

SAXONY

(DRESDEN)

DRESDEN

FO 68/153: Joseph Hume Burnley to Earl Granville, No 4, Dresden, 12 January 1871

[Received 14 January. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; G[ranville]]

Circulation of an absurd report on differences between Crown Prince of Saxony and King of Prussia

A most absurd report has been current in Dresden to the effect that grave discussions have arisen between the Crown Prince of Saxony¹ and the King of Prussia owing to the way in which the Saxon troops have been exposed and the want of confidence reposed in them; that the Crown Prince had thrown his sword at the feet of the King and that the Prince's father had gone secretly to Versailles to intervene for his son and finally that there was no reception at Court on New Year's day and that His Majesty had not been seen for some days. The whole story was too ridiculous to be true and I should hesitate to write to Your Lordship on the subject had not the "Dresdener Journal" found it necessary to contradict it officially in the article herewith inclosed.²

His Majesty, it is true, had no official reception on New Year's day, but received the salutations of the Civic Bodies and I had the honor, along with the rest of the Diplomatic Body, of dining at the Palace a few days ago, when the King took occasion to mention the foolish tale, regretting that people could be found to credit it.

Had such an occurrence taken place, His Royal Highness, like any other officer of the Army, would have been at once court martialled for disobedience.

¹Albert.

²Enclosure: undated clipping from *Dresdener Journal*.

**FO 68/153: Joseph Hume Burnley to Earl Granville,
No 7, Dresden, 16 January 1871**

[Received 18 January. 'Denial (if true) might be sent to all the royal representatives in Germany'; G[ranville]; Treasury, 19 January]

Times report that artillery batteries from England have landed in France

D^r Russell³ in his correspondence from Versailles in the "Times" of the 14th Instant states "Reports have reached Versailles that batteries of artillery complete in all respects and horsed and harnessed have been landed in France from England, I do not know if it be true or not, but the intelligence has been received and has caused much bitterness."

I need hardly say that what affects the feelings of the Germans at Versailles affects equally the feelings of those who are not there, and none more so than the Dresden inhabitants who catch up the impetus given by the German rulers and ply the English representative with searching questions to which he is not always competent to give a satisfactory answer.

The information which Your Lordship is good enough to give me from time to time is of the greatest service and enables me to make head against all such reports where they can be authoritatively denied or where it can be shewn that such acts are permissible according to the law of Nations.

**FO 68/153: Joseph Hume Burnley to Earl Granville,
No 10, Dresden, 31 January 1871**

[Received 6 February. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; G[ranville]]

Public apathy towards King of Prussia becoming German Emperor; little excitement about capitulation of Paris; arrest of August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht

If addresses from Towns and Councils are any proof of the loyalty of a nation, nothing can be more loyal than the attitude of the Saxons towards the King of Prussia on his assuming the Imperial Title.⁴

If I am asked, however, whether the masses themselves and society in general evince much interest, I am constrained to say that I fail to perceive it. The same may be said with regard to the very important event of the capitulation of Paris.⁵ Beyond a display of flags from the

³William Howard Russell.

⁴King Wilhelm I was proclaimed German Emperor in Versailles on 18 January 1871.

⁵Paris formally surrendered on 28 January 1871.

Public Buildings and Church Towers, there was very little genuine enthusiasm; certainly not to be compared to the manifestation on the fall of Sedan.⁶

The fact is that enthusiasm was beginning to cool down and that, although there was a certain exultation at the German successes, the feeling predominated that enough had been done and that peace would be very grateful to the soldiers and their families; at the same time the fear that peace might not ensue even after the capitulation of Paris, tended no doubt to check the outburst one would naturally have expected to see.

As I have often had occasion to remark, the feeling for the Prussians as the governing Body has never been very marked although nothing could be brought against the Authorities in Saxony, whether Civic Bodies or the Cabinet. All have been very forward in shewing a loyalty of discipline when there was a question of an Address.

It will therefore require a good deal of tact on the part of the new German Emperor to weld the whole harmoniously together and to prevent political parties cropping up and discussing the question in an unpleasant way when the war is over and people have time to think of something else.

Social Democracy, although existing here as every-where, is too firmly kept under by the Government for it ever to become dangerous as long as Police and Military combine to be what they are, very uncompromising when repressive measures have to be carried out. The start attempted by the Brunswick Democrats⁷ found a certain echo in Saxony and a meeting on the subject was proposed at Zwickaũ but an immediate stop was put to it by the Government and nothing more was heard of the meeting or the Democrats.

The arrest of the two Saxon Deputies to the Berlin Diet, Mess^{rs} Bebel and Liebknecht social Democrats in politics, a short time ago at Leipzig for treasonable proceedings,⁸ is a stern proof that a German Government knows how to put down what may become a disturbing element unless firmly taken in hand and as the German workman enjoys a greater amount of well being & many more opportunities of rationally passing his time at places of amusement to which both rich

⁶Battle of Sedan of 1 September 1870 which resulted in the capture of Napoleon III and the capitulation of the French army on 2 September.

⁷Burnley is referring to the Brunswick Socialists' manifesto of 5 September 1870, which called for an honourable peace with France and the democratization of the German political system, and was against the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine.

