

ТОМАС КАРЛЕЙЛЬ

HISTORY OF FRIEDRICH
II OF PRUSSIA —
VOLUME 02

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History of Friedrich II
of Prussia — Volume 02

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History of Friedrich II of Prussia — Volume 02:

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Thomas Carlyle

History of Friedrich II of Prussia — Volume 02

BOOK II. — OF BRANDENBURG AND THE HOHENZOLLERNS. - 928-1417

Chapter I. — BRANNIBOR: HENRY THE FOWLER

The Brandenburg Countries, till they become related to the Hohenzollern Family which now rules there, have no History that has proved memorable to mankind. There has indeed been a good deal written under that title; but there is by no means much known, and of that again there is alarmingly little that is worth knowing or remembering.

Pytheas, the Marseilles Travelling Commissioner, looking out for new channels of trade, somewhat above 2,000 years ago, saw the country actually lying there; sailed past it, occasionally

landing; and made report to such Marseillse "Chamber of Commerce" as there then was:—report now lost, all to a few indistinct and insignificant fractions. [*Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions*, t. xix. 46, xxxvii. 439, &c.] This was "about the year 327 before Christ," while Alexander of Macedon was busy conquering India. Beyond question, Pytheas, the first WRITING or civilized creature that ever saw Germany, gazed with his Greek eyes, and occasionally landed, striving to speak and inquire, upon those old Baltic Coasts, north border of the now Prussian Kingdom; and reported of it to mankind we know not what. Which brings home to us the fact that it existed, but almost nothing more: A Country of lakes and woods, of marshy jungles, sandy wildernesses; inhabited by bears, otters, bisons, wolves, wild swine, and certain shaggy Germans of the Suevic type, as good as inarticulate to Pytheas. After which all direct notice of it ceases for above three hundred years. We can hope only that the jungles were getting cleared a little, and the wild creatures hunted down; that the Germans were increasing in number, and becoming a thought less shaggy. These latter, tall Suevi Semnones, men of blond stern aspect (*oculi truces coerulei*) and great strength of bone, were known to possess a formidable talent for fighting: [Tacitus, *De Moribus Germanorum*, c. 45.] Drusus Germanicus, it has been guessed, did not like to appear personally among them: some "gigantic woman prophesying to him across the Elbe" that it might be dangerous, Drusus contented himself with erecting some triumphal pillar on his own

safe side of the Elbe, to say that they were conquered.

In the Fourth Century of our era, when the German populations, on impulse of certain "Huns expelled from the Chinese frontier," or for other reasons valid to themselves, began flowing universally southward, to take possession of the rich Roman world, and so continued flowing for two centuries more; the old German frontiers generally, and especially those Northern Baltic countries, were left comparatively vacant; so that new immigrating populations from the East, all of Sclavic origin, easily obtained footing and supremacy there. In the Northern parts, these immigrating Slaves were of the kind called Vandals, or Wends: they spread themselves as far west as Hamburg and the Ocean, south also far over the Elbe in some quarters; while other kinds of Slaves were equally busy elsewhere. With what difficulty in settling the new boundaries, and what inexhaustible funds of quarrel thereon, is still visible to every one, though no Historian was there to say the least word of it. "All of Sclavic origin;" but who knows of how many kinds: Wends here in the North, through the Lausitz (Lusatia) and as far as Thuringen; not to speak of Polacks, Bohemian Czechs, Huns, Bulgars, and the other dim nomenclatures, on the Eastern frontier. Five hundred years of violent unrecorded fighting, abstruse quarrel with their new neighbors in settling the marches. Many names of towns in Germany ending in ITZ (Meuselwitz, Mollwitz), or bearing the express epithet *Windisch* (Wendish), still give indication of those old sad circumstances; as does the word SLAVE, in

all our Western languages, meaning captured SCLAVONIAN. What long-drawn echo of bitter rage and hate lies in that small etymology!

These things were; but they have no History: why should they have any? Enough that in those Baltic regions, there are for the time (Year 600, and till long after Charlemagne is out) Slaves in place of Suevi or of Holstein Saxons and Angli; that it is now shaggy Wends who have the task of taming the jungles, and keeping down the otters and wolves. Wends latterly in a waning condition, much beaten upon by Charlemagne and others; but never yet beaten out. And so it has to last, century after century; Wends, wolves, wild swine, all alike dumb to us. Dumb, or sounding only one huge unutterable message (seemingly of tragic import), like the voice of their old Forests, of their old Baltic Seas:—perhaps more edifying to us SO. Here at last is a definite date and event:—

"A.D. 928, Henry the Fowler, marching across the frozen bogs, took BRANNIBOR, a chief fortress of the Wends;" [Kohler, *Reichs-Historie* (Frankfurth und Leipzig, 1737), p. 63. Michaelis, *Chur-und Furstlichen Hauser in Deutschland* (Lemgo, 1759, 1760, 1785), i. 255.]—first mention in human speech of the place now called Brandenburg: Bor or "Burg of the Brenns" (if there ever was any TRIBE of Brenns, —BRENNUS, there as elsewhere, being name for KING or Leader); "Burg of the Woods," say others,—who as little know. Probably, at that time, a town of clay huts, with dit&h and

palisaded sod-wall round it; certainly "a chief fortress of the Wends,"—who must have been a good deal surprised at sight of Henry on the rimy winter morning near a thousand years ago.

This is the grand old Henry, called, "the Fowler" (*Heinrich der Vogler*), because he was in his *Vogelheerde* (Falconry or Hawk-establishment, seeing his Hawks fly) in the upland Hartz Country, when messengers came to tell him that the German Nation, through its Princes and Authorities assembled at Fritzlar, had made him King; and that he would have dreadful work henceforth. Which he undertook; and also did,—this of Brannibor only one small item of it,—warring right manfully all his days against Chaos in that country, no rest for him thenceforth till he died. The beginning of German Kings; the first, or essentially the first sovereign of united Germany,—Charlemagne's posterity to the last bastard having died out, and only Anarchy, Italian and other, being now the alternative.

