷Congress of Berlin, 13 June–13 July 1878; see n. 324 in this section.

²⁸⁸Russell is referring to the Treaty of Paris of 1856 (see n. 240 in this section) and the London Convention for Black Sea Neutrality (13 March 1871). The Preliminary Treaty of San Stefano of 3 March 1878 ended the Russo-Turkish War. It provided for the enlargement and independence of Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania, and the creation of an autonomous Bulgarian state. It was superseded by the Treaty of Berlin of 13 July 1878.

That Treaty will be recommended to the acceptance of Europe by Russia and will form the real bases [*sic*] of discussion in the coming Congress.

Germany, as we already know, will give it her cordial support. The Emperor and Prince Bismarck look upon the Treaty of St Stefano as an accomplished fact, and consider the Congress as the means to obtain its recognition by the Signatory Powers of the Treaties it is to supersede.²⁸⁹

Russia and Germany will therefore act in concert as allies and Relations in the Congress.

The next question to consider is whether France is at present in a position to take an impartial view of the Treaty in question.

France has long wished to be allied with Russia, and relieved of the threat of another war with Germany.

The Congress will offer France a valuable opportunity of securing the good will of both Russia and Germany by a friendly support of their united wishes.

There are no French interests involved in the Treaty of S^t Stefano likely to necessitate a quarrel with Russia, but many reasons to avoid one in the general interest of France.

Since M^r Waddington's accession to office and Comte de S^t Vallier's appointment to Berlin²⁹⁰ great efforts have been made to improve the relations of France with Germany, and the sudden and unexpected permission granted to German Artists to participate in the Paris Exhibition is a signal proof of the success of the overtures already made by the new French Government.²⁹¹

Before adhering to the proposed Congress France has already made certain conditions with Russia and Germany. She has asked that Egypt, Syria, the Holy Places &c, &c, should not be alluded to and may well hold out some prospect of support in return for the favour asked.²⁹²

We may fairly therefore assume that France is not in a position to take an entirely impartial view of Eastern Affairs, and that She will think to serve her own interests best by placing her voice at the disposal of Russia and Germany in the Congress.

²⁸⁹Signatory Powers were Austria, Great Britain, France, Germany (1856: Prussia), Italy (1856: Sardinia), the Ottoman Empire, and Russia.

²⁹⁰William Waddington took over as French foreign minister on 13 December 1877; Saint-Vallier was appointed ambassador to Berlin on 20 December 1877.

²⁹¹On 3 March 1878 Bülow informed the German ambassador to Paris, Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, of the decision. The arts exhibition was hors concours (i.e. participation rather than competition for a prize) and opened on 11 May 1878, ten days after the *Exposition Universelle*. For the initial refusal to take part, see n. 257 in this section.

²⁹²These conditions were transmitted in Waddington's circular telegram of 7 March 1878.

Italy might give an independent vote, if she attached less importance to the good-will of Russia and Germany she has laboured long to acquire.

In any case Prince Gortchakoff and Prince Bismarck will not find it difficult to keep Italy from taking sides with Austria, if Austria should persist in taking a line of her own in opposition to Russia and Germany.

No doubt the new ministry in Italy²⁹³ may adopt a new policy, but the chances are that Italy will think it more prudent for her future interests to support Russia, Germany and France united than Austria in the Congress.

Austria on the other hand has already declared her intention to resist the pretensions of Russia, and will, no doubt, object to the proposed limits of the new Principality of Bulgaria and to the prolonged occupation of Turkish Territory by Russian troops.

If Russia, by Germany's friendly advice, consents to a smaller Bulgaria and a shorter occupation Austria will make the most of the victory obtained and in return will agree to the rest of the Treaty of S^t Stefano. But if Russia refuses, Austria must choose between accepting a diplomatic defeat or going to war to turn Russia out of Bulgaria.

To prevent war between his allies and to keep the Northern Alliance together Prince Bismarck will exert his personal influence to bring about a compromise, and will urge the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria.

Whether Austria will accept the compromise or go to war must depend very much on the attitude of England; but the chances are in favour of the compromise because Count Andrassy's war policy has not the support of his Emperor or of His Majesty's non-Hungarian subjects.

Austria is poor, weak and dependent on her neighbours, and Public opinion is growing more favourable to Peace and Provinces than to war and its risks and consequences.

Russia and Germany have it in their power to neutralize the opposition of Austria if they choose and it is more than probable that they will exercise that power when the Conference meets.

Taking all in all therefore the relative position of the Powers does not seem to warrant much independence of discussion in the coming Congress and the Treaty of S^t Stefano, with some modifications, has a fair chance of superseding the Treaties of 1856 and 1871, unless, of course, England adopts a policy calculated to command the support of Austria, Turkey, France and Italy, or declines to attend the Congress, when the Eastern question will remain open to discussion and some future settlement.

²⁹³The government under Benedetto Cairoli took office 24 March 1878.

**FO 64/903: Lord Odo Russell to Earl of Derby,
Confidential, No 238, Berlin, 30 March 1878**

[Received 1 April by messenger. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Lord Lyons / Print; T[enterden]]

Bismarck's and emperor's views on Eastern Question, and possible war between England and Russia

To judge from the irritation against England, it is evident that public opinion attributes the rejection of the proposed Congress more to England than to Russia,²⁹⁴ – and the news of Your Lordship's resignation²⁹⁵ has produced, after the first impression of consternation and regret, a general conviction that war between England and Russia has become inevitable.

The Emperor, I am told by all who have seen him lately, is anxious[,] worried and out of spirits, and would gladly take the part of his nephew the Czar against England. Prince Bismarck, I hear, admits in conversation with his friends that he has again had a severe struggle with his Imperial Master, to persuade His Majesty to adhere to a neutral policy and leave Russia to settle her difference with England without the aid of Germany.

Prince Bismarck is said to assure the Emperor, that he does not believe in war between England and Russia, first because the Treaty of San Stefano does not contain a 'casus belli' and second; because it is the interest of both countries to avoid war and seek a peaceful settlement of the Eastern question, as Austria and Russia are now doing through Count Andrassy and General Ignatieff and with a fair prospect of success. The Congress Prince Bismarck thinks, if it had met now would probably have failed to reconcile the angry feelings, roused by late events, between England and Russia, – whilst later on, – when Austria and Russia have agreed upon certain modifications of the Treaty of San Stefano, public opinion in England will become more and more favorable to a pacific agreement on the new state of things in the Balkan peninsula through the means of a European Congress.

²⁹⁴On 25 March 1878 Russia rejected the proposal for a congress and the British stipulation to review all the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano (see n. 288 in this section).

²⁹⁵Derby had resigned from the government on 28 March 1878 over military measures against Russian expansion in the Ottoman Empire; he was formally succeeded by Salisbury on 2 April.

**FO 64/905: Lord Odo Russell to Marquess of Salisbury,
Confidential, No 379, Berlin, 7 June 1878**

[Received 10 June by Messenger Seymour; extending telegram. For: The Queen / Circulate; T[enterden]]

Emperor's health following attempted assassination; repressive measures against socialism; dissolution of parliament

I informed Your Lordship on the 5th instant that the Emperor had, on the advice of Prince Bismarck, consented to delegate his Powers to the Crown Prince²⁹⁶ as was done in 1857 during the late King's illness.

The Royal decree was only published last night in the official Gazette, and I hasten to inclose copy and translation of it herewith.²⁹⁷

Happily the Emperor is recovering so rapidly that His Majesty will probably soon be able to resume his former occupation.

At present the Cabinet meets daily under the Presidency of the Crown Prince, and it is said that three measures for the repression of socialism have been under discussion.²⁹⁸

First. The Proclamation of the State of Siege and martial Law,

Secondly. The convocation of Parliament to discuss the measures lately proposed over again.

Thirdly. The dissolution of the Parliament and appeal to the Country for a more conservative representation than is at present the case.

The first proposal for the State of Siege was unanimously vetoed by the Cabinet.

The second for the convocation of Parliament was opposed by the leading members of the Cabinet because the present Parliament had on the 24th ultimo already thrown out by a large majority the Anti-Socialist Bill of the Government and could scarcely be asked to reconsider a measure they had so energetically condemned.²⁹⁹

The third proposal for the dissolution of Parliament and appeal to the Country was strongly advocated by Prince Bismarck and finally adopted by the Cabinet with the sanction of the Crown Prince. The general election will however not take place immediately.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁶Friedrich Wilhelm.

²⁹⁷Enclosures: original (clipping from *Deutscher Reichs-Anzeiger und Preussischer Staats-Anzeiger*) and translation of imperial proclamation of 4 June 1878. For the assassination attempt on Wilhelm I of 2 June, see n. 151 in Darmstadt section.

²⁹⁸Russell is referring to the meeting of the Prussian *Staatsministerium* on 5 June 1878.

²⁹⁹For 1st draft of the anti-socialist bill, which was rejected by the *Reichstag* on 24 May, see n. 250 in Dresden section.

³⁰⁰The *Reichstag* was dissolved on 11 June 1878; new elections were held on 30 July.

It is expected that in a general election several Socialist members will be unseated, though probably not all.

But the Government reckon with certainty on a considerable increase of their conservative Supporters in the new Reichstag.

FO 64/909: Henry Neville Dering to Marquess of Salisbury, No 569, Berlin, 12 October 1878

[Received 14 October by Messenger Johnson. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield; S[alisbury]]

Bismarck heckled on second reading of anti-socialist bill; remarks on Reichstag protocol

The last three days have been occupied by the German Reichstag in the second reading of the Anti-Socialist Law, and I have the Honour to enclose herewith a précis in translation by Mr. Denys of the proceedings.³⁰¹

During Prince Bismarck's reply on the 9th instant to the republican Deputy Sonnemann's diatribe, a loud voice, in the middle of one of his most earnest phrases, suddenly cried "Question" (zur Sache).

His Highness started at the insult as if he had received a blow, but soon recovered himself and continued his speech, the remainder of which, however, was marked with the nervous twitchings and hesitations which usually denote the irritated state of the Chancellor's temper. I may add that in the German Parliament, Ministers in their plans are by custom entirely exempt from the calls to "Order" etcetera to which other Members are liable, and the Conservative newspapers are warm in denouncing the ungentlemanlike character of the interruption.

I hear from Members of various shades of politics that it is hoped the second reading will be passed this evening, and that Wednesday or Thursday next will see the close of the final debate.

The National Liberal organs thank Deputy Sonnemann for his candid explanation of Socialism, which they declare has quite decided those wavering Deputies of their party who had hitherto doubted whether Socialism was really dangerous enough

³⁰¹Enclosure: précis of *Reichstag* debates 9–12 October 1878. For the Anti-Socialist Law cf. n. 251 in Dresden section.

to necessitate so exceptional a measure. They would hesitate no longer.

FO 64/910: Lord Odo Russell to Marquess of Salisbury, No 644, Berlin, 30 November 1878

[Received 2 December by Messenger Ball. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Seen by Mr Cross; S[alisbury]]

Anti-socialist measures passed by Federal Council

Great preparations are in progress for the festive reception of His Majesty The Emperor on the occasion of his return to Berlin on the 5th proximo. Some apprehension appears however to be entertained as to the safety of the person of the Aged Sovereign during his triumphal entry, and the Bundesrath³⁰² assembled on the 28th instant to consider the eventuality.

Before separating they unanimously sanctioned at the request of Prussia a short Law, based on Paragraph 28 of the Anti-Socialist Law of October 21st, to the following effect:³⁰³

For the period of one year, any person who may be considered as likely to endanger the public safety or order is liable to expulsion by the Police from the districts of Berlin, Charlottenburg, Potsdam and various neighbouring districts. No one except those whose calling obliges them to do so is allowed to carry within the town of Berlin, or within the districts of Charlottenburg and Potsdam, any weapon which can serve to stab or to cut, as well as firearms; nor to possess, to carry or to introduce into the above districts any explosives, other than those destined for the use of the Imperial Army and Navy.

Certain exceptions have been made to this Law, which from their wholesale nature serve to point out its real direction. All ordinary sporting gun cartridges are excepted. Also all persons whose profession entitles them to carry arms, all persons in possession of game Licences,

³⁰² Federal Council.

³⁰³ § 28 of the Anti-Socialist Law of 1878 (see n. 251 in Dresden section) authorized state governments – with prior approval of the Federal Council – to impose a minor state of siege on towns and districts in which activities of Social Democrats jeopardized public safety. The measures restricted the freedom of assembly and the dissemination of publications, allowed the expulsion of persons suspected to endanger public security, and imposed a general ban of weapons. The so-called *Kleine Belagerungszustand* for Berlin was authorized by the Federal Council and imposed by the Prussian government on 28 November 1878; it came into effect on 29 November.

and any one who may be in possession of a special permit are exempted from its operation.

In conformity with the above provisions, some forty Social Democrats have already received peremptory orders to leave the proclaimed districts, amongst others Herrn Fritzsche [*sic*], member for Berlin in the German Reichstag and Herr Hasselmann the member for Elberfeld.

Some of the extreme Journals have criticised the above measures, under the heading of "A minor State of Siege"; but the bulk of those whose wish is to efface by loyal demonstration, from the public mind the remembrance of the double attempt committed on the person of the Emperor within the walls of his capital, appear to accept the measure if not a palatable one, as one rendered necessary by the urgency of the case.

FO 64/931: Lord Odo Russell to Marquess of Salisbury, Confidential, No 66, Berlin, 4 February 1879

[Received 8 February by post. For immediate circulation: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Prince of Wales / Copy to Duke of Cambridge; Qy: Confidential to Copenhagen; S[alisbury], 10 February; 'Returned by Lord Beaconsfield', 18 February]

Duke of Cumberland as pretender to Kingdom of Hanover; possible restrictions on his movements in Germany

In my Despatches N^{os} 669 and 698 of the 12th and 30th of December last I made allusion to the probable difficulties the German Authorities might throw in the way of any future desire on the part of the Duke of Cumberland to reside in Germany so long as His Royal Highness did not withdraw the Letter maintaining his rights to the Throne of Hanover addressed in July last to the King of Prussia.³⁹⁴

My apprehensions I regret to say were not unfounded. Monsieur de Bülow tells me that Prince Bismarck has instructed him to say that ["His Highness wishes in all friendliness to save the Duke of Cumberland from impending trouble. He fears that His Royal Highness does not quite realize the personal inconvenience he is exposing himself to in assuming, by advice of his political friends, the position of Pretender to the Kingdom of Hanover.

³⁹⁴In a letter to the King of Prussia – deliberately not to the German Emperor – dated 1 July 1878, Ernst August, Duke of Cumberland and son of Georg V of Hanover (who had died in June 1878), upheld his claims to Hanoverian sovereignty.