⁸August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht were arrested on 17 December 1870 for their criticism of the war and their plea for peace without annexation.

and poor may resort in the greatest good fellowship and harmony, I do not think the labouring classes have much to complain of.

The impetus given to socialistic tendencies comes more from abroad through international societies having at their head disappointed Demagogues who try to wreak their vengeance in this way upon a Government by whom they consider themselves neglected.

If the workman were left to the natural bias of his own character, he would be a much more peaceable man and less liable to be influenced by the oratory of those leaders who hold out eutopian [*sic*] prospects which can never be realized as long as the rich and the poor exist as a distinct class.

**FO 68/153: Joseph Hume Burnley to Earl Granville,
No 43, Confidential, Dresden, 1 July 1871**

[No date, by Professor Gruner. Copy with No 36 to Home Office; G[ranville], 12 July]

Activities of International Workingmen's Association in Saxony

On receipt of Your Lordship's confidential Despatch N^o 18 of the 20th Ultimo I enquired of the Head of Police⁹ whether anything was known of the doings of the International Society¹⁰ in Saxony.

He informed that he received some time ago an anonymous letter from a German in London initialed F.H.¹¹ calling his attention to a correspondence from Dresden of the 14th & 17th March in the columns of the "International" the French organ of the Society published in London.

These articles were shewn to me and appear to be such as a newspaper correspondent would write as to the reception given to the Crown Prince of Saxony and his Brother on their return to the Capital.¹²

The writer indulged in a great deal of scurrilous falsehood relative to persons high in office here and made equally false statements as to the treatment of the French prisoners.

The person who wrote these articles is conjectured by the Police to be a Frenchman of the name Hassel a professor of languages at the Polytechnic School.

⁹Karl August Schwauß.

¹⁰International Workingmen's Association, founded in London on 28 September 1864.

¹¹Name not traceable.

¹²The princes Albert and Georg returned to Dresden for a brief visit on 12 March 1871.

Whatever organization they may possess, and at present but little is known beyond what I have just mentioned, would emanate along with the funds at their disposal from the Central Committee in London, Paris and Berlin.

At the same time, if Your Lordship's attention has not been already called to it, it may be proper to mention that in the "Journal des Debats" of the 22nd June an article appeared headed "Adresse de Conseil General de l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs" in which the names of all the corresponding members are given with an exposé of their principles.

I have no doubt that the meetings of the German workmen, such as that at Glauchau reported to Your Lordship in my Despatch N^o 36 of the 9th June last,¹³ all tend towards the same end, but as a society to be effectual must be organized by the same general rules, we must look for them where the chiefs of the Society come together and where the motive Power exists and such appears to be London.

When Bebel was accused of high treason by the Berlin Courts¹⁴ there were found among his Papers very strict disciplinary regulations emanating from the London Committee with distinct directions not to move without orders from London, from whence also the money was to come.

Should I hear anything further I will report to Your Lordship at once.

FO 68/153: Joseph Hume Burnley to Earl Granville, No 45, Dresden, 7 July 1871

[Received 9 July by Berlin. X; G[ranville]; 'What are the Austrian & American Salaries?'; 'See Minute Annexed – See paper precedent to commissions each year'; Chief Clerk answered, 18 July]

Expenses incurred for illuminating Burnley's residence during the Siegesfeier

With reference to Your Lordship's Despatch N^o 20 of the 26th Ultimo, I beg to explain that the sum of th[aler] 30 extra for illuminating was incurred for two Gas Stars on my Balcony.¹⁵

¹³First German Weavers' Congress (*Webertag*) on 28–30 May 1871.

¹⁴Bebel was arrested on 17 December 1870 and held on remand until 28 March 1871. The trial at Leipzig – not Berlin – lasted from 11 to 26 March 1872, when Bebel and Liebknecht were sentenced to two years' imprisonment.

¹⁵The Dresden celebrations of victory over the French were held on 5 March 1871.

As every house in my vicinity was a blaze of light and the Royal Cortège passed immediately before my windows, it would never have done for my residence to have been exceptionally dark as I should infallibly have heard of it next day in the Public Prints, and it appeared to me that if I illuminated at all, it would be better to do it well.

I could not hire the stars and had to buy them, but as they will remain the property of the Government, they can be resold for what they will fetch and the sum placed to the credit of Her Majesty's Government.

I am at a loss to know how Sir Charles Murray expended only £8.9.4 in 1865.¹⁶ Either the occasion did not demand much display or he was content to charge only this sum and pay the balance out of his own pocket which on his large salary he could afford to do.

Your Lordship will permit me to observe that I am living at great personal expense, out of private sources, for the credit of the position I hold. With a floating population of between 6 and 700 English who manage to bring me letters of introduction from private friends, besides those I get officially presented to me through the Foreign Office, I am put to great social obligation, so that I am compelled to get as much as I can repaid to me in order not to find myself some day in the position of a bankrupt representative.

Without a private fortune no man could live here on the official salary and it would be much more charitable to abolish the Post altogether than to condemn a man to live in a style not becoming the representative of a rich country like that of England.

**FO 68/153: Joseph Hume Burnley to Earl Granville,
No 57, Dresden, 6 November 1871**

[Received 9 November. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate / Home Office]

Chemnitz strike

Since my Despatch N^o 56 of the 1st Instant was written, there has been no new phase in the Chemnitz strike.¹⁷ The operatives have up to the present behaved in an orderly way and in some cases responded to the call of the owners to resume work under a strict guarantee that they will not allow them to be molested by the dissentients. In one

¹⁶On the occasion of the *Deutsche Sängerbundfest* in July 1865.