"A very high King," says one whose Note-books I have got, "an authentically noble human figure, visible still in clear outline in the gray dawn of Modern History. The Father of whatever good has since been in Germany. He subdued his DUKES, Schwaben, Baiern (Swabia, Bavaria) and others, who were getting too HEREDITARY, and inclined to disobedience. He managed to get back Lorraine; made TRUCE with the Hungarians, who were excessively invasive at that time. Truce with the Hungarians; and then, having gathered strength, made dreadful beating of them; two beatings,—one to each half, for the

invasive Savagery had split itself, for better chance of plunder; first beating was at Sondershausen, second was at Merseburg, Year 933;—which settled them considerably. Another beating from Henry's son, and they never came back. Beat Wends, before this,—'Brannibor through frozen bogs' five years ago. Beat, Sclavic Meisseners (Misnians); Bohehemian Czechs, and took Prag; Wends again, with huge slaughter; then Danes, and made 'King Worm tributary' (King *Gorm the Hard*, our KNUT'S or Canute's great-grand-father, Year 931);—last of all, those invasive Hungarians as above. Had sent the Hungarians, when they demanded tribute or BLACK-MAIL of him as heretofore, Truce being now out,—a mangy hound: There is your black-mail, Sirs; make much of that!

"He had 'the image of St. Michael painted on his standard;' contrary to wont. He makes, or RE-makes, Markgrafs (Wardens of the Marches), to be under his Dukes,—and not too HEREDITARY. Who his Markgraves were? Dim History counts them to the number of six; [Kohler, *Reich-Historie*, p. 66. This is by no means Kohler's chief Book; but this too is good, and does, in a solid effective way, what it attempts. He seems to me by far the best Historical Genius the Germans have yet, produced, though I do not find much mention of him in their Literary Histories and Catalogues. A man of ample learning, and also of strong cheerful human sense and human honesty; whom it is thrice-pleasant, to meet with in those ghastly solitudes, populous chiefly with doleful creatures.] which take in their order:—

"1. SLESWIG, looking over into the Scandinavian countries, and the Norse Sea-kings. This Markgraviate did not last long under that title. I guess, it, became *Stade-and-Ditmarsch* afterwards.

"2. SOLTWEDEL,—which grows to be Markgraviate of BRANDENBURG by and by. Soltwedel, now called Salzwedel, an old Town still extant, sixty miles to west and north of Brandenburg, short way south of the Elbe, was as yet headquarters of this second Markgraf; and any Warden we have at Brandenburg is only a deputy of him or some other.

"3. MEISSEN (which we call Misnia), a country at that time still full of Wends.

"4. LAUSITZ, also a very Wendish country (called in English maps LUSATIA,—which is its name in Monk-Latin, not now a spoken language). Did not long continue a Markgraviate; fell to Meissen (Saxony), fell to Brandenburg, Bohemia, Austria, and had many tos and fros. Is now (since the Thirty-Years-War time) mostly Saxon again.

"5. AUSTRIA (OEsterreich, Eastern-Kingdom, EASTERNREY as we might say); to look after the Hungarians, and their valuable claims to black-mail.

"6. ANTWERP ('At-the-Wharf,' 'On-t'-Wharf,' so to speak), against the French; which function soon fell obsolete.

"These were Henry's six Markgraviates (as my best authority enumerates them); and in this way he had militia captains ranked all round his borders, against the intrusive Sclavic element. He

fortified Towns; all Towns are to be walled and warded,—to be BURGs in fact; and the inhabitants BURGhers, or men capable of defending Burgs. Everywhere the ninth man is to serve as soldier in his Town; other eight in the country are to feed and support him: *Heergeruthe* (War-tackle, what is called HERIOT in our old Books) descends to the eldest son of a fighting man who had served, as with us. 'All robbers are made soldiers' (unless they prefer hanging); and WEAPON-SHOWS and drill are kept up. This is a man who will make some impression upon Anarchy, and its Wends and Huns. His standard was St. Michael, as we have seen,—WHOSE sword is derived from a very high quarter! A pious man;—founded Quedlinburg Abbey, and much else in that kind, having a pious Wife withal, Mechtildis, who took the main hand in that of Quedlinburg; whose LIFE is in Leibnitz, [Leibnitz, *Scriptores Rerum Brunswicensium*, &c. (Hanover, 1707), i. 196.] not the legiblest of Books.—On the whole, a right gallant King and 'Fowler.' Died, A.D. 936 (at Memmlen, a Monastery on the Unstrut, not far from Schulpforte), age sixty; had reigned only seventeen years, and done so much. Lies buried in Quedlinburg Abbey:—any Tomb? I know no LIFE of him but GUNDLING'S, which is an extremely inextricable Piece, and requires mainly to be forgotten.—Hail, brave Henry: across the Nine dim Centuries, we salute thee, still visible as a valiant Son of Cosmos and Son of Heaven, beneficently sent us; as a man who did in grim earnest 'serve God' in his day, and whose works accordingly bear fruit to our

day, and to all days!"—

So far my rough Note-books; which require again to be shut for the present, not to abuse the reader's patience, or lead him from his road.