His Royal Highness possibly does not know that the laws of the Empire will not admit of his passing through Germany while he continues to assume that position.

Prince Bismarck therefore thinks that it would be but fair to let this be known to the Duke of Cumberland, so that His Royal Highness may not from ignorance of the Laws of the Empire expose himself to the inconvenience which a disregard of them must necessarily entail.”

To me this measure appears as hard as it is unnecessary. I do not believe that the presence of the Duke of Cumberland in Germany would be a danger to the German Empire, powerful and popular as the House of Hohenzollern has made it.

I do not share the general belief here, that the Duke of Cumberland’s marriage,³⁰⁵ the attitude by Denmark and the bestowal of Danish decorations on members of the Guelph Party are Symptoms of an Anti=Prussian conspiracy which the Empire could not afford to ignore. But I do deeply regret to perceive that the policy advocated by the Hanoverian advisers of the Duke of Cumberland will furnish an excuse for the confiscation of his Royal Highness’s property and for his exclusion from the Brunswick Succession.³⁰⁶

Both might yet be saved if His Royal Highness would consent to follow his friends in England at once and without another moments delay. Otherwise it will very soon be “too late”.

FO 64/933: Lord Odo Russell to Marquess of Salisbury, Confidential, No 254, Berlin, 24 May 1879

[Received 26 May by Messenger Wynter. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Prince of Wales / Circulate; S[alisbury], 28 May]

Reichstag *President Forckenbeck’s resignation over Bismarck’s protective tariff*

The resignation of the President of the Reichstag, Herr von Forckenbeck, is a new triumph of Prince Bismarck’s policy.³⁰⁷

Herr von Forckenbeck, who is also Burgomaster of Berlin, and one of the most distinguished members of the Liberal Party had, as such, convened a meeting of the Representatives of the German Cities and Municipalities and of the liberal and national party for the purpose of organizing an agitation against Prince Bismarck’s protective Tariff, and the duties on corn and cattle, throughout the Empire.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁵In December 1878 Ernst August married Princess Thyra of Denmark.

³⁰⁶Ernst August was first in the line of succession to the Duchy of Brunswick.

³⁰⁷Forckenbeck resigned on 20 May 1879.

³⁰⁸The *Städteetag* met on 17 May 1879.

Seventy two Cities sent Representatives to Berlin, and Herr von Forckenbeck addressed them at a Banquet given at the Zoological Garden in a speech marked by its manly independence and eloquent enthusiasm.

Several versions of his speech have been circulated in Berlin, but all agree in the main feature which was an earnest and impressive appeal to the Liberals of Germany to organize as rapidly as possible a party strong enough to resist the policy of the Government and repeal the measures passed by the great conservative majority of Parliament.

To realize the anomaly of this situation we should suppose, if such were possible, that M^r Speaker, being also Lord Mayor of London, had conceived the happy thought of convening a meeting of the Opposition in Hyde Park for the purpose of turning out Her Majesty's Government, and of repealing the measures adopted by the party in power.

On the day following the banquet Herr von Forckenbeck wrote to the Vice President of the Reichstag, D^r Lucius, to resign his Presidency and ask for sick leave.

When Herr von Forckenbeck resumes to his seat in the Reichstag it will probably be as a Leader of the National Party in the place of Herr von Beningsen [*sic*], who appears to be drifting towards the protectionist side of the House.

The Reichstag has since elected Herr von Seydewitz President,³⁰⁹ and will probably elect Herr von Frankenstein Vice President in the place of Herr von Stauffenberg who resigned with Herr von Forckenbeck.

The Conservative Party which had so long been in a minority, and which Prince Bismarck had undertaken to lead to victory by his celebrated letter of the 15th December last,³¹⁰ have hereby carried the election of the Candidate for the Presidency of the German Parliament which at its opening in March last³¹¹ would have been a hopeless undertaking.

Prince Bismarck by his personal influence and tact has converted parliament and the great body of the electors in Germany to his views, and without a general election has fashioned a Liberal Reichstag into a Conservative one.

Prince Bismarck is now master of the situation in Germany.

³⁰⁹On 21 May 1879.

³¹⁰In his letter to the Federal Council of 15 December 1878 – the so-called *Weihnachtsbrief* – Bismarck announced his plans for a new tax law and protective tariffs.

³¹¹The *Reichstag* opened on 9 September 1878; the session of 1879 started on 12 February.

**FO 64/934: John Walsham to Marquess of Salisbury,
No 406, Berlin, 16 August 1879**

[Received 18 August by Messenger Leeds. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield; S[alisbury], 19 August]

Ecclesiastical policy; speech by the new minister of public worship Herr von Puttkamer; rumoured abolition of May Laws as price for Catholic support of Bismarck

A few days ago³¹² Herr von Puttkamer [*sic*], the new Minister of Public Worship, attended the opening of some school Buildings at Köslin in Pomerania, for the erection of which certain funds had been provided by his Department.

A public dinner was given after the ceremony, and in the course of the speech made by His Excellency on the occasion, he is reported to have said that while perfectly ready and willing to bear testimony to the excellent qualities, ability and energy of his Predecessor, D^f Falk, he did not agree with his views either on ecclesiastical or political subjects, but that he should endeavour to discharge faithfully the duties of the Office to which he had been appointed, and be prepared to resign it directly [if] he found that his views were disapproved by the Emperor and the Prince Chancellor.

Different versions have been published of this part of Herr von Puttkamer's speech and they vary according to the political bias of the Journals which report it, but there would appear to be little doubt that His Excellency did at all events allude to the circumstance of his own opinions not being precisely those of his predecessor, although he may not have expressed himself in quite such positive terms as those recorded in some of the Newspapers.

When it became known towards the close of the last session of the Reichstag that D^f Falk had resigned, and that Prince Bismarck would be supported by the Ultramontane and Conservative Parties,³¹³ those who disapproved of this change of policy on the part of His Highness felt assured that Herr Windhorst [*sic*], the celebrated leader of the Ultramontane Party, would never have consented to withdraw his determined opposition to the Chancellor, had it not been that he had named a price for his support and obtained it, the price being the abrogation of the Prussian May Laws, of which D^f Falk was the Author.³¹⁴

³¹²On 11 August 1879.

³¹³The Conservatives and Windhorst's Catholic Centre Party supported Bismarck's protective tariff policy; see n. 169 in Darmstadt section.

³¹⁴For the Prussian May Laws, see nn. 112 and 140 in this section.

Both Prince Bismarck and Herr Windhorst denied from their places in the Reichstag that there was the slightest foundation for such a supposition; but the rumours which have for sometime past been current of negotiations being pending between Germany and the Vatican,³¹⁵ and the recent statements of the new Minister of Public Worship, have again led people to imagine that a modification if not a repeal of the May Laws is imminent.

In my Despatch to Your Lordship N^o 339 of the 5th of July I ventured to express an opinion that it was hardly probable that the Chancellor would sanction any such modification, although for the sake of obtaining a more satisfactory state of relations with the Vatican than now exists. His Highness might legitimately be willing to consider the famous Laws as temporarily in abeyance, while keeping them in readiness for immediate application should occasion require their revival. Words subsequently uttered by the Prince in the Reichstag would almost seem to point to the possibility of negotiating on a basis of this kind. In replying to the charge of having entered into a compact with the Ultramontane Party, His Highness, when referring to the quarrel between Church and State, spoke as follows:³¹⁶ — “I admit that I have always fought this fight with the vivacity which is part of my nature, but I hold that conflicts should be bravely fought out not that they should be perpetuated into an institution, and when means can be found for taking the edge off divergences, without touching the principle involved in the question at issue; when moreover people learn to know each other by common labour for a common purpose, then I say that I should not be justified as a Minister in not taking that course or in refusing to take it.”

I still cannot help thinking that there is no intention of introducing any radical change into the May Laws. It may however not be the intention of those in authority to take away from their severity by enforcing them less rigorously than has hitherto been the case.

Those who are convinced that these Laws are about to be repealed should not overlook the fact that their abrogation could not be effected unless it had been sanctioned by another Law, and the latter does not yet exist.

³¹⁵The first steps towards negotiations were taken in June 1879; in July and August Bismarck and the apostolic nuncio to Munich, Masella, met at Kissingen. See n. 198 in Munich section.

³¹⁶On 9 July 1879.

**FO 64/935: Lord Odo Russell to Marquess of Salisbury,
Secret, No 517, Berlin, 24 October 1879**

[Received 27 October by Messenger Wynter. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Prince of Wales / Circulate / Show to Lord Lyons / Copy to Paris – secret / Copy to Vienna – secret; S[alisbury], 28 October]

Bismarck's negotiations for Austro-German alliance; German relations with Austria and Russia; Lord Salisbury's speech at Manchester well received

Your Lordship's speech at Manchester on the 17th instant has produced a very favourable impression in Berlin both in official circles and in the Press generally.

Germans feel that the approval of Her Majesty's Government to the establishment of a defensive alliance between Germany and Austria enhances and completes the "good tidings of great joy"³¹⁷ which Prince Bismarck's "Peace League with Austria" as he calls it, has produced throughout the two Empires.³¹⁸

In truth nothing is really known of the precise terms of the Vienna agreement. The Secret has hitherto been as well kept between Prince Bismarck and Count Andrassy as was that of the Abrogation of the Vth Article of the Treaty of Prague.³¹⁹

Officially the German Government admit only that Prince Bismarck went to Vienna to return Count Andrassy's several visits and to ascertain at the same time whether that Statesman's policy towards Germany would be continued by his successors in Office.³²⁰

His Highness's conversations with Count Andrassy had resulted in a general verbal agreement between the two Governments to cooperate in future on all questions of common interest, and this agreement had obtained the sanction of their respective Sovereigns.

More than that German Officials in conversation with foreign Representatives do not admit.

³¹⁷Salisbury used this quote from Luke: 2, 10 in his speech at a mass meeting of the Conservatives in Manchester, in which he outlined British foreign policy.

³¹⁸In the secret treaty of 7 October 1879 (published on 3 February 1888), which brought about the so-called Dual Alliance, Austria and Germany pledged to aid one another in case of attack by Russia, or in case of attack by a Russian-supported power. In all other cases it was agreed to observe benevolent neutrality.

³¹⁹Article V of the Peace of Prague of 1866 transferred all rights regarding the Duchies of Holstein and Schleswig, acquired by the Emperor of Austria in the Peace of Vienna of 1864, to the King of Prussia. It also stipulated that the northern districts of Schleswig were to be ceded to Denmark if a plebiscite decided in favour of unification. This provision was annulled by secret treaty of 13 April 1878. In January 1879 the treaty was re-dated to 11 October 1878; it was published on 4 February 1879.

³²⁰Bismarck visited Vienna from 21 to 24 September 1879. Andrassy was succeeded by Haymerle on 8 October 1879.

On the other hand the inspired Press has “good reason to know” that a formal defensive Alliance was negotiated at Vienna, the conditions of which were recorded in two Protocols and submitted to the Emperors for ratification, that the Emperor of Austria had gratefully agreed but that the German Emperor had withheld his sanction and had declared that he could not break with his family traditions and affections in regard to Russia, that Count Stolberg had in consequence been sent with Prince Bismarck’s resignation to Baden³²¹ and that the Emperor had then been finally compelled to yield and sanction his Chancellor’s great national Policy. According to the Cologne Gazette³²² of the 22nd instant the German Emperor only consented to ratify the Secret Protocol on Wednesday the 15th.

The Semi=Official “Post” and “Nord Deutsche Allgemeine” reproduce the Article of the Cologne Gazette without contradicting it, and add that the news it contains agrees with the disclosures of the “Pest Lloyd”³²³ of the 21st instant according to which the German and Austrian Governments in addition to the defensive Alliance concluded, have bound themselves over again to cooperate in the East on the basis of the Berlin Treaty³²⁴ and to bring Commercial and legal matters as much as possible into harmony between Austria and Germany.

In private and confidential conversation with my best informed Colleagues I find that they are inclined to believe the official version of the Vienna agreement and that they consider the disclosures of the inspired Press, to be merely intended to increase the popularity of Prince Bismarck in Germany. My Austrian Colleague,³²⁵ who is one of my oldest friends, feels so much annoyed at the ignorance in which he has been kept of the true history of the Vienna agreement that he has asked for a short leave to go home with a view to fathom the mystery if possible.

My Russian Colleague³²⁶ endeavours to conceal his irritation by declaring that an alliance between Germany and Austria is the one thing his Government has always most ardently desired.

³²¹ Stolberg transmitted Bismarck’s ultimatum – not his resignation, as stated in the dispatch – on 3 October; Wilhelm agreed to the treaty on the following day.

³²² *Kölnische Zeitung*.

³²³ *Pester Lloyd*, published at Budapest.

³²⁴ The Treaty of Berlin of 13 July 1878, which ended the Congress of Berlin (13 June–13 July 1878), revised the Treaty of San Stefano (see n. 288 in this section). Its main points were: division of Bulgaria into the Principality of Bulgaria, the autonomous province of Eastern Rumelia, and Macedonia (under Ottoman rule); the independence of Romania, Serbia, and Macedonia; Austria’s right to administer Bosnia and Herzegovina. The signatories were Austria-Hungary, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire.

³²⁵ Emmerich, Graf Széchényi.

³²⁶ Pavel Ubri.

My French Colleague³²⁷ seems puzzled but says that when he last saw Prince Bismarck in June His Highness confided to him already then that in the event of a war between Austria and Russia he would not interfere so long as the advantages were on the side of Austria but that Germany could never tolerate a Russian army at the Gates of Vienna.

From other sound sources of information I learn that it is true that the German Emperor's hesitation to ratify the Vienna agreement was only overcome by Prince Bismarck's threat to resign.

The German Emperor's Russian sympathies, the visit he paid to his nephew the Czar at Alexandrowna³²⁸ and the orders and decorations bestowed by His Majesty on Russian Generals after the very hostile language of the Russian Official Press in regard to Germany had certainly irritated Public opinion and given rise to a sense of national humiliation which it was essential to relieve and remove before the meeting of the Prussian and German Parliaments.

The spirited and essentially national policy attributed to Prince Bismarck in opposition to the Emperor's Russian proclivities, by the inspired and semi-official Press has already had the desired effect; but it has increased Prince Bismarck's popularity at the expense of his Imperial Master's.

Leading politicians tell me that Prince Bismarck has done nothing so popular, since the establishment of the Empire, as this Anti-Russian move in favour of Austria, and that it will render both the Prussian and German Parliaments even more amenable to his wishes.