¹⁷The strike began on 28 October 1871. It was the first major industrial action of the empire and, amongst other things, called for a ten-hour day.

factory about $\frac{3}{5}$ ° of the Hands have returned and in one or two others the Half. At the same time as I had the honor to state in my abovementioned Despatch the law will be vigorously applied should it be found necessary to quell any thing like disturbance or intimidation, and a first step has been taken in the direction by the Town Council of Chemnitz warning the workman that according to § 153 of the “Gewerbeordnung”¹⁸ or Trade Law such illegal acts will be subjected to a punishment of 3 months imprisonment, if not to a higher penalty in conformity with the criminal code of Germany.

I beg to inclose a statement emanating from the principal Chemnitz manufacturers with a view of setting before the Public what they had proposed of their own accord to do when the strike took them by surprize.¹⁹

The general belief here is that foreign elements are at work to seduce the workman from his good intentions and that supplies are sent by the Central Committee in London²⁰ where local funds are not forthcoming.

The principal organ of the Social Democratic Party here is the “Volkstbote” edited by a certain D^r Walster²¹ and written in the usual rabid style of such prints where as much odium as possible is thrown upon the manufacturer, who is generally held up as a tyrant from whom no good can be expected.

Such prints do an immense amount of harm and tend to accustom the workman to a chain of ideas which are in the main unjust.

The manufacturer cannot go beyond a certain point where his work becomes unprofitable to him, but this the workman continually poisoned by doctrines subversive of all order either cannot or will not understand.

In this way a vast social revolution is gradually gaining ground which must end in lamentable conflicts, unless the lower orders are emancipated from the leading strings of their present rulers and taught to listen to the advice of others better qualified by position and education to teach them.

¹⁸ *Gewerbeordnung* of 21 June 1869.

¹⁹ Enclosure: Chemnitz manufacturers' manifesto (translation).

²⁰ Central council of the International Workingmen's Association. See n. 10 in this section.

²¹ August Otto-Walster.

**FO 68/153: Joseph Hume Burnley to Earl Granville,
No 59, Dresden, 20 November 1871**

[Received 22 November. For: Gladstone / Home Office / Circulate; 'Approved by Lord Granville', T.F.W. [Thomas Frederick Wetherell], 22 July]

Termination of Chemnitz strike

With reference to my Despatches N^{os} 56 and 57 of the 1st and 6th Instants I have the honor to state, on the authority of the Minister of the Interior²², that the Chemnitz strike is considered to be at end. Of the 6000 men who struck work all have returned with a few exceptions to the various factories where they were employed on the terms of their employers.

Notwithstanding therefore the delusive promises held out by the Social Democratic Papers of help from abroad, the Saxon workman has had the good sense to consult his own interest in accepting the employment at hand rather than wait for support against impending starvation.

The whole question however can hardly be considered as settled by this isolated failure. The hopes of the Social Democratic Party are naturally centered on England and everything that tends to encourage them is eagerly commented on. Such was the case with the late speech of Sir Charles Dilke.²³

It can never be too widely known that the moral influence of England is very great abroad and may be the means of doing great good or immense evil.

**FO 68/155: Joseph Hume Burnley to Earl Granville,
No 2, Dresden, 31 January 1872**

[Received 5 February by Berlin. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate]

Friesen's speech in second chamber on distribution of French war indemnity

I have the honor to inclose in translation an interesting speech of Baron Friesen's relative to the distribution of the French War Indemnity in answer to a question of one of the Deputies²⁴ of the 2nd Chamber

²²Hermann von Nostitz-Wallwitz. For the Chemnitz strike, see preceding dispatch.

²³Burnley is probably referring to Charles Dilke's speech on the cost of the court and the British monarchy in Newcastle upon Tyne on 6 November 1871.

²⁴Interpellation by August Walter on 15 January 1872. For the French war indemnity, see n. 107 in Berlin section. Enclosure: translation of Friesen's speech of 15 January 1872.

why South Germany had already received a portion of her share and Saxony as yet nothing.

Baron Friesen, as Your Lordship will perceive, places in a clear light the position of the States forming the North German Confederation and takes occasion to mention the benefit arising to Saxony from certain financial arrangements²⁵ which did not exist before.

On this as on every occasion where asperities have to be softened down and sensitiveness put aside, I have never found Baron Friesen or any other member of the Government falter in their desire to place matters in a proper light.

In a complex machinery like that of the German Empire when ancient Landmarks come to be removed and old associations obliterated, questions of a more or less delicate nature are certain to arise, but Saxony will assuredly never lead the van in obstructing the march of the present order of things.

FO 68/155: Joseph Hume Burnley to Earl Granville, No 6, Dresden, 19 March 1872

[Received 25 March by Berlin. For: Gladstone / Circulate; G[ranville]]

No desire to hand legislation on civil law to the empire; remarks on composition of first and second chambers

In my Despatch N^o 5 of the 6th Instant I informed Your Lordship of the result of the debate in the 2nd Chamber on the Committee's Report on Foreign Affairs, and the competency of the Imperial Parliament on matters affecting legislation in the separate States of the Empire.