This of Markgrafs (GRAFS of the Marches, MARKED Places, or Boundaries) was a natural invention in that state of circumstances. It did not quite originate with Henry; but was much perfected by him, he first recognizing how essential it was. On all frontiers he had his GRAF (Count, REEVE, G'REEVE, whom some think to be only GRAU, Gray, or SENIOR, the hardiest, wisest steel-GRAY man he could discover) stationed on the MARCK, strenuously doing watch and ward there: the post of difficulty, of peril, and naturally of honor too, nothing of a sinecure by any means. Which post, like every other, always had a tendency to become hereditary, if the kindred did not fail in fit men. And hence have come the innumerable Markgraves, Marquises, and such like, of modern times: titles now become chimerical, and more or less mendacious, as most of our titles are,—like so many BURGs changed into "Boroughs," and even into "Rotten Boroughs," with Defensive BURGHers of the known sort: very mournful to discover. Once Norroy was not all pasteboard! At the heart of that huge whirlwind of his, with its dusty heraldries, and phantasmal nomenclatures now become mendacious, there lay, at first, always an earnest human fact. Henry the Fowler was so happy as to have the fact without any mixture of mendacity: we are in the sad reverse case; reverse

case not yet altogether COMPLETE, but daily becoming so,—one of the saddest and strangest ever heard of, if we thought of it!—But to go on with business.

Markgraviates there continued to be ever after,—Six in Henry's time:—but as to the number, place, arrangement of them, all this varied according to circumstances outward and inward, chiefly according to the regress or the reintrusion of the circumambient hostile populations; and underwent many changes. The sea-wall you build, and what main floodgates you establish in it, will depend on the state of the outer sea. Markgraf of SLESWIG grows into Markgraf of DITMARSCH and STADE; retiring over the Elbe, if Norse Piracy get very triumphant. ANTWERP falls obsolete; so does MEISSEN by and by. LAUSITZ and SALZWEDEL, in the third century hence, shrink both into BRANDENBURG; which was long only a subaltern station, managed by deputy from one or other of these. A Markgraf that prospered in repelling of his Wends and Huns had evidently room to spread himself, and could become very great, and produce change in boundaries: observe what OESTERREICH (Austria) grew to, and what BRANDENBURG; MEISSEN too, which became modern Saxony, a state once greater than it now is.

In old Books are Lists of the primitive Markgraves of Brandenburg, from Henry's time downward; two sets, "Markgraves of the Witekind race," and of another: [Hubner, *Genealogische Tabellen* (Leipzig, 1725-1728), i. 172, 173. A

Book of rare excellence in its kind.] but they are altogether uncertain, a shadowy intermittent set of Markgraves, both the Witekind set and the Non-Witekind; and truly, for a couple of centuries, seem none of them to have been other than subaltern Deputies, belonging mostly to LAUSITZ or SALZWEDEL; of whom therefore we can say nothing here, but must leave the first two hundred years in their natural gray state,—perhaps sufficiently conceivable by the reader.

But thus, at any rate, was Brandenburg (BOT or Burg of the BRENNS, whatever these are) first discovered to Christendom, and added to the firm land of articulate History: a feat worth putting on record. Done by Henry the Fowler, in the Year of Grace 928,—while (among other things noticeable in this world) our Knut's great-grandfather, GORMO DURUS, "Henry's Tributary," was still King of Denmark; when Harald BLUETOOTH (Blaatand) was still a young fellow, with his teeth of the natural color; and Swen with the Forked Beard (TVAESKAEG, Double-beard, "TWA-SHAG") was not born; and the Monks of Ely had not yet (by about a hundred years) begun that singing, (Without note or comment, in the old, BOOK OF ELY date before the Conquest) is preserved this stave;—giving picture, if we consider it, of the Fen Country all a lake (as it was for half the year, till drained, six centuries after), with Ely Monastery rising like an island in the distance; and the music of its nones or vespers sounding soft and far over the solitude, eight hundred years ago and more.

Merie sungen the Muneches binnen Ely
Tha Cnut ching rew therby:
Roweth enites near the lant,
And here we thes Muneches saeng.

*Merry (genially) sang the Monks in Ely
As Knut King rowed (rew) there-by:
Row, fellows (knights), near the land,
And hear we these Monks's song.*

See Bentham's *History of Ely* (Cambridge, 1771), p, 94.] nor the tide that refusal to retire, on behalf of this Knut, in our English part of his dominions.

That Henry appointed due Wardenship in Brannibor was in the common course. Sure enough, some Markgraf must take charge of Brannibor,—he of the Lausitz eastward, for example, or he of Salzwedel westward:—that Brannibor, in time, will itself be found the fit place, and have its own Markgraf of Brandenburg; this, and what in the next nine centuries Brandenburg will grow to, Henry is far from surmising. Brandenburg is fairly captured across the frozen bogs, and has got a warden and ninth-man garrison settled in it: Brandenburg, like other things, will grow to what it can.

Henry's son and successor, if not himself, is reckoned to have founded the Cathedral and Bishopric of Brandenburg,—his

Clergy and he always longing much for the conversion of these Wends and Huns; which indeed was, as the like still is, the one thing needful to rugged heathens of that kind.

Chapter II. — PREUSSEN: SAINT ADALBERT

Five hundred miles, and more, to the east of Brandenburg, lies a Country then as now called PREUSSEN (Prussia Proper), inhabited by Heathens, where also endeavors at conversion are going on, though without success hitherto. Upon which we are now called to cast a glance.

It is a moory flat country, full of lakes and woods, like Brandenburg; spreading out into grassy expanses, and bosky wildernesses humming with bees; plenty of bog in it, but plenty also of alluvial mud; sand too, but by no means so high a ratio of it as in Brandenburg; tracts of Preussen are luxuriantly grassy, frugiferous, apt for the plough; and the soil generally is reckoned fertile, though lying so far northward. Part of the great plain or flat which stretches, sloping insensibly, continuously, in vast expanse, from the Silesian Mountains to the amber-regions of the Baltic; Preussen is the seaward, more alluvial part of this,—extending west and east, on both sides of the Weichsel (VISTULA), from the regions of the Oder river to the main stream of the Memel. BORDERING-ON-RUSSIA its name signifies: BOR-RUSSIA, B'russia, Prussia; or—some say it was only on a certain inconsiderable river in those parts, river REUSSEN, that it "bordered" and not on the great Country, or any part of it, which now in our days is conspicuously its next

neighbor. Who knows?—

In Henry the Fowler's time, and long afterwards, Preussen was a vehemently Heathen country; the natives a Miscellany of rough Serbic Wends, Letts, Swedish Goths, or Dryasdust knows not what;—very probably a sprinkling of Swedish Goths, from old time, chiefly along the coasts. Dryasdust knows only that these PREUSSEN were a strong-boned, iracund herdsman-and-fisher people; highly averse to be interfered with, in their religion especially. Famous otherwise, through all the centuries, for the AMBER they had been used to fish, and sell in foreign parts.