Since writing the above I have been to the Church of S^t Matthew with the Diplomatic Body to attend the Funeral of the late Foreign Secretary, Herr von Bülow, and while awaiting the Emperor's arrival I was privately informed on high and reliable Authority that Herr von Bülow's last fatal illness had been mainly brought on by the mental worry to which he had been subjected, in labouring to reconcile the Emperor to the Chancellor's "Vienna Agreement", and proposed defensive Alliance with Austria.

Von Bülow, my informant said, was summoned by Bismarck to Gastein³²⁹ while still on sick leave at Marienbad and called upon, contrary to his own personal convictions, to convert the Emperor from Russian idolatry to the new faith in an Austrian Alliance and its consequences.

³²⁷ Charles Raymond de Saint-Vallier.

³²⁸ Meeting at Aleksandrovo on 3-4 September 1879.

³²⁹ Bismarck stayed at Gastein from 21 August to 20 September 1879; Bülow's visit is not documented.

He carried out his orders but the effort cost him his life.

The funeral ceremony was attended by the Emperor, His Majesty's Ministers, Generals, Aides-de-Camp and Household &c, &c.

Having only recently arrived in Berlin³³⁰ I had not met these gentlemen before, and I was gratified to notice that most of them in shaking hands whispered to me: "We are so glad that Lord Salisbury approves our new policy".

FO 64/936: Lord Odo Russell to Marquess of Salisbury, Secret, No 557, Berlin, 21 November 1879

[Received 24 November by Messenger Hare. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Prince of Wales / Circulate; Qy: Secret to Paris / Vienna / Constantinople / St Petersburg; T[enterden], 24 November; S[alisbury], 25 November]

Popularity of Austro-German alliance; discussion thereof with French ambassador

On returning to Berlin I reported to Your Lordship my impression that the Austro-German Alliance was popular throughout Germany.³³¹

That impression has since been confirmed by conversations with German politicians of all parties; and I notice that even Prince Bismarck's opponents admit that he has strengthened his position and increased the votes of his parliamentary majority by selecting Austria in preference to Russia as the favoured Ally of Germany.

An Austro-German Alliance is welcomed by all, not only as a guarantee of peace and safety for Germany, but also as a step towards the much desired Customs Union which is to promote the commercial enterprize and prosperity of both Countries.

Prince Bismarck's friends say that while he was cutting Austria adrift from the Confederation to assert the supremacy of Prussia in Germany, the intention to make a future Ally of Austria was already in his mind, and that it was to facilitate an early realization of that intention that he so strenuously resisted his Royal Master's desire to annex the conquered Kingdom of Bohemia during the peace negotiations which followed the seven weeks war of 1866.³³²

³³⁰Russell was on leave from 17 June to 20 October 1879.

³³¹For the Dual Alliance of 7 October 1879, see n. 318 in this section. Russell returned to Berlin on 20 October.

³³²The Austro-Prussian War, which led to the dissolution of the German Confederation (Peace of Prague of 23 August 1866).

His policy proved successful, for in less than six years, in September 1872, the Emperor Francis Joseph accepted an invitation to Berlin for the purpose of establishing intimate relations with Germany, – which the unexpected arrival of the Czar, who came selfinvited from Livadia, at Prince Gortchakow's instigation, transformed into the tripartite Alliance or "Dreikaiserbund".³³³ The "Scare" of 1875³³⁴ estranged the two Chancellors, and the support given to England and Austria during the Congress in 1878³³⁵ called forth in Russia that irritation and hostility against Germany which enabled Prince Bismarck to extort the Emperor William's consent to his long cherished plan of an intimate Alliance with Austria which he successfully negotiated at Vienna in September, but which the Emperor William only reluctantly ratified on the 15th of October last at Baden.³³⁶

In regard to the probable effects of the new combination, opinion is divided, – some think it will lead to a lasting estrangement, some to the reversal of improved relations with Russia.

The visit of the Czarewitch and Czesarevna and of the Grand Duke Vladimir to the German Emperor is looked upon as a first attempt towards reconciliation,³³⁷ – but there is in reality no danger of a quarrel between the reigning families of Germany and Russia while the Emperor William lives, even though there may be little prospect of improved relations between the two Governments while Prince Gortchakow remains in office.

In the event, however, of the latter being replaced by a more congenial Chancellor, as for instance by Count Schouvaloff, the relations between Russia and Germany might speedily become more intimate and the "Dreikaiserbund" be reestablished on a firmer basis than heretofore. It is already rumoured that a change of Ambassadors is in contemplation and that my Russian Colleague Monsieur d'Oubril, who has been summoned by the Czar to St Petersburg, will be replaced by an Agent specially selected to regain Prince Bismarck's lost confidence.³³⁸

Prince Bismarck himself avowed to the French Ambassador at Varzin³³⁹ that the "written agreement" he had concluded with the Austrian Government at Vienna and which he desired as a defensive

³³³See n. 108 in this section.

³³⁴See pp. 98–108.

³³⁵Congress of Berlin, 13 June–13 July 1878; see n. 324 in this section.

³³⁶Wilhelm I agreed to the Dual Alliance (see n. 318 in this section) on 4 October 1879; he formally ratified the treaty on 16 October.

³³⁷Alexander Alexandrovich and Maria Feodorovna visited Berlin on 16–17 November; Vladimir Alexandrovich on 5 November 1879.

³³⁸Pavel Ubri (Oubril) was replaced by Saburov in December 1879.

³³⁹Saint-Vallier visited Bismarck at Varzin from 11 to 14 November 1879.

alliance against Russia had been communicated by himself to the Russian Government and that it had not, to his great satisfaction, been ill received either at Livadia or at S^t Petersburg.³⁴⁰

He made use of the same expression employed by Count Karolyi in speaking with Your Lordship³⁴¹ to the effect that he had proposed a defensive Alliance to Austria in consequence of his having become “frightened” at the attitude of the Russian Government, – but that he hoped the counter attitude assumed by Austria and Germany would have the effect of bringing Russia back to reason and moderation.

He, Prince Bismarck, Count S^t Vallier told me in strict confidence, expressed both regret and alarm at the pressure recently put by England on Turkey,³⁴² because it might, he feared, have the effect of frightening the Sultan³⁴³ into seeking protection at the hands of Russia, and of encouraging Russia to make the most of the Sultan’s dread of the British fleet, which might ultimately bring the Austro-German Agreement into play, – a contingency he most particularly wished to avoid, as his object was to arrest the mad course of Russia by a firm but conciliatory attitude, and not, if possible, by force of arms.

Germany and Austria, Prince Bismarck said, wanted peace as much as France and England, whilst Russia and Italy wanted war, – the former to wipe out the humiliation she felt at having been compelled to relinquish at Constantinople, – the latter to acquire territory and importance.

He, Prince Bismarck, was in possession of proofs that Russia sought alliances to enable her to attack both Austria and Germany but the measures he had taken and was about to take would, he confidently hoped, avert the dangers that had rendered a defensive Alliance with Austria so necessary to both Empires.

In conclusion Count S^t Vallier told me that he had left Varzin thoroughly satisfied with Prince Bismarck’s assurances of friendship for Monsieur Waddington and of sympathy for the cordial agreement existing between France and England which he called the basis of peace in Europe.

In regard to the Austro-German defensive alliance Monsieur de S^t Vallier agreed with me that it would not only have the effect desired

³⁴⁰Wilhelm I, according to prior agreement with Bismarck, informed Alexander II of the Austro-German alliance in his autograph letter of 4 November 1879; Alexander answered from Livadia on 14 November in a conciliatory tone.

³⁴¹On 27 October 1879.

³⁴²Saint-Vallier was referring to British pressure put on the Porte by the ambassador to Constantinople, Layard, on 29 October 1879, to end the suppression of the Christian population and to instigate reforms in Asia Minor.

³⁴³Abdul Hamid II.

by Prince Bismarck of averting an attack by Russia on Germany, but probably also of reestablishing the old relations of friendship which have so long subsisted between Berlin and S^t Petersburg.

**FO 64/959: Lord Odo Russell to Marquess of Salisbury,
Secret, No 123, Berlin, 12 March 1880**

[Received 15 March by Messenger Byng Hall. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Paris – secret; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; S[alisbury], 16 March]

Emperor and empress dine at French embassy; attempts to improve relations with France

In my despatch N^o 83, most Confidential, of the 20th ultimo, I mentioned to Your Lordship the evident desire which is manifesting itself on the part of Monsieur de Freycinet and Monsieur Gambetta to establish the most intimate relations with Prince Bismarck and the consequent hope in Berlin that France may be gradually induced to join the Austro-German alliance³⁴⁴ and turn a deaf ear to Russian allurements.

Since I then wrote, the Emperor and Empress³⁴⁵ have honoured the French Embassy with their presence at a dinner which was given by the French Ambassador on the 2nd instant, being the anniversary of the triumphant entrance of the German Army into Paris in 1871.

The Paris Press was allowed to sound the trumpet and publish not only the plan of the dinner-table and the bill of fare, but also the table talk of the exalted and distinguished guests, the cordial assurances of friendship for France proclaimed, it was asserted in a “loud voice”, by the Emperor, and Prince Bismarck’s message of regret at being prevented by ill-health to attend the dinner conveyed by his son, Count Herbert Bismarck, to the French Ambassador.

Count de S^t Vallier, who is highly gratified at the good impression produced in France by his dinner to Their Majesties, tells me in confidence that he contemplates giving another, when the new Army bill has become Law,³⁴⁶ to Field-Marshal Count Moltke, General Kameke the Minister of War, and the leading Military Authorities in Berlin.

In official Circles the double appointment of Prince Hohenlohe as provisional Minister for Foreign Affairs and permanent German

³⁴⁴For the Dual Alliance, see n. 318 in this section.

³⁴⁵Augusta.

³⁴⁶The *Reichstag* passed the army bill on 16 April 1880 (Imperial Military Law of 6 May); as in 1874 the military budget was approved for seven years (see n. 131 in this section).

Ambassador in Paris³⁴⁷ is talked of as a measure well calculated to flatter the national vanity and attract the sympathies of the people of France. While the refusal of the French Government to grant the request of the Russian Government for the extradition of Hartmann is hailed as a happy incident, which will have the effect of estranging Russia from France.³⁴⁸

FO 64/959: Lord Odo Russell to Marquess of Salisbury, No 127, Berlin, 18 March 1880

[Received 22 March by Messenger Seymour. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Rome; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; T[enterden], 22 March; S[alisbury], 27 March]

Pope Leo XIII's pastoral to former Archbishop Melchers indicating concession to Prussian state; newspaper commentary on its potential effects; hopes for end of Kulturkampf

The letter dated 24th of February and addressed to ex Archbishop Melcher [*sic*] of Cologne by His Holiness Pope Leo XIII has given rise to considerable comment in the German Press.

The semi-official 'Post' sees with joy in the concession made by His Holiness, that the names of the priests selected as assistants by the Bishops shall be previously submitted for approval to the Prussian Government, the acceptance by the Pope of the principle enunciated in the Crown Prince's letter to him³⁴⁹ that in this matter he hoped Prussia might be put on an equal footing with other nations.

The first great step towards peace between Church and State has been taken, and the Pope does not ask for counter-concessions from Prussia. The "Post" does full justice to the difficulties under which Leo XIII has hitherto laboured in revoking the anathema on the May Laws pronounced by his predecessor,³⁵⁰ and calls attention to the individual

³⁴⁷Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst was ambassador to Paris from 1874; he served as acting secretary of state for foreign affairs from 20 April to 1 September 1880 (appointed on 29 February).

³⁴⁸Russia demanded the extradition of Lev Hartmann who was held responsible for the assassination attempt on the tsar in Moscow, on 1 December 1879; the French government declined this demand on 6 March on the basis of lack of evidence.

³⁴⁹Letter of 10 June 1878 in which Friedrich Wilhelm, in lieu of the emperor, put forward the principle of monarchical autonomy and the independence of legislation from outside influences.

³⁵⁰In his encyclical *Quod nunquam* of 5 February 1875 Pius IX declared that the Prussian May (Falk) Laws (see nn. 112 and 140 in this section) were invalid and decreed everyone involved in their creation and execution to be excommunicated and, indeed, excluded from the Catholic church.

to whom the letter was addressed viz: to an Archbishop deposed from his See by order of the State.³⁵¹

The installation of priests in dioceses where no superior now exists will necessitate some modification of the Laws, and the Prussian Diet will doubtless not now refuse to sanction such modifications as will admit of this most necessary step both for Church and State being taken.

The Post proceeds to contrast the free concession of His Holiness in acknowledging the control of the State to the indignant talk of the ultramontane party in Germany who call for the unconditional abolition of the Falk Laws, and persecute those of their own confession who were more moderate in their views. The newspaper only recalls these facts to point out that the head of all these Church Societies to whom the Prussian Government looks for the execution of the May Decrees is no one else than His Holiness Pope Leo XIII himself.

The 'Germania' declares that now that the Pope has taken the first step towards the solution of the 'Kulturkampf' by yielding on a point concerning externals[,] the Prussian Government is bound in return to take into consideration a revision of the May Laws. German Catholics will of course gladly obey His Holiness' injunctions, and trust the Prussian Government will enable them to say the Kulturkampf is at an end.

The 'Reichsbote' considers the step taken by the Pope to be the result of the late negotiations between Rome and Prussia. Reports from the Rhine Provinces state that the reinstatement of priests is getting most necessary, as license was rampant in many districts in consequence of their absence.

The 'Weimar News'³⁵² wants to know how Pope Leo XIII regards the institution of a Tribunal for clerical Affairs³⁵³ and points to several still undecided details relating to the notification of appointment by the Bishop to the State, the regulation of which would not be found easy.

The 'Hannover Courier'³⁵⁴ congratulates everyone on the sensible letter of His Holiness, which however was only elicited by the late acquired knowledge of the iron stubbornness of the Chancellor. The principle of State intervention alone is granted, but the rest is sure to follow.

³⁵¹ On 28 June 1876 Melchers was dismissed by verdict of the royal court for church affairs for violation of the May Laws of 1873; despite the appointment of a state commissary he tried to administer his diocese from exile in the Netherlands.

³⁵² *Weimarische Neueste Nachrichten*.

³⁵³ The royal court for church affairs was established in Prussia by the law of 12 May 1873.

³⁵⁴ *Hannoverscher Courier*.

The “Cologne Gazette”³⁵⁵ entertains much the same views, but is sure that the Prussian Government will now be far more friendly and disposed to treat than she has hitherto been. If the Pope succeed[s] in healing the wounds inflicted by Pius IX, especially in Germany, on the Roman Catholic Church, he will well deserve the name of a second Leo the Great.