The same subject came up for discussion in the 1st Chamber with results diametrically opposite inasmuch as the resolution:

“That the Chamber expects that the Government through the Saxon federal Commissioners will vote in favor of a general codification of Civil Law” was thrown out almost unanimously only 4 Members voting in favor of it.²⁶

The report of this section of the House states that they see no reason for handing over the whole civil law or “Privatrecht” to the Empire for the simple reason that it was only a few years ago that

²⁵In his speech Friesen referred to the mutual decision of the Federal Council and the *Reichstag* to transfer 17,350,000 thalers to the imperial exchequer. This was intended to relieve the *Länder* of financial burdens which were the result of respites which they had granted to tax payers.

²⁶Sitting of 15 March 1872; the second chamber adopted the resolution on 23 February 1872.

a most satisfactory civil code was framed for Saxony²⁷ answering all the purposes of sound legislation, – that the relations of the several states to one another were of so manifold a nature that it was doubtful whether any advantage would arise by having one and the same law for all. That sufficient had been done already where a similarity of interests permitted it, by the passage of laws with reference to Contracts, Commerce and Bills of Exchange²⁸ and that a law for the regulation of civil procedure would shortly be laid before the Berlin Parliament.

Baron Friesen had already in the 2nd Chamber stated that any resolution approved of by both Houses would meet with the serious attention it deserved, but that he was against tying the hands of the Government in matters in which as loyal Saxons they must necessarily be as able to judge as the Chambers themselves. That it was questionable, whether, before a civil code was framed for all Germany, the right should be considered to the Empire of passing special laws on all occasions creating confusion and uncertainty in the separate States which might be productive of serious results.

The main difference between the two Chambers lies in the class of men which compose them. In the second Chamber the trading and working classes are more generally represented. In the 1st Chamber the larger landed proprietors and men who by their birth and social position stand somewhat higher in the scale, and whose interests and inclinations are so to speak more dynastic, more purely Saxon.

They all deplore more or less the restricted sphere of the separate states and very naturally try to stem the tide which threatens to overwhelm their separate existence and with it the crown itself. At the rapid rate at which affairs are moving the monarch they say becomes a mere shadow and his action nil. A little wholesome opposition they urge can do no harm and may tend to better their position

By the present vote the Government will be left free to act as they think best and with a statesman of Baron Friesen's capacity it is well that it should be so.

No discussion ensued in the estimates for the Foreign Legations which were allowed as put down by the Government.

²⁷ *Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch für das Königreich Sachsen* (1863).

²⁸ The respective laws date back to 1861 (*Allgemeines Deutsches Handelsgesetzbuch*) and 1869 (*Allgemeine Deutsche Wechselordnung*). The juridical law which regulated civil procedure was passed in 1877.

**FO 68/157: George Strachey to Earl Granville No 3,
28 November 1873**

[Received 8 December by Berlin. For: The Queen / Gladstone; Berlin – F.S.; G[ranville]]

Parliamentary proceedings concerning proposed German Civil Code

The “Mémorial Diplomatique” and Vienna “Neue Freie Presse”, have lately published very erroneous comments on the attitude taken by the Saxon Cabinet and Chambers with reference to the proposed Amendment of the German Constitution, which in view of the preparation of a general Civil Code, would withdraw from the single states, and confer on the Reich, the competency to legislate on the reserved part of the Law of Private Rights.²⁹ The Vienna journal wrote: – “In Saxony the battle against the Independence of the Empire goes merrily on.”³⁰

Such Prussian [*sic*] interpretations will be appreciated at their value when it is remembered that the Upper Chamber of this Kingdom was some time since moved by Royal Message³¹ to communicate its’ wishes on the said Amendment, whose adoption would entail a loss of local legislative authority, and that the House pronounced for the project that is, in favor not of Saxon but of German objects: also, that last year (– earlier, therefore, than the vote at Stuttgart –)³² the Landtag passed a resolution in the same sense.³³ The Landtag having now, in its’ turn, been formally consulted on the Amendment, has adhered to its’ former vote. From the general readiness to surrender important Saxon rights, only 5 Particularists dissented.

In thus for the first time consulting the Legislature with respect to instructions eventually to be given to the Saxon Commissioners in the Bundesrath, the Cabinet was saving its Constitutional responsibility. Whether Saxon Sovereignty should be kept unimpaired, or stripped of an important prerogative, was a question on which the Ministry would naturally like to feel the public pulse, instead, as on more commonplace occasions, of sending orders to Berlin in their own unaided initiative. Without committing themselves to a general

²⁹The plan to transfer civil law legislation to the German Empire was approved by the *Reichstag* in April 1873 and referred to the Federal Council where it was finally approved on 12 December. The imperial constitution was amended accordingly on 20 December 1873.

³⁰*Neue Freie Presse*, 9 November 1873.

³¹Royal decree of 16 October 1873, by which the Saxon government declared its intention of supporting the proposed constitutional amendment in the Federal Council; the Saxon chambers approved this course of action on 5 and 20 November 1873.

³²Address of the chamber of deputies to the Württemberg government, 30 January 1873.