Amber, science declares, is a kind of petrified resin, distilled by pines that were dead before the days of Adam; which is now thrown up, in stormy weather, on that remote coast, and is there fished out by the amphibious people,—who can likewise get it by running mine-shafts into the sandhills on their coast;—by whom it is sold into the uttermost parts of the Earth, Arabia and beyond, from a very early period of time. No doubt Pytheas had his eye upon this valuable product, when he ventured into survey of those regions,—which are still the great mother of amber in our world. By their amber-fishery, with the aid of dairy-produce and plenty of beef and leather, these Heathen Preussen, of uncertain miscellaneous breed, contrived to support existence in a substantial manner; they figure to us as an inarticulate, heavy-footed, rather iracund people. Their knowledge of Christianity was trifling, their aversion to knowing anything of it was great.

As Poland, and the neighbors to the south, were already

Christian, and even the Bohemian Czechs were mostly Converted, pious wishes as to Preussen, we may fancy, were a constant feeling: but no effort hitherto, if efforts were made, had come to anything. Let some daring missionary go to preach in that country, his reception is of the worst, or perhaps he is met on the frontier with menaces, and forbidden to preach at all; except sorrow and lost labor, nothing has yet proved attainable. It was very dangerous to go;—and with what likelihood of speeding? Efforts, we may suppose, are rare; but the pious wish being continual and universal, efforts can never altogether cease. From Henry the Fowler's capture of Brannibor, count seventy years, we find Henry's great-grandson reigning as Elective Kaiser,—Otto III., last of the direct "Saxon Kaisers," Otto Wonder of the World;—and alongside of Otto's great transactions, which were once called MIRABILIA MUNDI and are now fallen so extinct, there is the following small transaction, a new attempt to preach in Preussen, going on, which, contrariwise, is still worth taking notice of.

About the year 997 or 996, Adalbert, Bishop of Prag, a very zealous, most devout man, but evidently of hot temper, and liable to get into quarrels, had determined, after many painful experiences of the perverse ungovernable nature of corrupt mankind, to give up his nominally Christian flock altogether; to shake the dust off his feet against Prag, and devote himself to converting those Prussian Heathen, who, across the frontiers, were living in such savagery, and express bondage to the Devil,

worshipping mere stocks and stones. In this enterprise he was encouraged by the Christian potentates who lay contiguous; especially by the Duke of Poland, to whom such next-neighbors, for all reasons, were an eye-sorrow.

Adalbert went, accordingly, with staff and scrip, two monks attending him, into that dangerous country: not in fear, he; a devout high-tempered man, verging now on fifty, his hair getting gray, and face marred with innumerable troubles and provocations of past time. He preached zealously, almost fiercely,—though chiefly with his eyes and gestures, I should think, having no command of the language. At Dantzic, among the Swedish-Goth kind of Heathen, he had some success, or affluence of attendance; not elsewhere that we hear of. In the Pillau region, for example, where he next landed, an amphibious Heathen lout hit him heavily across the shoulders with the flat of his oar; sent the poor Preacher to the ground, face foremost, and suddenly ended his salutary discourse for that time. However, he pressed forward, regardless of results, preaching the Evangel to all creatures who were willing or unwilling;—and pressed at last into the Sacred Circuit, the ROMOVA, or Place of Oak-trees, and of Wooden or Stone Idols (Bangputtis, Patkullos, and I know not what diabolic dumb Blocks), which it was death to enter. The Heathen Priests, as we may conceive it, rushed out; beckoned him, with loud unintelligible bullyings and fierce gestures, to begone; hustled, shook him, shoved him, as he did not go; then took to confused striking, struck finally a death-

stroke on the head of poor Adalbert: so that "he stretched out both his arms ('Jesus, receive me thou!') and fell with his face to the ground, and lay dead there,—in the form of a crucifix," say his Biographers: only the attendant monks escaping to tell.

Attendant monks, or Adalbert, had known nothing of their being on forbidden ground. Their accounts of the phenomenon accordingly leave it only half explained: How he was surprised by armed Heathen Devil's-servants in his sleep; was violently set upon, and his "beautiful bowels (*pulchra viscera*) were run through with seven spears:" but this of the ROMOVA, or Sacred Bangputtis Church of Oak-trees, perhaps chief ROMOVA of the Country, rashly intruded into, with consequent strokes, and fall in the form of a crucifix, appears now to be the intelligible account. [Baillet, *Vies des Saints* (Paris, 1739), iii. 722. Bollandus, *Acta Sanctorum, Aprilis tom. iii* (*DIE 23; in Edition venetiis*, 1738), pp. 174-205. Voigt, *Geschichte Preussens* (Königsberg, 1827-1839), i. 266-270.] We will take it for the real manner of Adalbert's exit;—no doubt of the essential transaction, or that it was a very flaming one on both sides. The date given is 23d April, 997; date famous in the Romish Calendar since.