The universal satisfaction which manifests itself in the German Press at the prospect of the reestablishment of Peace between the Pope and the Emperor, shews that Public Opinion has grown weary of the War which has now lasted nearly seven years between Church and State, but which is not yet quite over since the Popes concession has only been enunciated in a Pastoral to a suspended Bishop and has not yet been confirmed by direct negotiations between Berlin and Rome.

**FO 64/959: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville,
Confidential, No 187, Berlin, 29 April 1880**

[Received 3 May by Messenger Woodford. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate / Print; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; Confidential copies to: Embassies; ‘Put to Mr Michel [*sic*] as to German Government not intending to send a Consul to Philippopolis’; G[ranville]]

General account of Eastern policy; Bismarck’s desire to co-operate with Britain on all matters; outline of current issues in Montenegro and Serbia

In reply to Lord Tenterden’s telegram of the 24th instant requesting me to send a Memorandum on the principal questions in discussion at present, I am glad to say that none of the pending questions are likely to affect the perfect harmony now happily established between England and Germany.

Prince Bismarck shews an earnest desire in all questions connected with the execution of the Treaty of Berlin³⁵⁶ to subordinate his views to those of the English Government, and to give his support to England, whose interests in the East he considers to be of far greater importance than those of Germany. He is even more willing to give his support to any combined policy of England and France – as for instance in Egypt – because he looks upon an Anglo-French Alliance as the basis of peace and order in Europe, and wishes Germany to become a party to it practically, by giving that alliance his support in the general interest of peace.

³⁵⁵ *Kölnische Zeitung*.

³⁵⁶ See n. 324 in this section.

The still pending questions in the East are those connected with the Montenegrin frontier, the Turco-Greek frontier, The Romanian frontier at Arab Tabia, the Servian Agrarian Law Question, and the question of sending the German Commissioner³⁵⁷ back to Eastern Roumelia.

In regard to the Montenegrin frontier question, the German Ambassador³⁵⁸ has been instructed to support Her Majesty's Ambassador³⁵⁹ and the Austrian Representative³⁶⁰ at Constantinople.

If any serious differences of opinion should arise, which is unlikely, Prince Bismarck would certainly support the wishes of his Ally, Austria, as the nearest neighbour to Montenegro, and would probably not object to Austrian interference if The Porte should fail to carry out the Convention of the 18th instant, and prove unable to reestablish order in the disputed districts.³⁶¹

Although Prince Bismarck declared himself ready to adopt the proposals of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the rectification of the Turco-Greek frontier, his sympathies have all along been with the French proposal³⁶² for the largest concession possible to Greece. Any further proposal on which the Governments of England and France may hereafter agree, will be sure to have the support of Germany, where the desire to contribute to the development of Greece is genuine and general.

In regard to Arab Tabia, the final adherence of the Russian Government to the decisions of the majority of the signatory Powers has been announced by Monsiur Giers to the German Government.³⁶³

In the Servian Agrarian question the German Government will follow the lead of Austria in offering advice to the Government of Servia.³⁶⁴

³⁵⁷Wilhelm von Braunschweig.

³⁵⁸Paul von Hatzfeldt.

³⁵⁹Henry Layard.

³⁶⁰Viktor Graf Dubský.

³⁶¹The convention of 12 April 1880 – approved by the signatory powers of the Berlin Treaty in the protocol of 18 April 1880 – defined the boundaries between Turkey and Montenegro and regulated the Turkish cession of territory to Montenegro.

³⁶²French proposal of 18 December 1879.

³⁶³According to the Act of Constantinople of 17 December 1878, defining the boundary between Romania and Bulgaria, the Arab-Tabia redoubt was awarded to Romania and not, as stipulated in the Treaty of Berlin, to Bulgaria. The Russian commissioner did not sign the Treaty; however, Russia acceded on 28 August 1880 after further adjustments to the border. Giers's announcement to the German government, most likely in April 1880, could not be dated.

³⁶⁴Russell is referring to the unresolved question of land tenure and ownership after the end of Ottoman rule.

The proposal to send back the German Commissioner, who is now Secretary to the German Embassy at Constantinople, to Philippopolis to assist M^r Michel and the Austrian Consul³⁶⁵ in supporting and advising the Director of Finance,³⁶⁶ is not likely to be adopted by the German Government, who do not appear to wish to interfere in Eastern Roumelia, and do not even intend to appoint a German Consul at Philippopolis.

On the other hand the German Government are willing, in concert with the signatory Powers to agree to the request of the Turkish Government that the Commissioner for the organization of Eastern Roumelia may meet at Constantinople in order that the new “règlements” for the European Provinces of Turkey may be submitted to them, as prescribed by Article 23 of the Treaty of Berlin.

FO 64/960: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, Most Confidential, No 220, Berlin, 21 May 1880

[Received 24 May by Messenger Hare. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Prince of Wales / Circulate / Munich – confidential; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Disagreement between Bismarck and Bavarian envoy, Rudhart; Bismarck's annoyance at possible independence of Federal Council

The account given in the newspapers respecting the disagreement between Prince Bismarck and the Bavarian Minister Herr von Rudhardt [*sic*] is not quite correct. What really happened was as follows: –

Herr von Rudhardt had expressed to his Colleagues in the Bundesrath³⁶⁷ a personal opinion against Prince Bismarck's proposal to modify the Elbe Navigation Act and to include Altona and a suburb of Hamburg within the Customs line of the Empire.³⁶⁸ At an evening party³⁶⁹ at the Foreign Office, to which Herr von

³⁶⁵Sigmund Ritter von Piombazzi.

³⁶⁶Georgi Stranski.

³⁶⁷Federal Council.

³⁶⁸On 28 April 1880 Rudhart raised concerns about the constitutionality of incorporating the Hamburg suburb of St Pauli into the Customs Union (*Zollverein*), as stipulated in the bill introduced in the Federal Council on 19 April. On 22 May the Federal Council agreed to the incorporation of Altona into the customs territory, St Pauli still being excluded. The background to this policy was the desire to put pressure on Hamburg to enter the Customs Union; see n. 346 in Dresden section.

³⁶⁹29 April 1880.

Rudhardt had been invited by Prince Bismarck, His Highness reproached him for holding language which he, Prince Bismarck, knew to be contrary to the views held by the Bavarian Government, and on Herr von Rudhardt replying that he had not yet received the instructions of his Government on the subject in discussion, Prince Bismarck became very violent and accused him of “intriguing with the Hamburg Jews against the interests of the German Empire”.

Herr von Rudhardt too much alarmed to reply, at once left the room and telegraphed for instructions to Munich, but did not send in his resignation as reported by the Newspapers.

As Herr von Rudhardt is an able and popular Agent and Prince Bismarck has otherwise been well disposed towards him, means will probably be found of settling the difficulty which has arisen between them to the satisfaction of both Governments.

My private impression is that Prince Bismarck, on finding that the Bundesrath was occasionally showing symptoms of becoming inconveniently independent, thought that it might be advisable to strike terror amongst its members before submitting his unpopular measures to them for their approval and acceptance.

Your Lordship will recollect that some time since Prince Bismarck sent in his resignation in consequence of an adverse vote of the Bundesrath on the subject of the proposed Stamp duties on Post Office receipts, by which means he obtained the Emperor’s sanction to a revision of the Rules of procedure of the Federal Council, which places the management of its deliberations under his immediate control.³⁷⁰

But the independent spirit of its individual Members still remained to be checkmated, and this object Prince Bismarck has achieved by making an example of the Bavarian Representative who had ventured to express his private opinion with too much freedom to his Colleagues.

Prince Bismarck seldom loses his temper without some well-matured object.

³⁷⁰On 4 April 1880, in an angry response to the partial rejection of the stamp duty bill (3 April 1880), Bismarck handed in his resignation. Wilhelm I dismissed this request on 7 April and left it to Bismarck’s discretion to propose a solution for further constitutional conflicts of the kind. The revised standing orders for the Federal Council came into effect on 26 April 1880.

**FO 64/962: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 430, Berlin, 17 September 1880**

[Received 20 September by Messenger Hare. For: The Queen / Gladstone; Qy: Secret to Paris / Vienna / Constantinople / St Petersburg; F.S.S. [Francis S. Stephens]; G[ranville]]

Animosity to Gambetta's speech alluding to war of revenge; remarks on good relations with Austria

The evil impressions produced by Mr. Gambetta's Cherbourg speech³⁷¹ are taking root in the German mind, and are generating again the suspicion and distrust which led to the 'scare' of 1875.

Monsieur Gambetta's allusion to a war of revenge was answered by the celebrations of the anniversary of Sedan.³⁷² The comments and recriminations of the Press followed, and then came Herr von Varnbühler's speech to his electors at Ludwigslust in which he explained his vote in favour of an increase of the army by reviving the assertion that Germany was threatened by a Franco-Russian alliance, – which has not yet been officially contradicted.³⁷³

The impression here is that Monsieur Gambetta has commenced an agitation which is to place him on the Presidential chair of France, when he will support Russia and England in the East to the detriment of Austria and consequently of her ally Germany.

The importance attached to the alliance with Austria had been manifested by the demonstration made in favour of the Crown Prince of Austria during his visit to Berlin.³⁷⁴

In official circles the understanding between Prince Bismarck and Baron Haymerle³⁷⁵ is declared to be of the most satisfactory and intimate nature, – and the Chancellor's assumption of the duties of the Commercial Ministry³⁷⁶ is attributed to his intention to arrive at the conclusion of a Commercial Union with Austria.

The utterances of the Crown Prince of Austria are perhaps of no real importance, but it is well to place on record that the future ruler of the Austrian Empire expressed confidentially his private opinion to his friends in Berlin, that the possession of Salonica might compensate Austria for the preponderance of Russia at Constantinople.

³⁷¹Speech at a banquet in Cherbourg, 9 August 1880.

³⁷²For Sedan Day (2 September), see n. 57 in Darmstadt section.

³⁷³In his speech of 5 September 1880 Varnbühler referred to Russian advances made to France in 1879, which the French prime minister, Waddington, had revealed to Germany. For the Imperial Military Law of 6 May 1880 cf. n. 346 in this section.

³⁷⁴Rudolf visited Berlin on 12 September 1880.

³⁷⁵Haymerle visited Bismarck at Friedrichsruh from 4 to 5 September 1880.

³⁷⁶Bismarck took over as Prussian minister for trade on 23 August 1880.

**FO 64/962: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, No 432,
Berlin, 18 September 1880**

[Received 20 September by Messenger Hare. Copy to Colonial Office; 'Copy to Colonial Office left 22 September'; G[ranville]]

Proposals for German colony in southern Africa; unlikelihood of success

I have the Honour to acknowledge the receipt of Your Lordship's Despatch N^o 582 of the 9th instant enclosing Sir Bartle Frere's Despatch of the 19th July forwarding a translation of an article by Ernst von Weber in favour of a plan for a German Colony in South Africa, which in obedience to Your Lordship's instructions, is herewith returned.³⁷⁷

Herr von Weber's plan will not meet with any support either at the hands of the German Government or on the part of the German Parliament, – while German emigrants feel more attracted by a republican form of Government than by that of a Crown Colony.

The German Government feel more the want of soldiers than of Colonies, and consequently discourage emigration.

The German Parliament has marked its disinclination to acquire distant dependencies, however advantageous to German enterprise, by the rejection of the Samoa bill.³⁷⁸

Under present circumstances therefore the plan for a German colony in South Africa has no prospect of success.

**FO 64/963: John Walsham to Earl Granville,
Confidential, No 515, Berlin, 6 November 1880**

[Received 8 November by Messenger Wynter. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Print / Embassies; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]; Cabinet, 22 November]

Newspaper reports on Austria's increasingly pro-Russian policy; comments on relations with Austria and Russia

The English Newspapers, as well as those of other Countries, have for some time past been calling attention to an alleged tendency

³⁷⁷Not enclosed in FO 64/962. The article in question was entitled 'Deutschlands Interessen in Südost-Afrika' and published in *Geographische Nachrichten für Welthandel und Volkswirtschaft*, Berlin 1879.

³⁷⁸The Samoa bill sought to guarantee dividends to investors for the takeover of the bankrupt trading company J.C. Godeffroy & Sohn; it was rejected by the *Reichstag* on 27 April 1880.

on the part of Austria to pursue a Russian rather than a German policy as regards the question pending between the Powers and Turkey.³⁷⁹

Within the last two or three days the same Papers which lately insisted on the correctness of their comments in the above sense, are now equally anxious to show that the relations between Germany and Austria were never more cordial.

This latter assertion is no doubt perfectly accurate, and I am quite unable to account for the first statement of the Papers.

It is not of course unreasonable to suppose that the intimate alliance between the two Empires may not be altogether free from mutual embarrassments. Austria may dislike the idea of being regarded as dependent on Germany for assistance against her powerful eastern neighbour. And Germany may perhaps feel somewhat compromised by the Alliance,³⁸⁰ as it might oblige her to render aid at times when it was inconvenient to do so; but both Parties to the Alliance must feel that the drawbacks it may have, are of but little account in comparison with its evident advantages.

The relations between this Country and Russia may not be so openly unfriendly as they were a year ago, nor is Russia now supposed to be intriguing, as was then the case, for the goodwill of France, or to be avowedly hostile to Austria: Italy also is showing less restlessness than she did a twelvemonth back.

As far therefore as outward appearances are concerned, the object of the Alliance might seem to have lost some of its original importance; but although Germany and Austria may consider that any immediate coalition of Powers against either one or the other is less imminent than it was last year, both are aware that Russia at least is by no means favourably inclined towards either of them.

Germany will naturally endeavour to prevent France from entering into any alliances which might be used against the Empire, and as a precautionary measure against such a possible contingency, she is now acting towards Russia, and counselling Austria to act towards that Power, in such a manner as would facilitate a return to the "Dreikaiserbund".³⁸¹

³⁷⁹Walsham is referring to the pressure on the Ottoman Empire to transfer the port of Ulcinj (Dulcigno) to Montenegro.

³⁸⁰For the Dual Alliance, see n. 318 in this section.

³⁸¹For the League of the Three Emperors, see n. 108 in this section.

The visible effect of this policy may not improbably have been more noticeable on the part of Austria than on the side of Germany; and this perhaps may have given rise to the observations and criticisms which appeared in the Press. I am at a loss otherwise to account for them.

**FO 64/979: Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 28, Berlin, 21 January 1881**

[Received 25 January by Messenger Hare. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Print (Greece), 29 January / Embassies – secret; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Bismarck's Eastern policy; speculation that Bismarck wants Greek frontier question to drag on and favours Austrian expansion in the south

I have read with great interest Sir Henry Elliot's despatch N^o 12, Most Confidential, of the 12th instant, respecting the suspicion His Excellency has met with among some of his Colleagues that Baron Haymerle does not desire to see the Greek question³⁸² quickly settled and that Prince Bismarck is secretly favouring an extension of the Austrian Empire towards the South.