³³Resolution of 23 February 1872.

theory of responsibility, or defining the limits within which they held themselves bound, in such cases, to consult the Chambers – or explaining whether their present application to the Legislature was more than consultative – Baron von Friesen and his colleagues merely asked for a Parliamentary vote, which was given as described.

The incident, therefore, was domestic, and Constitutional, not German, or Political. Seen from the local point of view it by no means indicates an outbreak of Saxon “Particularismus”, but rather the depth of that German (as distinguished from Prussian) feeling, whose strength strikes even such a stranger to the Kingdom as myself. It is worthy of note that the language of Baron von Friesen is considered to have been far more German than on some previous occasions.

FO 68/158: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 6, Dresden, 21 March 1874

[Received 24 March by post. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate; D[erby]]

Remarks on Saxon reactions to the Imperial Press Law

The Kingdom which possesses the chief seat of continental learning,³⁴ and claims, with the neighbouring Thuringian states, to be the historical centre of German civilization, might have been expected to make some sign of disapproval of the Imperial Press Law.³⁵

An isolated demonstration has at length been made by the Author's Society of Leipzig, which has petitioned the Reichstag against the Bill.³⁶ Their address complains that it is proposed to gag the journalistic thinkers of the great modern Culture-State with a severity worthy of the days of parental Government: that it is the proper function of the Reich to protect the separate countries, by confirming and widening their rights and liberties, instead of chaining them in Prussian fetters: that the relative freedom of speech always allowed in Saxony and extended by legislation only four years ago,³⁷ would be generously curtailed by the extension to the Kingdom of the principles and practise of Northern coercion. Amongst specially obnoxious provisions they name, the obligatory qualification of local

³⁴University of Leipzig.

³⁵At the time of the dispatch the bill was going through its 2nd reading and discussion in the *Reichstag*; after further compromises it was passed on 25 April. The Imperial Press Law (*Reichspressegesetz*) of 7 May 1874 became effective on 1 July 1874; it introduced freedom of the press throughout the German Empire.

³⁶Petition by the *Leipziger Schriftsteller-Verein*; registered on 8 March 1874.

³⁷Saxon Press Law of 24 March 1870.

citizenship for Editors: the establishment of the astounding principle of the assumption of the complicity of Editors, and authors, on mere suspicion: the scandalous and vexatious system of police seizures, under which an aggrieved editor has no legal redress against officials who may have subjected his paper or magazine to frivolous confiscation: the grants to the Chancellor of the Russians³⁸ right of forbidding foreign reviews; the enormous severity of the punishments to be inflicted: the absence of all recognition of the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing.

I have not observed in any of the Dresden organs of the “Friends of the Empire” a single analogous condemnation of the Bill. The National Liberal journal has not disapproved it. But the “Constitutionelle”³⁹ is reputed to be a recipient of the Reptile-Fund.⁴⁰ Even the Fortschritt “Presse”⁴¹ has barely insinuated a doubt as to the propriety of a return to the epoch of the Carlsbad conferences.⁴² The Social-Democrat “Volksbote”⁴³ whose editors and contributors are perpetually going in and out of jail, does not venture to say much, but it points out that their party divides with the Centrum the honor of being the enemy for whom the projected weapons are to be forged.

I suspect that a large majority of the upper and middle class electors of Dresden would not be sorry to see the Bill restored to its original Draconian shape.⁴⁴ I am not sure that they think with their deputy Minckwitz that “even Socialists and Clericals have rights.” Against the Socialists extreme bitterness prevails because of their late display of electoral strength, of strikes, rising wages, and the concomitant increase of prices so sharply felt in this capital now. The fact is, that although, according to a phrase in today’s *Presse*, the Germans may have written on their Banner “Right and Freedom”, their interpretation of those words is very different from ours. Tolerance

³⁸Alexander Gorchakov.

³⁹*Constitutionelle Zeitung*.

⁴⁰The secret ‘reptile fund’ or ‘Guelph fund’ consisted of the confiscated assets of King Georg V of Hanover. It was administered by a Prussian commission and, amongst other things, used for influencing the Prussian and German press. The expression ‘reptile’ was originally coined by Bismarck to describe the agents of the likewise dethroned prince elector of Hesse, but the meaning was quickly deflected back onto its originator. Accordingly, journalists and press in the service of the Prussian and German governments were termed ‘reptile press’.

⁴¹*Dresdner Presse* (Progressive Party).

⁴²Carlsbad Conferences, 6–31 August 1819. On 20 September 1819 the German Federal Diet passed four laws on the basis of the Carlsbad Decrees which made censorship of the press obligatory.

⁴³*Der Dresdner Volksbote: Organ für die Interessen des gesamten Volkes*.

⁴⁴Strachey is referring to the imperial government’s original intention of including exemption clauses for the ultramontane and socialist press.

of dissident opinions is not a common German virtue, or ideal. On this head I can only say here, that no one with a tolerable knowledge of Germans, individually, and through their chief manifestations and contrivances in the various branches of culture, can be unaware of their extreme personal susceptibilities, and infirmity of temper, of their impatience, of ridicule, sarcasm, and contradiction. So constituted, they easily sympathize with systems which punish energetic criticisms of public men and measures, and make minorities mute.