He was a Czech by birth, son of a Heathen Bohemian man of rank: his name (Adalbert, A'lbert, BRIGHT-in-Nobleness) he got "at Magdeburg, whither he had gone to study" and seek baptism; where, as generally elsewhere, his fervent devout ways were admirable to his fellow-creatures. A "man of genius," we may well say: one of Heaven's bright souls, born into the muddy

darkness of this world;—laid hold of by a transcendent Message, in the due transcendent degree. He entered Prag, as Bishop, not in a carriage and six, but "walking barefoot;" his contempt for earthly shadows being always extreme. Accordingly, his quarrels with the SOECULUM were constant and endless; his wanderings up and down, and vehement arguings, in this world, to little visible effect, lasted all his days. We can perceive he was short-tempered, thin of skin: a violently sensitive man. For example, once in the Bohemian solitudes, on a summer afternoon, in one of his thousand-fold pilgrimings and wayfarings, he had lain down to rest, his one or two monks and he, in some still glade, "with a stone for his pillow" (as was always his custom even in Prag), and had fallen sound asleep. A Bohemian shepherd chanced to pass that way, warbling something on his pipe, as he wended towards looking after his flock. Seeing the sleepers on their stone pillows, the thoughtless Czech mischievously blew louder,—started Adalbert broad awake upon him; who, in the fury of the first moment, shrieked: "Deafness on thee! Man cruel to the human sense of hearing!" or words to that effect. Which curse, like the most of Adalbert's, was punctually fulfilled: the amazed Czech stood deaf as a post, and went about so all his days after; nay, for long centuries (perhaps down to the present time, in remote parts), no Czech blows into his pipe in the woodlands, without certain precautions, and preliminary fuglings of a devotional nature. [Bollandus, ubi supra.]—From which miracle, as indeed from many other indications, I infer an

irritable nervous-system in poor Adalbert; and find this death in the Romova was probably a furious mixture of Earth and Heaven.

At all events, he lies there, beautiful though bloody, "in the form of a crucifix;" zealous Adalbert, the hot spirit of him now at last cold;—and has clapt his mark upon the Heathen country, protesting to the last. This was in the year 997, think the best @@@@ Antiquaries. It happened at a place called FISCHHAUSEN, near Pillau, say they; on that, narrow strip of country which lies between the Baltic and the Frische Haf (immense Lake, WASH, as we should say, or leakage of shallow water, one of two such, which the Baltic has spilt out of it in that quarter),—near the Fort and Haven of Pillau; where there has been much stir since; where Napoleon, for one thing, had some tough fighting, prior to the Treaty of Tilsit, fifty years ago. The place—or if not this place, then Gnesen in Poland, the final burial-place of Adalbert, which is better known—has ever since had a kind of sacredness; better or worse expressed by mankind: in the form of canonization, endless pilgrimages, rumored miracles, and such like. For shortly afterwards, the neighboring Potentate, Boleslaus Duke of Poland, heart-struck at the event, drew sword on these Heathens, and having (if I remember) gained some victory, bargained to have the Body of Adalbert delivered to him at its weight in gold. Body, all cut in pieces, and nailed to poles, had long ignominiously withered in the wind; perhaps it was now only buried overnight for the nonce? Being dug up, or being cut down, and put into the

balance, it weighed—less than was expected. It was as light as gossamer, said pious rumor, Had such an excellent odor too;—and came for a mere nothing of gold! This was Adalbert's first miracle after death; in life he had done many hundreds of them, and has done millions since,—chiefly upon paralytic nervous-systems, and the element of pious rumor;—which any Devil's-Advocate then extant may explain if he can! Kaiser Otto, Wonder of the World, who had known St. Adalbert in life, and much honored him, "made a pilgrimage to his tomb at Gnesen in the year 1000;"—and knelt there, we may believe, with thoughts wondrous enough, great and sad enough.

There is no hope of converting Preussen, then? It will never leave off its dire worship of Satan, then? Say not, Never; that is a weak word. St. Adalbert has stamped his life upon it, in the form of a crucifix, in lasting protest against that.

Chapter III. — MARKGRAVES OF BRANDENBURG

Meanwhile our first enigmatic set of Markgraves, or Deputy-Markgraves, at Brandenburg, are likewise faring ill. Whoever these valiant steel-gray gentlemen might be (which Dryasdust does not the least know, and only makes you more uncertain the more he pretends to tell), one thing is very evident, they had no peaceable possession of the place, nor for above a hundred years, a constant one on any terms. The Wends were highly disinclined to conversion and obedience: once and again, and still again, they burst up; got temporary hold of Brandenburg, hoping to keep it; and did frightful heterodoxies there. So that to our distressed imagination those poor "Markgraves of Witekind descent," our first set in Brandenburg, become altogether shadowy, intermittent, enigmatic, painfully actual as they once were. Take one instance, omitting others; which happily proves to be the finish of that first shadowy line, and introduces us to a new set very slightly more substantial.

END OF THE FIRST SHADOWY LINE

In the year 1023, near a century after Henry the Fowler's feat, the Wends bursting up in never-imagined fury, get hold of Brandenburg again,—for the third and, one would fain

hope, the last time. The reason was, words spoken by the then Markgraf of Brandenburg, Dietrich or Theodoric, last of the Witekind Markgraves; who hearing that a Cousin of his (Markgraf or Deputy-Markgraf like himself) was about wedding his daughter to "Mistevoi King of the Wends," said too earnestly: "Don't! Will you give your daughter to a dog?" Word "dog" was used, says my authority. [See Michaelis *Chur und Furstlichen Hauser*, i. 257-259: Pauli, *Allgemeine Preussische Staats-Geschichte* (Halle, 1760-1769), i. 1-182 (the "standard work" on Prussian History; in eight watery quartos, intolerable to human nature): Kloss, *Vuterlandische Gemalde* (Berlin, 1833), i. 59-108 (a Bookseller's compilation, with some curious Excerpts):—under which lie modern Sagittarius, ancient Adam of Bremen, *Ditmarus Merseburgensis*, *Witichindus Corbeiensis*, *Arnoldus Lubecensis*, &c. &c. to all lengths and breadths.] Which threw King Mistevoi into a paroxysm, and raised the Wends. Their butchery of the German population in poor Brandenburg, especially of the Priests; their burning of the Cathedral, and of Church and State generally, may be conceived. The HARLUNGSBERG,—in our time MARIENBERG, pleasant Hill near Brandenburg, with its gardens, vines, and whitened cottages:—on the top of this Harlungsherg the Wends "set up their god Triglyph;" a three-headed Monster of which I have seen prints, beyond measure ugly. Something like three whale's-cubs combined by boiling, or a triple porpoise dead-drunk (for the dull eyes are inexpressible, as well as the amorphous shape): ugliest