As regards Prince Bismarck's oriental policy there can be no doubt that it is based on a desire to favour the extension of Austria towards the South and in so doing to preserve and protect her against any complications with Russia.

Before the Berlin Congress³⁸³ met, he advocated the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and even of Servia to Austria, and since the Berlin Congress he has privately admitted that he hoped some day to see the Austrian Empire extend to the Egean and enter into a Customs Union with Germany. For the present no doubt he wishes to prolong the existence of the Turkish Empire, – but if the collapse could no longer be postponed, his favorite solution to the oriental problem would be the peaceful division of influence in the Balkan Peninsula between Austria and Russia, – the former to extend to the

³⁸²Despite the resolution of the conference in Berlin (16 June to 1 July 1880) the Turco-Greek frontier dispute remained unresolved. At the time of the dispatch the French proposal for a European board of arbitration had been abandoned; however, deliberations on the border issue were continued by the ambassadors to the Porte. The Convention of Constantinople of 24 May 1881, supplemented by a subsidiary Turco-Greek convention on 2 July 1882, finally stipulated the cession of Thessaly and southern Epirus to Greece.

³⁸³See n. 324 in this section.

Egean and the latter to the Straits³⁸⁴ and both to be indebted to him for harmonizing their claims to the Sultan's³⁸⁵ inheritance.

To prevent a quarrel or conflict between Austria and Russia after the dissolution of the "Dreikaiserbund", he contracted a defensive Alliance with Austria, the conditions of which are still unknown to Europe, – and to prevent Russia and France from uniting against Germany, he threatened Russia with his Austrian Alliance and offered France his support in everything she might desire.³⁸⁶

When Her Majesty's present advisers came into office,³⁸⁷ Prince Bismarck apprehended three things:

1st That England and Russia might come to some special understanding about Turkey.

2^d. That Austrian interests in Turkey might suffer from an Anglo-Russian understanding.

3^d That the creation of the concert might diminish his personal influence in Europe.

His first apprehension was relieved when he received from S^t Petersburg proofs that her Majesty's Government had declined a special alliance with Russia in November last and that the Russian Government in consequence solicited his good offices to establish between them and Austria relations of confidence in regard to Eastern Affairs.

By promoting the welcome wishes of Russia Prince Bismarck saw his way to relieving himself of his second apprehension in regard to the prospects of Austrian interests in Turkey, and at the same time of commanding a majority of votes – four to two³⁸⁸ – in the European concert.

My belief is that the immediate result of the reestablishment of the tripartite understanding has been, that Austria, Germany and Russia have agreed to oblige the Sultan, by setting aside the Berlin Award and leaving Janina and Metzovo to Turkey in exchange for Larissa and the Island of Crete for Greece,³⁸⁹ and that they will work out this idea at the proposed discussion between the Porte and the Powers of Constantinople.

³⁸⁴Turkish Straits, the waterway between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea consisting of the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara, and the Bosphorus.

³⁸⁵Abdul Hamid II.

³⁸⁶For the League of the Three Emperors, which was disrupted by the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878, and the Dual Alliance of 1879, see nn. 108 and 318 in this section.

³⁸⁷The third Gladstone administration took office on 23 April 1880.

³⁸⁸Austria-Hungary, Italy, Prussia, and Russia on one side, Britain and France on the other.

³⁸⁹The Berlin conference of 1880 granted Ioannina and Metzovo to Greece.

**FO 64/980: Lord Ampthill to Earl Granville, No 150,
Berlin, 22 March 1881**

[Received 28 March by Messenger Leeds. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Conversation with Bismarck regarding controversial London journal, Freiheit

Prince Bismarck shewed me last night a number of the German weekly newspaper “*Freiheit*”³⁹⁰ of the 19th of March published at N^o 101 Great Titchfield street, Oxford street W, London, – Editor J. Neve Esq., containing an article headed “*Endlich*” (at last), exulting in the most disgusting and revolting language over the assassination of the Czar,³⁹¹ regretting that Regicide should be so scarce, recommending that a sovereign should be dispatched (abgethan) at least every month, and hinting that the assassination of the present Czar as well as of certain hypocritical monarchs who pretend to be liberal and impede the progress of culture even more than Despots is most desirable etc. etc.

Prince Bismarck said that he was aware that English Governments as a rule paid no attention to these sorts of publications, but that the one he had shewn me appeared to him to go beyond the limits of a free Press, since it advocated the assassination of sovereigns with whom England entertained friendly relations, and he had therefore instructed the German Ambassador³⁹² in London to call attention to this dangerous publication, and ask Your Lordship’s advice as to how its authors might be prosecuted.

**FO 64/981: Lord Ampthill to Earl Granville,
Confidential, No 198, Berlin, 12 April 1881**

[Received 16 April by Mr Townley. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate / St Petersburg – confidential; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Russian proposal for international conference at Brussels in aid of measures against nihilism

I have communicated the substance of Your Lordship’s instructions of last night to the Chancellor and have endeavoured to persuade His Highness not to propose a Conference on Nihilism to Her Majesty’s

³⁹⁰ Anarchist German language journal, established by Johann Most in 1879.

³⁹¹ Alexander II was assassinated in St Petersburg on 13 March 1881.

³⁹² Münster, on his own initiative, presented German demands for the prosecution of *Freiheit* to Granville on 22 March 1881. Bismarck, however, in his correspondence with Münster of 26 and 29 March, expressed that he did not want Germany to appear as a keen representative of Russian grievances. For the prosecution of Johann Most, see n. 342 in Dresden section.

Government. I said that in Your Lordship's opinion it would be impossible, in the face of all our traditions, to accept it, that it would create a reaction against the excellent feeling which now exists, that the refusal would be a great encouragement to those whom it is desired to put down and that the refusal, which would appear unavoidable in England, would be unintelligible in Germany. I added that it might lead to a division of opinion between the Northern and Western Powers and break up the Concert, which it was so important to maintain for the sake of order and goodwill among the European Nations.

Prince Bismarck replied that the proposal to hold a Conference with a view to arriving at some international agreement for the prevention of assassination would come from Russia and not from Germany, and that under present circumstances, even if he had not been called upon by an almost unanimous vote of the German Parliament³⁹³ to concert such measures with the Powers of Europe, the Russian proposal would have his full sympathy and approval, because he firmly believed that an international understanding for the prevention of murder as such, irrespective of persons, had become necessary if order and progress were to be preserved and promoted in Europe.

He believed that all the Powers, including France, would share his view and would accept the Russian proposal to consider the subject, without of course interfering with the internal legislation of each individual Country, and he would deeply regret if England alone abstained from taking part in the discussion of so important a question to Europe as the prevention of murder and the promotion of political morality in the future.

**FO 64/982: John Walsham to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 284, Berlin, 4 June 1881**

[Received 6 June by Messenger Leeds. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate / Paris / Rome / Mr Malet; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Summary of Bismarck's policy towards France and its bearing on relations with England, Italy, and Eastern matters

The despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, marked No 529 Secret of the 27th ultimo, a copy of which Your Lordship

³⁹³In response to the assassination of Alexander II in March 1881 the motion called upon Bismarck to reach an understanding with foreign governments on the questions of persecution and extradition of murderers of state sovereigns, conspirators, and agitators; it was passed on 4 April 1881 (the Socialist deputies abstained). Russo-German initiatives for an international conference on nihilism failed because of British and French refusals to participate.

was so good as to send me by last Messenger, describes so exactly Prince Bismarck's policy towards France that I venture to bear testimony to the accuracy of the account given by His Excellency of the relations existing between the two Countries at the present moment.

Prince Bismarck watches events in France with nervous interest. He feels that sooner or later Germany will have to settle accounts with her powerful neighbour, but he is doing his utmost to postpone the day of reckoning as long as possible.

With this end in view the Chancellor will be only too ready to humour France whenever an opportunity offers, and if by humouring her he can at the same time excite the jealousy of other powers on her account, he will all the better pleased. As stated by Lord Lyons, Prince Bismarck will use his best endeavours to alienate from France the sympathies of other nations: And he is undoubtedly secretly delighted with the result of what has occurred in Tunis.³⁹⁴ Not only did his good will in the affair enable him to flatter French vanity, and give occupation to French troops at a comfortable distance from the German Frontier, but it also gave him the opportunity of wounding the susceptibilities of Italy through the very Power she was supposed to be coquetting with at the time he was taking steps to prevent any coalition against Germany and was driven to enter into an intimate Alliance with Austria for the mutual defence of the two Empires against a common Enemy.³⁹⁵

For some time past the Chancellor's feelings towards Italy have been far from cordial; but although he may rejoice over her present irritation, and not dislike the idea of having been instrumental in causing it, he is too much clear-sighted not to perceive that he could use that irritation to his own advantage by allowing it, in case of necessity, to work itself out against those who, with his consent and approval, now occupy a position at Tunis so galling to Italy.

May I be allowed to add a word to what Lord Lyons says about the great importance he attaches to the complete execution of the existing understanding between the British and French Governments respecting Egypt, and about the inexpediency of meddling with it in any way, in view of the satisfaction felt throughout France at the result of their recent enterprise, and of the temptation to attempt similar ones, so long as Germany is willing.

³⁹⁴On 28 April 1881 France invaded Tunisia under the pretext of raiding the Tunisian Kroumer tribe in French Algeria. On 12 May 1881, under the Treaty of Bardo (Kasser Said), Tunisia, formally an Ottoman province, became a French protectorate.

³⁹⁵For the Dual Alliance, see n. 318 in this section.

Shortly before the events took place which led up to the change of rule in Egypt, and to the system of Control now in force, there was a short period when it was generally supposed that the English and the French Governments were not quite agreed as to the course to be pursued with regard to the Affairs in the Principality.³⁹⁶

It was at this moment that Prince Bismarck stepped in and discovered that Germany had considerable interests in Egypt. People were then generally under the impression that His Highness intended himself to superintend the reorganization of the Country, as England and France seemed to be at variance on the subject.

Directly, however, it became known that these two Powers had decided upon the joint policy which was to be pursued in Egypt, and that English and French interests were held to be predominant there, Prince Bismarck at once recognized that predominance, and was the first to express his satisfaction at the solution of a difficult question. At the same time it should not be forgotten that, while the Chancellor was quite ready to admit the inferiority of German interests as compared with those of England and France, he declined to be deprived of his share in the future Foreign supervision, and both Germany and Austria put forward many pretensions before the actual system could be brought into working order.

I am myself convinced that Prince Bismarck would not intentionally go out of his way to adopt a policy hostile to England. I do not, however, for a moment suppose that, in his anxiety to isolate France, he would be prepared to weigh too nicely the effect which any project with this aim might produce in England: and although he has always held that our Action might properly be employed in the direction of Egypt, while that of France might find an outlet in the vicinity of Tunis, it would be too much to say that, were there any divergence of opinion between the two Powers as regards the future of Egypt, the Chancellor would be found siding with us.

He is, or at least professes himself to be satisfied with the leading part taken by England and France in the management of Egyptian Affairs, and looking to the position he has created for himself at Constantinople,³⁹⁷ in addition to the loss of influence he

³⁹⁶Walsham is referring to the period between the publication of the financial plan of Egypt's 'national' government on 22 April 1879 and the replacement of the Khedive, Isma'il Pasha, by his son Tewfik Pasha on 26 June 1879. On 15 November 1879 the Anglo-French (dual) control of Egyptian finances and foreign debts – originally introduced in 1876 and suspended in December 1878 – was reinstated.

³⁹⁷In spring 1881, Germany played a leading role in the settlement of the frontier dispute between Greece and Turkey; see nn. 363 and 382 in this section.

has created there for France through the Tunis business, it would appear most probable that the Chancellor would not jeopardize that position, to which he clings with tenacity, by sanctioning any further direct interference on the part of France with the Sultan's³⁹⁸ Prerogative.

This is the favorable side of the question as regards the position of England in Egypt; but it is quite certain that it would be best not to raise any point which might give the Chancellor an occasion for deciding which of the two Powers should have his support in that part of the world.

**FO 64/982: John Walsham to Earl Granville,
Confidential, No 330, Berlin, 23 July 1881**

[Received 25 July by Messenger Newton. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Rome; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Speculative reports that Bismarck has reopened negotiations with the Vatican

From Your Lordship's confidential Telegram to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Rome,³⁹⁹ N^o 333 of the 13th instant, it would appear as if there was good reason to believe that Prince Bismarck had lately reopened negotiations with the Pope in connection with the long pending differences between the Vatican and the Prussian Government.

Till within a comparatively quite recent date I have no reason to suppose that there was any intention on the part of the Chancellor to make any fresh overtures to the Vatican. Indeed the opinion of those who were most likely to know what was going on in the matter, appeared to be that His Highness considered the overtures should be made by the other side, as he himself had already shown what kind of concessions he was ready to grant with a view to a reconciliation.

It is however quite possible that since the dissolution of the Reichstag, and having regard to the approaching Elections,⁴⁰⁰ the Chancellor may have again had recourse to the mysterious Agencies through which he conducts negotiations with the Vatican.

During the late Parliament His Highness depended for support on the Ultramontane and Conservative Parties. He has quarrelled with

³⁹⁸Abdul Hamid II.

³⁹⁹Augustus Berkeley Paget.

⁴⁰⁰The *Reichstag* was dissolved on 15 June 1881; new elections were held on 27 October.

the Liberal Party since they refused to follow him in his Protectionist policy, and is especially irritated against that portion of this Party known as the Progressists.

It would therefore not be unnatural if His Highness endeavoured in every way to conciliate the Clerical Party so as to obtain a continuance of their support in the new Parliament.

Prince Bismarck may feel that to attain this object he must go further in the way of concessions than he has hitherto done, and he may therefore have thought it necessary to renew his offer in some form more likely to be palatable at the Vatican.

The Newspapers here hint at secret missions,⁴⁰¹ but I have hitherto been unable to ascertain that there are any real grounds for the report.

The leading Clerical Journal⁴⁰² professes to know that Prince Bismarck is taking no interest at all in the question at issue, while one of the chief Conservative organs equally professes to be aware of an approaching alliance between the Ultramontanes and the Progressists, the very Party against which the semi-official Press is most bitter.

These of course may be and probably are merely Election manoeuvres.