FO 68/158: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 9, Dresden, 6 April 1874

[Received 13 April. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate; D[erby]]

Discussion of thorny situation in Saxony regarding publication of papal infallibility

The increasing complications of the Prussian ecclesiastical conflict give interest to the recent discussion here, in the Press and Legislature, of this question – has the Infallibility Dogma been Published in the Kingdom, or not?⁴⁵

Saxony has no Concordat to regulate the spiritual dependence of her 50,000 Catholics on the Civil power. But in virtue of a local understanding with the Government, the Apostolic Vicar does not issue Mandates, or order special prayers, intercessions, or Collections, still less promulgate Papal Bulls or Briefs, without asking the Royal permission.

This may be given in two ways. For Briefs, or other important documents, which may seem to include a political element, the Placet is the appropriate form of sanction. For Mandates &c emanating from domestic religious authority, and having a relatively Saxon character, the approval, like the application, is less formal, and is, in fact a mere matter of routine. Under this arrangement the Government do not claim to criticize or control the orders which the Prelate may propose to issue to his clergy or their flocks. But they allow no legal force, or consequences, to any act of the Vicar that contravenes the rule stated, the royal consent being the essential condition and preliminary of Publication.

In the summer of 1871 Bishop Forwerk requested leave for the so-called Fulda “Pastoral-Letter” to be read from his pulpits: also for the issue of the Placet to enable him to Publish the Infallibility Dogma. Considering that the prohibition of the Fulda letter, however

⁴⁵For the dogma of papal infallibility, see n. 11 Munich section.

distasteful its' contents might be in the ancient cradle of the Reformation, would almost amount to persecution, especially as the reading was to take place on a Papal Jubilee, the Government complied with the Vicars wish in respect to that missive.⁴⁶ At the same time they declined to allow the promulgation of the Infallibility Dogma, and refused the Placet.⁴⁷

About four months ago appeared an Article in the local Catholic journal,⁴⁸ which argued thus: although, for want of the Royal Placet, no Publication proper of the Dogma of 1870 has been made in Saxony, yet that the Dogma has been announced to the faithful in a way that Christian consciences would consider equivalent, and adequate to bind them. The writer's⁴⁹ allusion was to the Fulda Pastoral Letter, which quoted the text of the Vatican decree, and mentioned the Dogma in terms of high encomium. This authoritative statement from a semi-official Catholic source almost read like a contradiction of a previous assertion by the Minister of Public Instruction⁵⁰ that the Dogma had not been published in Saxony. An overzealous member⁵¹ of the lower Chamber, acting on his own initiative, brought the matter before the House. The general feeling was, that the question should not have been raised, nevertheless a Committee was appointed to consider the whole subject, on whose Report the first Chamber was asked to join in a request to the Government to declare finally that from the reading of the Fulda Letter no "Publication" of Papal Infallibility did, or could, flow.

In the first Chamber, as in the second, there was exhibited a natural dislike of New Catholicism, with an equally obvious desire that Saxony should decline to follow Prussia in the path of provocative legislation. The Vicar General, who is a member of the upper house, made a conciliatory speech,⁵² in which after expressing his entire satisfaction with the treatment of the Saxon Catholics by their Protestant rulers, he declared that the Infallibility Dogma had not been Published in the Kingdom, adding, with sufficient emphasis, that though not legally it was spiritually binding on Catholic consciences. This fresh assertion of the objectionable newspapers notion did not seem to mend matters,

⁴⁶The pastoral letter in question – on the occasion of the 25th Jubilee of Pius IX – resulted from the episcopal conference at Eichstätt (7–9 May 1871). The *placet* – requested by Forwerk on 30 May – was granted on 1 June; the pastoral letter was read out in parishes on 11 June 1871.

⁴⁷Forwerk's request of 26 April was declined on 26 June 1871.

⁴⁸*Katholisches Kirchenblatt zunächst für Sachsen*, 30 June 1873.

⁴⁹Ludwig Wahl.

⁵⁰Karl von Gerber.

⁵¹Friedrich Raimund Sachße.

⁵²Forwerk, on 7 February 1874.

but the House proceeded to pass a resolution at once wise and illogical, to the effect that the Bishop's explanation disposed of the whole affair.

The House was evidently glad to get rid of a discussion which, for reasons into which I need not enter, had extended from religious to personal questions; out of doors there neither is, nor was, any wish to see Bishop Forwerk's carriages and furniture sold by auction,⁵³ and himself dragged from his bed to keep company with Bebel and Liebknecht in a fortress.⁵⁴ The Saxons have no desire to identify themselves with Prussia's religious quarrels. The Berlin cry of 'Christianos ad leones'⁵⁵ can hardly be got up here. There may be a small minority which affects to believe that but for the May Laws and 'Pulpit-Paragraph',⁵⁶ the great German Empire would now be humbled before a new and more revengeful Canossa.⁵⁷ But the prevalent sentiment is that the Prussian legislation was provocative, that it necessarily drove the clergy into breaches of the law, and that Prince Bismarck, to whose single will these measures are ascribed, is now following, as far as modern humanity permits, the Example of Tiberius and Diocletian.

FO 68/158: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 13, Dresden, 5 May 1874

[Received 12 May by Sir George Campbell. For: The Queen / Disraeli; D[erby]]

Friesen's sympathy with Bismarck's reactionary scheme

A Reuss Fortschritt Deputy⁵⁸ having recently alleged here that Prince Bismarck entertained "the plan" of suppressing in detail at Berlin the liberties locally established in the separate states of the Empire, I asked Baron von Friesen what he thought of such a statement, adding, that with my English dread of constructive interpretations I should be disposed, in the absence of positive knowledge, to refer such a policy to instinct rather than to contrivance.