and stupidest of all false gods. This these victorious Wends set up on the Harlundsberg, Year 1023; and worshipped after their sort, benighted mortals,—with joy, for a time. The Cathedral was in ashes, Priests all slain or fled, shadowy Markgraves the like; Church and State lay in ashes; and Triglyph, like a Triple Porpoise under the influence of laudanum, stood (I know not whether on his head or on his tail) aloft on the Harlundsberg, as the Supreme of this Universe, for the time being.

SECOND SHADOWY LINE

Whereupon the DITMARSCH-STADE Markgrafs (as some designate them) had to interfere, these shadowy Deputies of the Witekind breed having vanished in that manner. The Ditmarschers recovered the place; and with some fighting, did in the main at least keep Triglyph and the Wends out of it in time coming. The Wends were fiercely troublesome, and fought much; but I think they never actually got hold of Brandenburg again. They were beginning to get notions of conversion: well preached to and well beaten upon, you cannot hold out forever. Even Mistevoi at one time professed tendencies to Christianity; perhaps partly for his Bride's sake,—the dog, we may call him, in a milder sense! But he relapsed dreadfully, after that insult; and his son worse. On the other hand, Mistevoi's grandson was so zealous he went about with the Missionary Preachers, and interpreted their German into Wendish: "Oh, my poor Wends,

will you hear, then, will you understand? This solid Earth is but a shadow: Heaven forever or else Hell forever, that is the reality!" SUCH "difference between right and wrong" no Wend had heard of before: quite tremendously "important if true!"—And doubtless it impressed many. There are heavy Ditmarsch strokes for the unimpressible. By degrees all got converted, though many were killed first; and, one way or other, the Wends are preparing to efface themselves as a distinct people.

This STADE-AND-DITMARSCH family (of English or Saxon breed, if that is an advantage) seem generally to have furnished the SALZWEDEL Office as well, of which Brandenburg was an offshoot, done by deputy, usually also of their kin. They lasted in Brandenburg rather more than a hundred years;—with little or no Book-History that is good to read; their History inarticulate rather, and stamped beneficently on the face of things. Otto is a common name among them. One of their sisters, too, Adelheid (Adelaide, NOBLENESSE) had a strange adventure with "Ludwig the Springer:" romantic mythic man, famous in the German world, over whom my readers and I must not pause at this time.

In Salzwedel, in Ditmarsch, or wherever stationed, they had a toilsome fighting life: sore difficulties with their DITMARSCHERS too, with the plundering Danish populations; Markgraf after Markgraf getting killed in the business. "ERSCHLAGEN, slain fighting with the Heathen," say the old Books, and pass on to another. Of all which there is now silence

forever. So many years men fought and planned and struggled there, all forgotten now except by the gods; and silently gave away their life, before those countries could become fencible and habitable! Nay, my friend, it is our lot too: and if we would win honor in this Universe, the rumor of Histories and Morning Newspapers,—which have to become wholly zero, one day, and fall dumb as stones, and which were not perhaps very wise even while speaking,—will help us little!—

SUBSTANTIAL MARKGRAVES: GLIMPSE OF THE CONTEMPORARY KAISERS

The Ditmarsch-Stade kindred, much slain in battle with the Heathen, and otherwise beaten upon, died out, about the year 1130 (earlier perhaps, perhaps later, for all is shadowy still); and were succeeded in the Salzwedel part of their function by a kindred called "of Ascanien and Ballenstadt;" the ASCANIER or ANALT Markgraves; whose History, and that of Brandenburg, becomes henceforth articulate to us; a History not doubtful or shadowy any longer; but ascertainable, if reckoned worth ascertaining. Who succeeded in Ditmarsch, let us by no means inquire. The Empire itself was in some disorder at this time, more abstruse of aspect than usual; and these Northern Markgrafs, already become important people, and deep in general politics, had their own share in the confusion

that was going.

It was about this same time that a second line of Kaisers had died out: the FRANKISH or SALIC line, who had succeeded to the SAXON, of Henry the Fowler's blood. For the Empire too, though elective, had always a tendency to become hereditary, and go in lines: if the last Kaiser left a son not unfit, who so likely as the son? But he needed to be fit, otherwise it would not answer,—otherwise it might be worse for him! There were great labors in the Empire too, as well as on the Slavie frontier of it: brave men fighting against anarchy (actually set in pitched fight against it, and not always strong enough),—toiling sore, according to their faculty, to pull the innumerable crooked things straight. Some agreed well with the Pope,—as Henry II., who founded Bamberg Bishopric, and much else of the like; [Kohler, pp. 102-104. See, for instance, *Description de la Table d'Autel en or fin, donnee a la Cathedrale de Bale, par l'Empereur Henri II. en 1019* (Porentruy, 1838).] "a sore saint for the crown," as was said of David I., his Scotch congener, by a descendant. Others disagreed very much indeed;—Henry IV.'s scene at Canossa, with Pope Hildebrand and the pious Countess (year 1077, Kaiser of the Holy Roman Empire waiting, three days, in the snow, to kiss the foot of excommunicative Hildebrand), has impressed itself on all memories! Poor Henry rallied out of that abasement, and dealt a stroke or two on Hildebrand; but fell still lower before long, his very Son going against him; and came almost to actual want of bread, had not the Bishop of Liege been good to him.