I shall not fail to forward to Your Lordship any information I may be enabled to procure on the subject of the supposed secret mission to the Pope. Of one thing however I think Your Lordship may be nearly sure and it is that if Prince Bismarck has reopened negotiations with the Vatican, His Highness has not offered to yield on any point of principle connected with the celebrated "May Laws", but has simply somewhat enlarged his concessions as to questions of detail on the application of those Laws.⁴⁰³

FO 64/983: John Walsham to Earl Granville, Confidential, No 345, Berlin, 6 August 1881

[Received 8 August by Messenger Hare. For: The Queen / Gladstone; G[ranville]]

Relations between Germany and Austria; intentions of the two emperors at Gastein

With reference to the visit of The Emperor of Austria to The Emperor of Germany at Gastein, to which I have alluded in

⁴⁰¹Schlözer's mission to the Vatican in July 1881 concerned the appointment of bishops to vacant sees in Prussia; it marked the resumption of diplomatic relations between Prussia and the Holy See.

⁴⁰²*Germania – Zeitung für das Deutsche Volk.*

⁴⁰³For the May Laws, see nn. 112 and 140 in this section.

my Despatch N^o 338, of the 30th ultimo, I have the Honor to enclose, herewith, accompanied by a translation for which I am indebted to M^r Townley, an Article from the “National Zeitung”, the leading Liberal Journal of Berlin, written with the view of proving how advantageous the alliance between Austria and Germany is not only to the two Powers themselves, but also for the peace of Europe.⁴⁰⁴ – Of course this visit to Gastein has given rise to innumerable conjectures, one of them being that it must necessarily be connected with the various schemes for further alliances which the Public Press everywhere has been hinting at for some time past.

I should imagine, however, that the meeting of the two Sovereigns had no other immediate object in view than the wish of both that the world should be able to appreciate the intimacy of the relations which exist between the two Empires, an additional indication of the friendly nature of these relations being offered in the intention of The Emperor of Austria to visit other German Princes before His Majesty returns home.

Were proofs wanting of the firmness of the alliance from a political point of view, it would not be necessary to look beyond the conduct of this Government in the matter of the late quarrel between the Germans and Czechs at Prague.⁴⁰⁵ – Had such an occurrence taken place in any other country than Austria, the strong feeling which the event created here would have been permitted to express itself in the columns of the Press, and the official Papers would certainly not have been behindhand in their criticisms. – As it is, however, the latter journals have barely alluded to the question, and yet it is one which contains elements of the most vital importance for the two countries.

The commercial relations of the two Empires are doubtless not of the best, and yet this circumstance is not allowed in the slightest degree to interfere with the friendship which one nation has for the other, but then Prince Bismarck holds that politically two countries may be the firmest friends and yet in their commercial policy be the worst possible enemies.

⁴⁰⁴The emperors met on 4 and 5 August 1881. For the Austro-German Dual Alliance, see n. 318 in this section. Enclosures: clipping and translation of article, dated Berlin 4 August, ‘Die Zusammenkunft in Gastein’ from the *National-Zeitung* (undated).

⁴⁰⁵Walsham is referring to the so-called Chuchle battle, a street fight between Czechs and German students on 28 June 1881.

**FO 64/983: Lord Ampthill to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 391, Berlin, 17 September 1881**

[Received 19 September by Messenger Powell. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Confidential to Embassies; G[ranville]]

German and Russian emperors' meeting at Danzig; League of the Three Emperors renewed

The Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs⁴⁰⁶ professes to know nothing about the meeting of the Emperors at Dantzig beyond what is in the Papers.⁴⁰⁷ The official and officious Papers rejoice over the Dantzig Meeting as the reestablishment of the good understanding between the three Emperors⁴⁰⁸ which they declare to be the safest guarantee of the lasting peace of Europe.

The independent and liberal Press which had been lulled into the belief that Prince Bismarck had broken with Russia to ally Germany and Austria against her, – a policy which was most congenial to the great majority of Germans, – has been taken by surprise and does not quite know what to make of this sensational renewal of the “Dreikaiserbund”, nor what Prince Bismarck intends to do with it, – after having denounced and repudiated it in 1879.⁴⁰⁹

Public opinion in Germany which has ever been suspicious of Russia and Rome appears to apprehend that the renewal of the intimacy with the Czar and of diplomatic relations with the Pope⁴¹⁰ forbode a period of reaction which will impede the liberal progress of the nation.

As far as I have been able to ascertain the reasons which have led Prince Bismarck to renew with Russia and Rome are:

1st that still dreading an alliance between France and Russia he wishes once for all to isolate the former in Europe by renewing the tripartite alliance, and

⁴⁰⁶Clemens August Busch.

⁴⁰⁷Alexander III and Wilhelm I met on 9 September 1881.

⁴⁰⁸The Austrian emperor, Franz Joseph, was not present at Danzig.

⁴⁰⁹The renewal of the League of the Three Emperors, founded in 1873 and forsaken through the Dual Alliance of 1879 (see nn. 108 and 315 in this section), was formalized in the Three Emperors' Treaty of 18 June 1881 (*Dreikaiserbündnis*). In this, Austria, Germany and Russia agreed to maintain benevolent neutrality in case of one signatory being at war with a fourth power; and to take into consideration their respective interests in the Balkans; territorial changes in the European part of Turkey were subject to prior agreement.

⁴¹⁰In August 1881 Bismarck requested of Wilhelm I that diplomatic relations between Prussia and the Holy See be resumed. Schlözer, who had been in charge of the diplomatic missions of July and August 1881 (see n. 401 in this section), presented his letter of credence on 24 April 1882.

2^d that by making peace with the Pope he reckons on securing the Catholic votes without which he cannot obtain a working majority in the coming Reichstag.

**FO 64/983: Lord Amphill to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 414, Berlin, 6 October 1881**

[Received 10 October by Messenger Newton. For: The Queen / Gladstone; Qy: Paris – secret; G[ranville]]

Germany's advances towards France

I have read with great interest the Despatch addressed on the 12th ultimo to Your Lordship by Her Majesty's Minister at Paris, marked N^o 824 Secret, recording a conversation with a gentleman connected with the French Foreign Office and giving, as M^r Adams observes, indisputable proof that Germany has been making advances to France. – The proof, – if further proof were needed, – is also to be found in the expedition to Tunis⁴⁴¹ to which the advances of Germany have indisputably led France, whilst Prince Bismarck's subsequent advances to Russia have isolated France before he has even succeeded in isolating England in Europe, as M^r Adams informant suspects him to intend.

Prince Bismarck's further plan of "binding France to Germany as Austria is already bound, and thus to make an alliance of three" has doubtless occupied his mind since the Congress of Berlin, but he does not appear impatient to conclude that alliance, since he has meanwhile made advances to the Pope, and abandoned the "Culturkampf" at the very moment that France is about to take it up.⁴⁴²

Whilst the Germans in Paris are "expressing joy at the difficulties which have arisen in the course of the commercial negotiations between France and England",⁴⁴³ they are in Berlin expressing a similar feeling at what they call the "military incapacity" displayed by the French Generals in Africa, which allows them to look forwards with

⁴⁴¹Bismarck had approved of French ambitions in Tunisia since the Congress of Berlin in 1878 (see n. 324 in this section); in a conversation of 5 January 1879 he reassured Saint-Vallier not to expect any difficulties from Germany. For the French invasion of Tunisia, see n. 394 in this section.

⁴⁴²Amphill is referring to Gambetta's anti-clerical attitudes and policies.

⁴⁴³French tariff reform in May 1881 affected the London negotiations (26 May to 28 August 1881) for a new commercial treaty; negotiations were resumed in Paris on 21 September after Britain and France agreed to extend the existing treaties and conventions until 8 February 1881.

less apprehension to the war of revenge, they still persist in believing M. Gambetta is gradually preparing France to undertake.

No doubt if France were sincerely willing to join the tripartite Alliance Prince Bismarck has now renewed with Russia and Austria,⁴⁴ – he would receive her overtures in a corresponding spirit for the sake of securing a lasting peace for Germany, but so long as M. Gambetta alludes in public speeches to the recovery of the lost Provinces, as he did at Cherbourg and Belleville,⁴⁵ Prince Bismarck's advances to France will no doubt continue, but they will tend to encourage her spirit of enterprize out of Germany's way in regions where German interests cannot be impaired and at the cost of other Powers.

FO 64/1005: Lord Amphil to Earl Granville, No 12, Berlin, 13 January 1882

[Received 16 January by Messenger Stephens. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Lord Carrington; Copies to: Vienna / Paris / Rome / St Petersburg / Constantinople; G[ranville]]

Royal rescript intended to prevent constitutional crisis

Your Lordship has already seen from the telegraphic accounts in the newspapers that the Imperial Rescript of the 4th instant, of which copy and translation are herewith enclosed, has produced considerable sensation in the Press, by which it has been represented as the commencement of a constitutional crisis in Germany.⁴⁶

This view is manifestly due to an imperfect knowledge of Prussian history and the excitement produced by it will subside when public opinion realizes that the Royal Decree, calmly considered, as the Cologne Gazette⁴⁷ explains, is in reality “a perfectly faithful enunciation of the Prussian constitution, which nobody can contradict and which is evidently intended merely to prevent false notions in the future.”

In truth, The Emperor's intention is not to evoke, but on the contrary to prevent a constitutional crisis by reminding those of his Subjects who act upon the assumption that they live under a constitutional Monarchy with responsible Ministers, that they are

⁴⁴See n. 409 in this section.

⁴⁵Amphil is referring to the speeches of 9 August 1880 (see p. 159) and 12 August 1881, in which Gambetta presented his manifesto for the upcoming elections.

⁴⁶Enclosures: copy (undated clipping from *Staatszeitung*) and translation of Royal Decree of 4 January 1882.

⁴⁷*Kölnische Zeitung*.

in reality living under a Monarchical Constitution in which all responsibility is assumed by the Sovereign who is “de facto” himself the Leader of the political party in power, and as such expects his supporters to vote for him, and not for the opposition, and the more so if they hold offices under the Crown.

In the event of a dissolution, which is, however, not at present contemplated, many Prussian Officials who voted for Members of the Opposition in the last general election, will feel bound to vote for the supporters of the Government at the next general election, in consequence of this Royal Rescript reminding them that their aged Sovereign claims both to “reign and to govern” in Prussia, according to the traditions of the House of Hohenzollern.⁴¹⁸

Parliamentary Government is not likely to commence in Germany until after the death of the present Emperor and of his Chancellor.

FO 64/1005: Lord Amphill to Earl Granville, Very Confidential, No 100, Berlin, 21 March 1882

[Received 27 March by Captain Ball. For: ‘Chief Clerk for remarks’, H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; Copy to Treasury, 30 March; T[enterden]]⁴¹⁹

Arrival in Berlin of three destitute Indians seeking onward travel to London

On the 16th instant three Indians, without papers of any kind, and with only the slightest knowledge of any other language but their own, were abandoned at Custrin in this province by their employer.

The station-master at Custrin sent them to Berlin and begged repayment of the price of their tickets which he had bought.

On arrival in a destitute state at the Berlin-station late at night, they were charitably assisted by the head waiter of the Station Restaurant,

⁴¹⁸According to the royal rescript the duty of civil servants to represent the royal government’s policies extended to voting in elections.

⁴¹⁹Notes on the docket: “25th: The India Office would be sure to decline to repay. There are two courses open, either to send the case to the India Office for consideration and on receipt of their refusal to send it to Lord Amphill, or to represent the case to the Treasury and ask them to consent to the expense being charged to our Vote.” [Signed] F.B.A. [Francis Beilby Alston], 28 March 1882; “There is a third course which is, without inviting the certain refusal of the India Office & the probable refusal of the Treasury, to answer at once that in regret to say that it is not a case which can be treated under the head of relief of destitute B.S.S [British seamen and other British subjects]. As Lord Amphill would not lose but would merely not be able to indemnify the Relief Association, might not this course be the best?” [Signed] H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson], 29 March 1882; “I think we should have a [meeting] at the Treasury. It is not creditable that these Indians should be starving about the streets & depend on the charity of a German waiter.” [Signed] T[enterden], 29 March 1882.’

who procured them board and lodging and brought them next day to Her Majesty's Embassy where they asserted that they were natives of Hydrabad, and would, if sent to London, be able to find friends there.

It appearing undesirable to keep them in Berlin where their insufficient clothing and unusual appearance caused them to be followed in the streets, and the head waiter expressing a strong desire to be relieved from his responsibilities, they were despatched to Hamburg on the evening of the 17th instant and the expenses were advanced by the British Relief Association.⁴²⁰ I have now the honour to ask Your Lordship's [*sic*] whether, under the circumstances, I should be authorized in regarding these three Indians as destitute British Subjects and consequently charging, the expenses incurred in the Extraordinary Accounts.

**FO 64/1006: Lord Amthill to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 245, Berlin, 21 June 1882**

[Received 26 June by Messenger Powell. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Print (Egypt); Confidential to: Embassies / Alexandria; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Bismarck likely to change standpoint in conference on Egyptian Question to restore political reputation

In my previous correspondence I have had occasion to point out that Prince Bismarck, after the severe defeat his home policy had sustained,⁴²¹ might be tempted to retrieve his political reputation by some success in foreign policy, which would increase the influence of Germany in Turkey and extend it also to Egypt.

Recent events had me to think that at the secret request of the Khedive and of the Sultan⁴²² he is willing to promote a provisional arrangement in Egypt with the powerful cooperation of Arabi Pasha, for the purpose of preventing, if possible, further bloodshed and massacre.⁴²³

If in the coming Conference he seeks to maintain and increase the influence of Germany in the East, he may possibly support the

⁴²⁰The British Relief Association Berlin was founded in 1858; it assisted British subjects in distress, residing in or passing through Berlin.

⁴²¹On 18 June 1882 the *Reichstag* rejected the bill on the tobacco monopoly; see n. 177 in Darmstadt section.

⁴²²Abdul Hamid II.

⁴²³The nationalist revolt under the leadership of Ahmed Urabi (Arabi Pasha) against the Khedive of Egypt, Tewfik Pasha, and European influence in Egypt started in September 1879. On 11 June 1882 the crisis deteriorated with anti-European riots in Alexandria resulting in many fatalities.

Sultan's policy more than that of the other Powers, and then I should not be surprised to hear that the German Representative in the Conference took a somewhat different view of the 'Status quo' the Conference is to reestablish, than the Representatives of England and France.⁴²⁴

My reason for thinking so is that I have been privately told, on high authority, that Prince Bismarck has been heard to attribute to the 'Status quo' which England and France wish to reestablish in Egypt, the national movement against foreigners and the military despotism it has created.

**FO 64/1007: John Walsham to Earl Granville, No 291,
Berlin, 20 July 1882**

[Received 24 July by Messenger Seymour. For: Copy to War Office; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Use of 'iron ration' in German army

In reply to Your Lordship's despatch N^o 296 of the 12th instant I have the honour to state, for the information of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for War⁴²⁵ that, from enquiries I have made, I believe the following to be a correct description of the "Eiserne Ration" (Iron Ration), which I may mention is just as often referred to as the "Eiserne Bestand" (Iron Stock of food) and the "Eiserne Portion" (Iron portion).