⁵³Strachey is alluding to the prosecution of Prussian bishops whose belongings were pawned and auctioned as a result of the high fines for violating the May Laws.

⁵⁴For Bebel and Liebknecht's imprisonment, see n. 14 in this section.

⁵⁵Latin: 'Christians to the lions'.

⁵⁶For the Prussian May Laws, see nn. 112 and 140 in Berlin section; for the 'pulpit paragraph' of 1871, see n. 25 in Munich section.

⁵⁷The reference to Heinrich IV's submission to the pope at Canossa in 1077 was used to connote the deference of secular power to the Catholic Church; it became proverbial after Bismarck's 'we will not go to Canossa' speech in the *Reichstag* on 14 May 1872.

⁵⁸Albert Traeger, at a meeting of the Dresden *Fortschritt* (Progressive) Party on 24 April 1874.

The Baron replied that he should agree with me in suspecting programmes, but that Prince Bismarck was just the man to form them. He continued, cautiously, but positively, – “there is a great deal of truth in what the deputy said: Bismarck has the wish supposed, but the complete execution of plans of this sort is always liable to interruption.” As Baron Friesen is likely to be well informed, his assertion may throw some light on the political future of Germany during the remainder of Prince Bismarck’s life, or rule. I do not imagine that he would much object to the displacement of authority supposed. Like most German statesmen, he has acquired a sort of varnish of constitutional morality which would prevent him, under ordinary circumstances at leasts [*sic*], from taking a direct initiative against the local Constitution which he is pledged to maintain, but he does not scruple to lay in Berlin mines which he would shrink from preparing in Dresden, feeling, no doubt that the reactionary legislation of the Bundesrath and Reichstag is covered by a divided responsibility, and its’ execution facilitated by the dispersion over the whole Empire of its unpopular effects.

FO 68/158: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 15, Dresden, 5 May 1874

[Received 16 May by Mr Hyde. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate; D[erby]]

Remarks by Minckwitz on army bill compromise; characteristics of National Liberal Party; Saxon support of German Empire despite dislike of Prussia

D^f. Minckwitz the Fortschritt⁵⁹ member for Dresden (Altstadt) has the useful habit of sending the constituency “open letters” on the proceedings in the Reichstag. His last report illustrates the abandonment by the National Liberals of the principles which they profess. He points out that in the 1st reading of the Army Bill there was an almost unanimous agreement that the 1st Paragraph was utterly inadmissible.⁶⁰ From this concurrence of unfavorable opinion the Conservative faction (now reduced to about 20 members) alone dissented, and the best judges thought that not 50 votes would finally be obtained in favour of the third renunciation of the annual Budget right called for since the foundation of the new Bund of 1866,

⁵⁹Progressive Party.

⁶⁰The 1st paragraph of the bill (1st reading on 16 February 1874) fixed the size of the army for an indefinite period and thus was inconsistent with the annual budget rights of the *Reichstag*. The revised bill was passed by the *Reichstag* on 20 April 1874; see n. 131 in Berlin section.

a renunciation this time demanded in perpetuity.⁶¹ D^r. Minckwitz remarks that in Committee the hostility to the Paragraph was not abated, and that it was rejected by 24 to 4. In the 2nd reading in Committee, however, the minority had gained 2 votes, and it became by degrees obvious that the Paragraph would probably have a majority of the house in its' favour. D^r. Minckwitz says that at last all the National Liberals were disposed to vote for the unamended Paragraph, and that the energetic resistance of the Fortschritt fraction alone encouraged the National-Liberal left to persist in demanding at least a compromise.

D^r. Minckwitz stops' [*sic*] at the practical result, but his account of the gradual collapse of National Liberal courage and patriotism suggests the solution which must inevitably have occurred had the D^eus ex machina personally appeared in the Reichstag at the appropriate moment. Looking to Prince Bismarck's prestige, to his faculty of intimidation[,] the absence of political conviction amongst the National Liberals, and the Byzantine sequacity of that servile party, as shewn in the speeche's [*sic*] and writings of men like Treitschke, Mohl, and Gneist, it may be assumed that the Chancellors presence would have silenced opposition at once.

Considered from the point of view which specially concerns me, nothing could be more groundless than the fears expressed in official quarters, and in the "Reptile-Press",⁶² lest the Reichstag should next year, or later, refuse, or reduce, the army supplies. Of the 23 members of the Saxon Contingent fully 17 could be relied on to support an annual vote of as many millions of thalers as the wants of the Empire might suggest. There can be no risk of the 17 falling into cheese-paring instincts, or of the 6 Social Democrats expanding to the dimensions of the present majority. It is obvious that from the Saxon National Liberals, with their Prussian "H^undelei" or dog's fawning – (I am using a local Parliamentary expression) – no resistance will come. The rest of the population are not enthusiastic for the Empire; they say they have got nothing but military glory, for which not even the army cares much, especially as France was not the country with which the Saxons had a debt of revenge to settle. Hatred of Prussia is abundant, dislike of the "leader of the policy" general, nevertheless the Saxon people are intelligent enough to see that the Reich is an established fact with which they must deal in a reasonable spirit, and it is nonsense to say that they could not be trusted to make the sacrifices wanted to maintain it.