Nay, after death, he lay four years waiting vainly even for burial,—but indeed cared little about that.

Certainly this Son of his, Kaiser Henry V., does not shine in filial piety: but probably the poor lad himself was hard bested. He also came to die, A.D. 1125, still little over forty, and was the last of the Frankish Kaisers. He "left the REICHS-INSIGNIEN [Crown, Sceptre and Coronation gear] to his Widow and young Friedrich of Hohenstauffen," a sister's son of his,—hoping the said Friedrich might, partly by that help, follow as Kaiser. Which Friedrich could not do; being wheedled, both the Widow and he, out of their insignia, under false pretences, and otherwise left in the lurch. Not Friedrich, but one Lothar, a stirring man who had grown potent in the Saxon countries, was elected Kaiser. In the end, after waiting till Lothar was done, Friedrich's race did succeed, and with brilliancy,—Kaiser Barbarossa being that same Friedrich's son. In regard to which dim complicacies, take this Excerpt from the imbroglio of Manuscripts, before they go into the fire:—

"By no means to be forgotten that the Widow we here speak of, Kaiser Henry V.'s Widow, who brought no heir to Henry V., was our English Henry Beauclerc's daughter,—granddaughter therefore of William Conqueror,—the same who, having (in 1127, the second year of her widowhood) married Godefroï Count of Anjou, produced our Henry II. and our Plantagenets; and thereby, through her victorious Controversies with King Stephen (that noble peer whose breeches stood him so cheap),

became very celebrated as 'the Empress Maud,' in our old History-Books. Mathildis, Dowager of Kaiser Henry V., to whom he gave his Reichs-Insignia at dying: she is the 'Empress Maud' of English Books; and relates herself in this manner to the Hohenstauffen Dynasty, and intricate German vicissitudes. Be thankful for any hook whatever on which to hang half an acre of thrums in fixed position, out of your way; the smallest flint-spark, in a world all black and unrememberable, will be welcome."—

And so we return to Brandenburg and the "ASCANIEN and BALLENSTADT" series of Markgraves.

Chapter IV. — ALBERT THE BEAR

This Ascanien, happily, has nothing to do with Brute of Troy or the pious AENEAS's son; it is simply the name of a most ancient Castle (etymology unknown to me, ruins still dimly traceable) on the north slope of the Hartz Mountains; short way from Aschersleben,—the Castle and Town of Aschersleben are, so to speak, a second edition of Ascanien. Ballenstadt is still older; Ballenstadt was of age in Charlemagne's time; and is still a respectable little Town in that upland range of country. The kindred, called GRAFS and ultimately HERZOGS (Dukes) of "Ascanien and Ballenstadt," are very famous in old German History, especially down from this date. Some reckon that they had intermittently been Markgrafs, in their region, long before this; which is conceivable enough: at all events it is very plain they did now attain the Office in SALZWEDEL (straightway shifting it to Brandenburg); and held it continuously, it and much else that lay adjacent, for centuries, in a highly conspicuous manner.

In Brandenburg they lasted for about two hundred years; in their Saxon dignities, the younger branch of them did not die out (and give place to the Wettins that now are) for five hundred. Nay they have still their representatives on the Earth: Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau, celebrated "Old Dessauer," come of the junior branches, is lineal head of the kin in Friedrich Wilhelm's time (while our little Fritzchen lies asleep in his cradle at Berlin); and

a certain Prince of Anhalt-Zerbst, Colonel in the Prussian Army, authentic PRINCE, but with purse much shorter than pedigree, will have a Daughter by and by, who will go to Russia, and become almost too conspicuous, as Catharine II., there!—

"Brandenburg now as afterwards," says one of my old Papers, "was officially reckoned SAXON; part of the big Duchy of Saxony; where certain famed BILLUNGS, lineage of an old 'Count Billung' (connected or not with BILLINGS-gate in our country, I do not know) had long borne sway. Of which big old Billungs I will say nothing at all;—this only, that they died out; and a certain Albert, 'Count of Ascanien and Ballenstadt' (say, of ANHALT, in modern terms), whose mother was one of their daughters, came in for the northern part of their inheritance. He made a clutch at the Southern too, but did not long retain that. Being a man very swift and very sharp, at once nimble and strong, in the huge scramble that there then was,—Uncle Billung dead without heirs, a SALIC line of emperors going or gone out, and a HOHENSTAUFFEN not yet come in,—he made a rich game of it for himself; the rather as Lothar, the intermediate Kaiser, was his cousin, and there were other good cards which he played well.

"This is he they call 'Albert the Bear '*Albrecht der Bar*;' first of the ASCANIEN Markgraves of Brandenburg;—first wholly definite MARKGRAF OF BRANDENBURG that there is; once a very shining figure in the world, though now fallen dim enough again. It is evident he had a quick eye, as well as a strong hand; and could pick what way was straightest among crooked things.

He got the Northern part of what is still called Saxony, and kept it in his family; got the Brandenburg Countries withal, got the Lausitz; was the shining figure and great man of the North in his day. The Markgrafdom of SALZWEDEL (which soon became of BRANDENBURG) he very naturally acquired (A.D. 1142 or earlier); very naturally, considering what Saxon and other honors and possessions he had already got hold of."—

We can only say, it was the luckiest of events for Brandenburg, and the beginning of all the better destinies it has had. A conspicuous Country ever since in the world, and which grows ever more so in our late times.

He had many wars; inextricable coil of claimings, quarrellings and agreeings: fought much,—fought in Italy, too, "against the Pagans" (Saracens, that is). Cousin to one Kaiser, the Lothar above named; then a chief stay of the Hohenstauffen, of the two Hohenstauffens who followed: a restless, much-managing, wide-warring man. He stood true by the great Barbarossa, second of the Hohenstauffen, greatest of all the Kaisers; which was a luck for him, and perhaps a merit. He kept well with three Kaisers in his time. Had great quarrels with "Henry the Lion" about that "Billung" Saxon Heritage; Henry carrying off the better part of it from Albert. Except that same Henry, head of the Guelphs or Welfs, who had not Albert's talent, though wider lands than Albert, there was no German prince so important in that time.