Whichever of the three terms is employed, it would be understood to mean the "Ration", "Stock of food", or "Portion" set apart for a special purpose and rigidly used for that purpose only. Hence probably the origin of the term "Iron" as applied to it, as on its delivery to troops, each man is called upon to promise faithfully that he will strictly adhere to the conditions on which the "Ration" is issued, namely, that it shall be used only in a case where no other food can be obtained. As a rule therefore the so-called "Iron Ration" is principally applicable to a special "Ration" issued in time of war, though it would be equally applied to a similar "Ration" given to the men under exceptional circumstances in time of peace, such for instance as the Autumn or other Manoeuvres of the Army.

⁴²⁴The international conference on Egyptian affairs was held at Constantinople from 23 June to 14 August 1882. On 15 July the European powers, in identical notes, called upon Sultan Abdul Hamid II to intervene in Egypt. Germany was represented by Louis von Hirschfeld, Britain by the Earl of Dufferin, and France by Marquis de Noailles.

⁴²⁵Hugh Childers.

The term “Iron Ration” is, I should add, likewise employed, and with precisely the same signification, to any special quantity or kind of food set apart for the use of Cavalry horses or other animals accompanying an army.

In respect of the “ration” issued to the men it does not always necessarily consist of the same ingredients. Each man would receive a certain amount of Coffee, Salt, pepper and rusk-biscuit, but there would be added a certain amount either of Rice or of “Erbswurst” (pea-sausage), but not of both. The men would be allowed to choose either one or the other. The “Ration” when issued would in most cases, I am told, be supposed to contain food enough for two, or at most three days. It would weigh under a pound and be carried in a small linen bag, by Infantry within the knapsack, and by Cavalry within the valise.

It will therefore be understood that the “Eiserne Ration” is merely a technical expression and not actually a Ration kept prepared for use, or which can be purchased already “made up”.

Stores kept in Fortresses for possible future use are also known as “Eiserne Ration”.

Should I be able to obtain any further information on the subject, I will at once communicate it to Your Lordship; and, if the War Office requires it, I can obtain a sample of the “Erbswurst” (pea sausage); but, as this Sausage, which is used for making soup, is not a new invention, I have no doubt the Department is already well-acquainted with its ingredients.

**FO 64/1008: Lord Amphill to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 471, Berlin, 16 December 1882**

[Received 18 December by Messenger Wynter. For: The Queen / Gladstone; G[ranville]]

Bismarck prevented from attending to business of government by ill health; his satisfaction at British success in Egypt; and French desires to neutralize revolutionaries in Geneva

Since his return to Berlin⁴²⁶ Prince Bismarck has been suffering from face-ache, which is attributed, according to the Physicians consulted, to teeth, gout, nerves, rheumatism, neuralgia or “tic douloureux”⁴²⁷ &c. An eminent Dentist⁴²⁸ recommended the removal of four teeth,

⁴²⁶Bismarck returned to Berlin from Varzin on 3 December 1882 after an absence of over five months.

⁴²⁷Trigeminal neuralgia, a neuropathic disorder.

⁴²⁸Dr Petsch; he advised Bismarck that the extraction of teeth was no guarantor of pain relief.

but the Chancellor, who is proud of being still in possession of his full complement of thirty-two, declared that he preferred pain to the loss of a single one of them. Meanwhile he finds some relief in the warmth of a growing beard.

I mention these details because they occupy the public mind and are not without some influence on public affairs. In the first instance Prince Bismarck has in consequence been unable to attend either the German or the Prussian Parliaments, where the persuasive powers of his personal intervention might possibly have averted the defeat of all his recent measures.

In the second instance he is unable to grant audiences to all those who have anxiously awaited his return to town for the last five months. He made an exception for the Russian Ambassador,⁴²⁹ whom he received previous to his departure for St Petersburg, and he has also been honoured by visits of the Emperor, the Crown Prince⁴³⁰ and Prince William, but he has otherwise declared himself to be too ill to see anyone on business.

From private sources I have been very confidentially informed that, in speaking of the "situation", he expressed great satisfaction at England's successes in Egypt,⁴³¹ and some anxiety lest the time required to settle what the future of Egypt is definitively to be should allow of complications, or encourage France to make what he calls a "scientific retreat."

The French, he says, represent themselves to him as having been deeply hurt by the offer of the Presidency of the "Caisse de la Dette publique",⁴³² which could compensate them for the loss of political influence. What they hoped for, they tell him, was the appointment of a French Minister in the Egyptian Government.

He is glad to think their thoughts are diverted from their Egyptian losses by the prospect of Colonial acquisitions,⁴³³ and to hear that they are seriously considering how to neutralize the revolutionary elements of all Europe that threaten France in Geneva, – a policy which would have his full sympathy.

⁴²⁹Peter Alexandrovich Saburov.

⁴³⁰Friedrich Wilhelm.

⁴³¹On 13 September 1882, in the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir, British troops defeated the Egyptian nationalist army under Ahmed Urabi. This decisive victory in the Anglo-Egyptian War marked the beginning of the British occupation of Egypt. French demands for the continuation of Anglo-French financial administration (dual control) were declined.

⁴³²The *Caisse de la Dette Publique* (Public Debt Commission, established on 2 May 1876) supervised the repayment of Egyptian debts to foreign creditors.

⁴³³This probably refers to French colonial ambitions in the Congo Basin.

**FO 64/1024: Lord Amphill to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 6, Berlin, 5 January 1883**

[Received 9 January by Messenger Johnson. For: The Queen / Gladstone / X / Prince of Wales; Qy: Paris, 10 January; G[ranville]]

German reactions to Gambetta's death

The tone of the official and officious Press in Berlin on the subject of Gambetta's death⁴³⁴ has been tactful, dignified and appreciative, and calculated to give no offence to France.

Public feeling on the other hand has been relieved by his death, because his name was so identified in the German mind with the idea of a future war of revenge that the great majority of Germans could not believe in lasting peace while he lived.

Indeed the Emperor, on receiving the deputations of the Army on New Year's day, said: "Gentlemen I have good news to give you on the commencement of the New Year. Gambetta is dead, and with him the threatened war of revenge.

You can unsaddle your horses and look forward to long peace" (Satteln Sie ab, meine Herren, wir können einem langen Frieden entgegen sehen).

This speech of the Emperor's did not suit Prince Bismarck and orders were given by the Ministry of War to the Officers present not to repeat it, and to the Press to ignore it, and the Articles above alluded to were at once sent for publication to the Official papers.

Prince Bismarck is represented by his friends as not sharing the great satisfaction at Gambetta's death, because he, – the Chancellor, – considered Gambetta's influence in France as a guarantee of the stability of the present Republic, whilst his death may reopen the struggle between the Pretenders to power of every shade and colour, whose hopes and aspirations will be encouraged by the absence of a recognized and accepted Candidate for the future Presidency in France.

**FO 64/1024: Lord Amphill to Earl Granville, No 35,
Berlin, 24 January 1883**

[Received 29 January by Messenger Woodford. For: The Queen; G[ranville]]

Private interview with grieving emperor following funeral of Prince Carl of Prussia

The Emperor sent me a message to say that he wished to speak to me immediately after the ceremony of the funeral of Prince Charles,

⁴³⁴Gambetta died on 31 December 1882.

and I proceeded to the Palace where I found His Majesty alone and deeply moved by the painful impression the sad and solemn service we had just attended in the Imperial Dôme had left on all present.⁴³⁵ The Emperor said that he had received messages of sympathy from Her Majesty the Queen which had gone to his heart and had deeply touched him. “The Queen” His Majesty said “had for years past shown him more real friendship and true sympathy than any Sovereign he knew, or had the happiness of counting among his relations, and the consciousness of Her Majesty’s sentiments of friendship and sympathy towards him both in happiness and in sorrow afforded him more consolation in his deep affliction than he could find words to express. He could never adequately thank the Queen for all he owed Her Majesty; and under the overwhelming sense of the loss he had sustained by the death of his last and youngest brother, the oldest companion of his boyhood, the last link of his early childhood, the only one left with whom he could talk of his mother, he was comforted by the thought that the Queen understood the depth of his grief, and he felt grateful to Her Majesty for it.”⁴³⁶]

The Emperor who was crying could not speak for some time and leant on my arm until he recovered himself sufficiently to continue.

“Prince Charles’ recollection” he said “did not go back as far as his own, since he could well remember having been spoken to by Prince Henry, the brother of Frederick the Great, but from the death of their Mother Queen Luise in 1810 they had been constant companions and had all the happier recollections of boyhood and of the commencement of their military career in common, not to speak of the Wars of Napoleon, against whom they had served together, and had three times successfully marched upon Paris, viz 1814, 1815, and 1870.

Their lifelong relations had been so intimate and devoted that they had never been troubled or interrupted by a difference during the long period of eighty years.

The Emperor then alluded in very gratifying terms to my presence at Versailles in 1870⁴³⁶ and asked whether I remembered how we had one day waited dinner for Prince Charles who came late in consequence of having lingered to measure the distance at which a shell had dropped in the Garden of the Villa he inhabited?

And whether I recollected the interest with which his brother would discuss the operations of the siege after dinner at the Préfecture?

⁴³⁵Prince Carl died on 21 January 1883; the funeral service took place on 24 January.

⁴³⁶See n. 49 in this section.

And the expedition on the 19th of January 1871 up the Sèvre Aqueduct when the garrison of the Mont Valérien espied their movements and sent six projectiles right and left of and over the post of observation they had taken up? And the Villa Stern from which they used to overlook Paris and see the Bombardment of the Forts?"

The Emperor dwelt for some time on various other recollections connected with his deceased brother regretting bitterly that he could never talk them with him over again.

Then His Majesty dwelt on his last illness and conferred to having felt no apprehension, because no change was noticeable in Prince Charles since he had broken his hipbone at Cassel, and had since then always recovered from his frequent indispositions, until D^r Lauer had summoned him, the Emperor, to his brother's bedside at eleven on the morning of Sunday.

Even then he seemed to recover and the Doctors asserted that his last words on seeing them, the Emperor and Empress,⁴³⁷ enter the room had been "Es lebe der Kaiser", but he had not heard the words distinctly himself, and had only thought himself recognized by the feeble pressure of his brother's hand.

He had left Prince Charles' bedroom at noon, to return at half past one with the Empress again, and had then and then only given up all hope on hearing that the Doctors counted fifty eight respirations in the minute and that consequently the last struggle had set in.

The Emperor sobbed aloud and was so overcome that he had again to support himself on my arm. After an interval His Majesty said that at Versailles, where I so frequently saw Prince Charles and himself, he had little anticipated that he was destined to outlive his younger brother, and at this moment he felt as if the ceremony we had just witnessed must soon be repeated. And, pointing to the window through which the Dome could be seen in the distance, The Emperor took my hand and said that the next funeral I would attend in that Church would be his – that he hoped I would not forget him and would remember the twelve years of cordial intercourse between us since the days of Versailles, and above all that I would cherish his earnest desire that those relations of confidence so happily established since then between England and Germany and so essential to the future peace of Europe should be continued by his son and successor. Having once more struggled to suppress an outburst of grief, The Emperor requested me to convey his message of gratitude for Her

⁴³⁷ Augusta.

Majesty's sympathy in his sorrow to the Queen; – and I withdrew, deeply moved by the grief I had been allowed to witness.

**FO 64/1024: Lord Ampthill to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 91, Berlin, 10 March 1883**

[Received 12 March by Messenger Newton. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Lord Hartington; X; Ch.W.D. [Charles Wentworth Dilke]; G[ranville]]

Resignation of German minister of war, General von Kameke, due to conciliatory policy and weak defence of army pensions bill in Reichstag

The resignation of General von Kameke⁴³⁸ is giving rise to a good deal of comment and excitement, both in the Press and in the lobbies of the Reichstag. His amiable and conciliatory manners had made him very popular with all Parties in and out of the Reichstag, – whilst, in the Army his too conciliatory disposition had of late laid him open to the accusation of weakness in the defence of their interests and privileges in Parliament.

He did not insist with sufficient energy on the necessity of passing the Army Pensions Bill, and seemed inclined to share the opinion of the great majority that the Officers, like other servants of the Crown, should pay the “Communal taxes”.⁴³⁹

The Emperor wrote to Field-Marshal Count Moltke to thank him for his able speeches in favour of these measures,⁴⁴⁰ which the Minister of War had failed to carry, and General von Kameke then felt that he could not do otherwise than tender his resignation, which the Emperor accepted.

I should not be surprised to hear that the “Minister of Marine” General von Stosch, who has followed the same conciliatory line of policy in Parliament and has generally acted in concert with General von Kameke, had also thought it his duty to resign if the Emperor should see fit to bring on a conflict with Parliament with a view to obtaining greater privileges for the Army than the country is prepared to concede.

⁴³⁸Kameke handed in his resignation on 26 February; he was dismissed on 3 March 1883.

⁴³⁹The abolition of tax exemptions on local taxes for officers (*Kommunalsteuer*) was the precondition for National Liberal support of the amendment bill to the Military Pension Law of 1871. Kameke, without consulting Bismarck, advised the emperor to make this concession. Despite the emperor's refusal Kameke's subsequent statement in the *Reichstag*, on 12 February, was still ambiguous.

⁴⁴⁰Ampthill is referring to the royal letter (*Kabinettschreiben*) to Kameke of 25 February 1883.

At present the Emperor does not admit the possibility of giving way to Parliament where the interests of the Army are concerned, but in the end His Majesty will no doubt yield to the advice of Prince Bismarck in the matter, who has however not yet pronounced himself on the best mode of dealing with these military questions.

Prince Bismarck might possibly meet the opposition of the Reichstag to the Emperor's wishes, by a dissolution of Parliament, but it is doubtful whether an appeal to the country would improve matters, and probably a general election would be more favourable to the opposition than to the supporters of the present Government, – especially if the appeal is based on a demand for larger grants of the public money for the Army.

Prince Bismarck's friends are under an impression that he will not think the present moment opportune for these demands or for a dissolution, and that he will advise the Emperor not to press the matter now, to temporize and, if necessary, to make some concessions to Parliament in regard to the payment of "Communal taxes" by the Officers.