He transferred the Markgrafdom to BRANDENBURG, probably as more central in his wide lands; SALZWEDEL is

henceforth the led Markgrafdom or MARCK, and soon falls out of notice in the world. Salzwedel is called henceforth ever since the "Old Marck (*Alte Marck, Altmarck*);" the Brandenburg countries getting the name of "New Marck." Modern NEUMARK, modern "Middle-Marck" (in which stands Brandenburg itself in our time), "UCKER-Marck" (OUTSIDE Marck,—word UCKER is still seen in UKRAINE, for instance): these are posterior Divisions, fallen upon as Brandenburg (under Albert chiefly) enlarged itself, and needed new Official parcellings into departments.

Under Albert the Markgrafdom had risen to be an ELECTORATE withal. The Markgraf of Brandenburg was now furthermore the KURFURST of Brandenburg; officially "Arch-treasurer of the Holy Roman Empire;" and one of the Seven who have a right (which became about this time an exclusive one for those Seven) to choose, to KIEREN the Romish Kaiser; and who are therefore called KUR Princes, KURFURSTE or Electors, as the highest dignity except the Kaiser's own. In reference to which abstruse matter, likely to concern us somewhat, will the uninstructed English reader consent to the following Excerpt, slightly elucidatory of KURFURSTS and their function?

"FURST (Prince) I suppose is equivalent originally to our noun of number, First. The old verb KIEREN (participle ERKOREN still in use, not to mention 'Val-KYR' and other instances) is essentially the same word as our CHOOSE, being written KIESEN as well as KIEREN. Nay, say the etymologists,

it is also written KUSSEN (to KISS,—to CHOOSE with such emphasis!), and is not likely to fall obsolete in that form.—The other Six Electoral Dignitaries who grew to Eight by degrees, and may be worth noting once by the readers of this Book; are:—

"1. Three Ecclesiastical, MAINZ, COLN, TRIER (Mentz, Cologne, Treves), Archbishops all, with sovereignty and territory more or less considerable;—who used to be elected as Popes are, theoretically by their respective Chapters and the Heavenly Inspirations, but practically by the intrigues and pressures of the neighboring Potentates, especially France and Austria.

"2. Three Secular, SACHSEN, PFALZ, BOHMEN (Saxony, Palatinate, Bohemia); of which the last, BOHMEN, since it fell from being a Kingdom in itself, to being a Province of Austria, is not very vocal in the Diets. These Six, with Brandenburg, are the Seven Kurfursts in old time; SEPTEMVIRS of the Country, so to speak.

"But now PFALZ, in the Thirty-Years War (under our Prince Rupert's Father, whom the Germans call the 'Winter-King'), got abrogated, put to the ban, so far as an indignant Kaiser could; and the vote and KUR of Pfalz was given to his Cousin of BAIERN (Bavaria),—so far as an indignant Kaiser could. However, at the Peace of Westphalia (1648) it was found incompetent to any Kaiser to abrogate PFULZ or the like of Pfalz, a Kurfurst of the Empire. So, after jargon inconceivable, it was settled, That PFALZ must be reinstated, though with territories much clipped, and at the bottom of the list, not the top as formerly; and that

BAIERN, who could not stand to be balked after twenty years' possession, must be made EIGHTH Elector. The NINTH, we saw (Year 1692), was Gentleman Ernst of HANOVER. There never was any Tenth; and the Holy ROMISCHE REICH, which was a grand object once, but had gone about in a superannuated and plainly crazy state for some centuries back, was at last put out of pain, by Napoleon, '6th August, 1806,' and allowed to cease from this world." [Ms. *penes me.*]

None of Albert's wars are so comfortable to reflect on as those he had with the anarchic Wends; whom he now fairly beat to powder, and either swept away, or else damped down into Christianity and keeping of the peace. Swept them away otherwise; "peopling their lands extensively with Colonists from Holland, whom an inroad of the sea had rendered homeless there." Which surely was a useful exchange. Nothing better is known to me of Albert the Bear than this his introducing large numbers of Dutch Netherlanders into those countries; men thrown out of work, who already knew how to deal with bog and sand, by mixing and delving, and who first taught Brandenburg what greenness and cow-pasture was. The Wends, in presence of such things, could not but consent more and more to efface themselves,—either to become German, and grow milk and cheese in the Dutch manner, or to disappear from the world.

The Wendish Princes had a taste for German wives; in which just taste the Albert genealogy was extremely willing to indulge them. Affinities produce inheritances; by proper

marriage-contracts you can settle on what side the most contingent inheritance shall at length fall. Dim but pretty certain lies a time coming when the Wendish Princes also shall have effaced themselves; and all shall be German-Brandenburgish, not Wendish any more.—The actual Inhabitants of Brandenburg, therefore, are either come of Dutch Bog-farmers, or are simple Lower SAXONS ("Anglo-Saxon," if you like that better), PLATT-TEUTSCH of the common type; an unexceptionable breed of people. Streaks of Wendish population, extruded gradually into the remoter quagmires, and more inaccessible, less valuable sedgy moors and sea-strands, are scattered about; Mecklenburg, which still subsists separately after a sort, is reckoned peculiarly Wendish. In Mecklenburg, Pommern, Pommerellen (Little Pomerania), are still to be seen physiognomies of a Wendish or Vandalic type (more of cheek than there ought to be, and less of brow; otherwise good enough physiognomies of their kind): but the general mass, tempered with such admixtures, is of the Platt-Deutsch, Saxon or even English character we are familiar with here at home. A patient stout people; meaning considerable things, and very incapable of speaking what it means.

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