**FO 64/1025: Lord Ampthill to Earl Granville, Secret,
No 105, Berlin, 22 March 1883**

[Received 26 March by Messenger Woodford. Secret and private to: Home Office, 26 March; T.V.L. [Thomas Villiers Lister]; G[ranville]]

Probable Fenian plots

In extension of my telegram N^o 7 Secret of this day, I have the honour to inform Your Lordship that Colonel Swaine reports the arrival in Berlin of an American gentleman, an expert in explosives. This person is a Southerner by birth. He has been followed here by another American from England, who successively tried to find him in France and Russia. They are total strangers to one another.⁴⁴ The latter has offered the Expert twenty-five Guineas for each hour's consultation. At present the offer is refused, but Colonel Swaine's acquaintance proposes remaining on terms with the American in hopes of ascertaining more particulars as to the real intentions of his would-be pupil.

⁴⁴Names are not traceable.

So far he thinks to have gathered from him that the Fenian Association⁴⁴² and Land League⁴⁴³ have joined hands and, acting like desperate men, having doomed all public Offices and large private establishments to destruction.

The explosive used is a composition harmless when exposed to the air; but as soon as air is excluded for a short time, explosion occurs with great force. But in its present state it is as dangerous to the attacker as to the attacked.

Judging from the conversation the Expert has had with the stranger and the statements he made, he thinks there is little doubt the man belongs to the Fenian-Americans.

Colonel Swaine has entreated me not to have any steps taken in the matter at present, and lays great stress on the Berlin Police being kept absolutely in ignorance. He is anxious that his acquaintance should in no way be compromised, and, as the matter requires the greatest possible care, he requests to be allowed for the moment to conduct the matter himself, and engages to keep me informed of every item of news he obtains on the subject.

FO 64/1025: Lord Amphill to Earl Granville, No 109, Berlin, 29 March 1883

[Received 2 April by Messenger Hare. For: The Queen (see Minute on Sir J. Lumley's No 29 of March 31); Qy: Copy to Colonial Office – confidential; G[ranville]]

Newspaper reports about Germany buying land in Mexico to found a colony

The “Cologne Gazette”⁴⁴⁴ of the 26th, and the “Nord-deutsche Allgemeine” of the 29th instant contradict the report published by the “Standard” that the German Government are in treaty with that of Mexico for the purchase of several millions of acres of land for the purpose of founding a German Colony.⁴⁴⁵

The desire to acquire Colonies is quite as great in Germany as it is in France, and needs but a spark of encouragement from the Imperial Government to become a national conflagration, in favour of Colonies for Germany throughout the Empire.

⁴⁴²Amphill is probably referring to the Fenian Brotherhood founded in the United States in 1858, and the counterpart to the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

⁴⁴³Irish National Land League, founded in 1879; its aim was the abolition of the landlord system.

⁴⁴⁴*Kölnische Zeitung*.

⁴⁴⁵According to the New York correspondent of the *London Standard* (16 March 1883) Bismarck had negotiated the acquisition of ten million acres of land.

Prince Bismarck is opposed to the national wish, as I have often had occasion to state in my previous correspondence, and he will be able to keep down and prevent any serious agitation in Germany for the purchase and foundation of Colonies, so long as he is Chancellor of the Empire.

**FO 64/1026: John Walsham to Earl Granville, No 202,
Berlin, 16 June 1883**

[Received 18 June by Messenger Hare. For: The Queen / Gladstone / X; Qy: Copy to Rome; Ch.W.D. [Charles Wentworth Dilke]; G[ranville]]

New ecclesiastical bill submitted to Prussian parliamentary committee; resignation of National Liberal leader, Bennigsen

With reference to my N^o 193 of the 9th instant, on the subject of the new ecclesiastical Bill now before the Prussian Parliament, I have the honour to state that, on the motion of Herr Windhorst [*sic*],⁴⁴⁶ the Leader of the Ultramontane Party, the Bill was submitted to a Committee of the House, which is now busily engaged in examining it.⁴⁴⁷

Herr Windhorst declined to give any decided opinion on its merits until the report of the Committee was before the House, but from the few observations which fell from him he evidently looked upon the fresh concessions voluntarily offered by the Government, merely as a further instalment of the payments made by Prussia to the Vatican of the Debt still owing, namely the repeal of the May Laws.

It is unlikely that the Bill will receive the approval of the Committee in the shape in which it was sent down to it, but an opinion seems to be gaining ground that the alterations to be introduced may not be otherwise than acceptable to the Church and Conservative Parties in the Chamber, in which case the Government would obtain a majority in favour of their Bill: And it is not at all improbable that this new departure in the contest with the Vatican, taken as it were without any special reference to the recent official ultimatum in the shape of concession on the part of Prussia and its rejection on the part of the Vatican, has been initiated by Prince Bismarck as a purely political

⁴⁴⁶The motion of 25 April 1883 demanded an 'organic revision' of the May Laws (nn. 112 and 140 in this section).

⁴⁴⁷The bill was introduced to the Prussian house of deputies on 5 June 1883 and submitted to committee after its 1st reading on 12 June. The revised bill – presented to the house on 16 June and passed on 25 June (becoming law on 11 July) – annulled the duty to give notice of temporary appointments of priests, restricted the power of the state court over ecclesiastical matters, and stipulated exemption from punishment for certain illegal clerical acts.

move, rather than a renewed attempt to discuss the merits of the rejoinder from the Curia to the last Prussian Note.⁴⁴⁸ So long as the Chancellor can, without apparently even asking for any return from the Vatican, so frame his voluntary concession as to gain the vote of the ultra-montane and Conservative Parties in the Prussian Parliament, and consequently in the Imperial Representative Chamber, His Highness will not take too much to heart the taunt of the National Liberals and Progressists, that he is already nearing “Canossa”.⁴⁴⁹

The retirement from political life just at this particular juncture, of Herr von Bennigsen,⁴⁵⁰ one of the most distinguished Leaders of the National Liberals, and who has hitherto so strenuously opposed any alterations in the Laws introduced by Herr Falk some ten years ago against German Ultramontanism, is much commented upon by the Press of all shades of opinion.

By many it is supposed that from patriotic motives he was no longer inclined to stand in the way of a reconciliation with the Vatican, and that on this account he found himself at variance with the views of his old party, which is as strongly opposed to concession as ever. Herr von Bennigsen has as yet offered no reason for the resignation of his seats in the Prussian and German Parliaments. He has merely stated it to be his intention to take this step, and his retirement will be a great loss to the Liberal Party, while it will be regretted even by his political opponents.

FO 64/1026: John Walsham to Earl Granville, Confidential, No 251, Berlin, 25 August 1883

[Received 27 August by Messenger Powell. For: The Queen / Gladstone; X; Ch.W.D. [Charles Wentworth Dilke]; G[rانville]]

Norddeutsche Zeitung warns of French invocations of revenge; no German intentions of war against France

The accompanying Leading Article from the semi-official “Nord Deutsche Zeitung” of the 22nd instant, copy and translation of which

⁴⁴⁸Walsham is referring to the Prussian note of 5 May and the reply of the Roman Curia of 19 May 1883.

⁴⁴⁹Walsham is referring to Bismarck’s famous ‘we will not go to Canossa’ speech in the *Reichstag* of 14 May 1872 when – upon the papal rejection of Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst as German ambassador to the Holy See – he alluded to Heinrich IV’s submission to the pope in 1077.

⁴⁵⁰Bennigsen resigned his seats in the *Reichstag* and the Prussian chamber of deputies; this was announced in both houses on 11 June 1883.

I have the honour to enclose herewith, appears to have created in the Capitals of Europe, and of course especially at Paris, a considerable amount of sensation.⁴⁵¹ It has been regarded in France and indeed elsewhere as a direct menace to that country, and as an indication of Prince Bismarck's continued hostility towards her. My own impression, if I may venture to give it, is that the publication of the Article, which is unquestionably inspired, was in no way intended as a menace, but merely as a warning that recent utterances in some portions of the French Press, – unnecessarily boastful and calculated it is considered to wound German susceptibilities, would, if persisted in, place in jeopardy the good relations between the two countries which the Chancellor is so anxious to maintain, and foster that very spirit of revenge which he is not less anxious should die out.

For some time past the tone of the French Press in respect to Germany has been noticed here, but probably the comments on General Thibaudin's visit of inspection in the neighbourhood of the German Frontier,⁴⁵² and the allusions to the present readiness of the French Army to meet any opponent, called forth the warning which has now been given.

There is not the slightest reason for supposing that Germany is desirous of entering upon a fresh conflict with France, which apart from the consequences to the two countries would inevitably create complications for the whole of Europe. On the contrary, it is no secret that Prince Bismarck is steadfastly opposed to whatever might endanger the existing state of European peace. No doubt in the combinations which the Chancellor is working out for obtaining alliances complete or partial, the special interests of Germany in the future are not overlooked, but it is equally certain that these combinations have for their object also the creation of such a show of strength as will act as a preventive against any attempt to disturb peace.

The present warning need not I feel sure be looked upon as foreshadowing immediate danger. Though issued in unquestionably accentuated language, it is but a counterpart of many similar warnings which from time to time have found publicity through the channel of the official German Press whenever in the French Press or in the

⁴⁵¹The article stated that the anti-German agitation of the French press was itself a threat to peace. Enclosure: *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 22 August 1883 (clipping and translation of article).

⁴⁵²The French minister of war, Thibaudin, visited French military fortifications on the eastern frontier of France from 7 to 20 August 1883.

speeches of French Statesmen there has been marked allusions to the “War of Revenge”.

The French Ambassador returned to France a few days ago on leave of absence.⁴⁵³ In speaking to Baron de Courcel shortly before he left about the relations between France and Germany, His Excellency assured me that for many months past they had been of the most friendly description, and that he had every reason to be satisfied with them. It is hardly likely therefore that the German Government should deliberately within a few hours so to speak of his departure, have taken a step intentionally hostile to France. Knowing the rigorous supervision exercised over the Press in France Prince Bismarck in his warning appeals as it were to the French Government not to allow Journalists to imperil the actual relations between the two Powers. In the Article from the “Nord Deutsche Zeitung” allusion is made to the “kindred spirits in Alsace Lorraine” who are continuously preaching the doctrine of revenge. This allusion is more especially directed against Monsieur Antoine, one of the Deputies for Metz in the Imperial Representative Chamber. It became known that he was on the point of publishing a Paper with the express intention of opening its columns to exponents of the doctrine in question, and Marshal Manteuffel, as Stadtholder of Alsace Lorraine considered it to be his duty to prevent the Publication from appearing. Upon this Deputy Antoine addressed the accompanying Letter to the Marshal, which found a place in a recent number of the “Nord Deutsche Zeitung” with the remark that “comment was unnecessary”.⁴⁵⁴

FO 64/1027: Lord Ampthill to Earl Granville, No 296, Berlin, 21 October 1883

[Received 29 October by Messenger Lumley. For: The Queen; Ch.W.D. [Charles Wentworth Dilke]; G[ranville]]

Rumours refuted that war would break out upon sale of Russian ambassador's horses

The Times of the 18th instant contains a letter from Berlin on the subject of War Rumours in the French and German Press and states that “The Russian Ambassador Monsieur de Sabouroff has sold his

⁴⁵³Courcel left Berlin for Paris on 21 August 1883.

⁴⁵⁴In his letter to Edwin von Manteuffel, dated Metz, 10 August 1883, Antoine protested against the prohibition – imposed by decree of 5 August – of the intended newspaper *Metz*. The letter was reprinted in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* of 13 August 1883 (clipping enclosed with dispatch).

horses, which may perhaps serve as a further proof for the Cologne Gazette that he is about to be recalled and War declared.”

I am happy to be in a position to explain that the able Representative of Russia in Berlin is as determined as the German Chancellor himself to promote and maintain peace between Russia and Germany, and that the horses he sold consisted in a single pony which I bought for my children when Monsieur de Sabouloff's son left Berlin for school in Russia.

FO 64/1027: Lord Ampthill to Earl Granville, Most Confidential, No 354, Berlin, 15 December 1883

[Received 17 December by Messenger Johnson. For: The Queen / Gladstone; Ch.W.D. [Charles Wentworth Dilke]; Copies to: Paris / Munich; G[ranville]]

Rejection of accusations that Germany harbours angry feelings towards France; Bismarck seeking alliance to secure peace in Europe

M^r Mac Donell in his interesting account of his French Colleague's views on the relations between France and Germany N^o 106 of the 24th ultimo, enclosed in Your Lordship's N^o 441 of the 13th instant, observes that Your Lordship will be enabled to form a correct estimate of them, through the Reports received from Her Majesty's Embassy at Berlin on the subject of “the angry feeling at present manifested in Germany as regards France.”

In my previous correspondence I have repeatedly had the honour to submit to Your Lordship that there is no angry feeling on the part of the German Government towards that of France; on the contrary, the relations between the two Governments are as friendly as they can be or have ever been since the Franco-German War of 1871.

Prince Bismarck in his earnest desire to maintain the peace of Europe, would go to great lengths to facilitate the task of the present Government of France, and to prolong by goodwill and moral support, the Administration of Monsieur Grévy and the tenure of office of Monsieur Jules Ferry with whose Foreign Policy he is perfectly satisfied.

The angry feeling Monsieur Mariani alluded to, exists no doubt in the Press of the two Countries, but it does not affect the anxious desire of their respective Governments to act in harmony for the maintenance of friendly relations and general peace in Europe.

Monsieur Mariani has evidently been misinformed in regard to the “menacing language” of the Bavarian Press having been “prompted by the Prussian Legation at the instigation of the Imperial Chancery”, the Imperial Chancery having on the contrary instructed the official

and officious Press to ignore the attacks of, and avoid all irritating controversy with, the French Press.

No doubt, if, as Monsieur Mariani states, French Armaments are intended “to constitute a standing menace to Germany”, Prince Bismarck will be the more encouraged to secure the peace of Europe, and isolate “menacing France” by the consolidation of a Peace League of the Peace-loving Powers, inaugurated by the defensive Alliance with Austria of 1879,⁴⁵⁵ which Italy and Spain, and possibly the Pope, may find it prudent to enter, in consequence of the attitude assumed by France.

No doubt, also Monsieur Mariani, is right in believing that, “a reconciliation with the Pope would enlist the support of the Centre Party”, and give the German Chancellor a working majority in the German Parliament.

As regards Monsieur Mariani’s accusation that Prince Bismarck “is addicted to spirituous liquor[?]”, and “complètement alcoolisé”, it is a calumny worthy of the author of the scurrilous articles on Berlin Society published by Madame Adam in her *Nouvelle Revue*⁴⁵⁶ of September, October, and December last.

⁴⁵⁵For the Dual Alliance, see n. 318 in this section. Italy joined the military alliance on 20 May 1882 (Triple Alliance).

⁴⁵⁶*La Nouvelle Revue*, bi-monthly Parisian journal founded by Juliette Adam in 1879.