⁶¹The annual budget rights were renounced by the *Reichstag* of the North German Confederation in 1867 and in 1871.

⁶²See n. 40 in this section.

The same may presumably be said of the rest of the Germans. To a people so docile, I might say so obsequious, so free from Manchester sentiments,⁶³ so much more acquiescent in restrictions on personal liberty than all the other continental nations which have any voice in their own affairs, the arguments from necessity and prevision urged in the Reichstag and Press seem to be singularly inapplicable.

As a sample of the wholesale misrepresentations tolerated in German political controversy I may mention that the Review "Im neuem Reich",⁶⁴ which is a periodical of high respectability, lately contained a careful analysis of the Army Bill question, which deliberately assures the reader that the whole dispute was about 20,000 bayonets more or less!

FO 68/158: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 21, Dresden, 17 May 1874

[Received 25 May by post to Berlin. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate; D[erby]]

Social Democratic sentiments with respect to imprisonment of three Reichstag deputies

Liebknecht, (the Social Democrat deputy to Berlin for Schneeberg Circle), was recently dismissed from Königstein, his 2 years imprisonment having expired.⁶⁵ He was allowed his liberty for a short time and then again sent to prison, on an old sentence, of 3 weeks confinement, passed for "outrage" against a municipal councillor of Zwickau,⁶⁶ whom the Socialists had qualified as "unverständlich", an adjective whose force fluctuates between injudicious and foolish. His colleague Bebel, (member for Glauchau) was discharged from the Fortress of Hubertsburg [*sic*] a few days ago. He has to return to jail for nine months, on an old condemnation for offensive expressions used against the late King of Saxony. He has received a short leave of absence between his terms of incarceration.

Your Lordship will doubtless have heard from South Germany of the arrest and conveyance to Berlin, of Most,⁶⁷ the Deputy to the

⁶³Sentiments associated with Manchester Liberalism.

⁶⁴*Im neuen Reich: Wochenschrift für das Leben des deutschen Volkes in Staat, Wissenschaft und Kunst* (established 1871 at Leipzig). The article 'Der Compromiß in der Militärfrage' was published on 17 April 1874.

⁶⁵Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel had been sentenced for treason on 26 March 1872; see n. 14 in this section.

⁶⁶Edmund Urban.

⁶⁷Johann Most was arrested in Mainz on 29 April 1874 for a speech he had given on the anniversary of the Paris Commune (18 March) to an audience of Berlin workmen. He was subsequently put on trial and sentenced to 26 months' detention.

Reichstag for Chemnitz, the Manchester of Central Germany. Like Raspail, the Saxon politician spent a considerable part of his life in prison and these arrests do not much irritate him: he says that, in his objecting to travel in the “Schub”, or batch transport of criminals, the authorities allowed him to take a separate ticket, for which, however, and the special policeman’s journey, he was charged 36 Thalers, a sum he thought high. Wahlteich [*sic*],⁶⁸ member for Mittenweida, alleges that President Forckenbeck shews gross partiality in refusing to the Social Democrats their fair opportunities for addressing the Reichstag and I have seen this charge frequently made. On Most, says his colleague, the president keeps his gag doubly and triply close, for his daily attempts to speak are utterly fruitless.

The stifled rage of the party is easily read between the lines of mild, statistical, narrative in which they record these matters, as well as the arrests of minor partisans, prohibitions and interruptions of meetings, dissolutions of Unions, and other daily acts of official interference. The protest of Herr Walter, mentioned in No. 19,⁶⁹ is the second case I have come across of anyone not a Social-Democrat questioning the wisdom or legality of the present system of coercion. Whether in politics, literature, a science, Germans practice and admire a Barbarossa like energy, in the repression and extirpation of an opposing tend [*sic*]. I hope I am in [*sic*] wrong in my belief that the Governments of Germany are going the way to intensify the disease they dread, to widen the circle of its’ contagion, and to associate with it class passions menacing not only to Government but to civilization.

FO 68/158: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 33, Dresden, 21 October 1874

[Received 26 October. X]

Systematic misrepresentation of Saxon affairs in the National Liberal press

The leading National-Liberal journals of Germany from time to time attack the Saxon Court and Government, describing Dresden as a Particularist Den, where a reactionary, half-Popish, clique, encourages the “Enemies” of the Reich, spites its’ “Friends”, and stops that Constitutional Progress which the National Liberals of the Kingdom

⁶⁸Carl Julius Vahlteich.

⁶⁹In a sitting of the second chamber of the Saxon *Landtag*, on 30 April 1874, August Walter criticized the illiberal policy of the German Empire and the National Liberals – especially in press affairs.

aspire to effect. These articles are generally reprinted from the lithographic organ⁷⁰ of the rightwing of the National Liberal party. They are often preceded or accompanied by paragraphs, or (so called) provincial letters, whose simultaneous appearance in the newspapers of a dozen different cities, falsification of facts, and untruth of local colour, betrays the agency of the Press-Bureau.

Although separately considered the articles in question like the incidents which serve them as texts seldom or never deserve notice, their publication throws considerable light on German political methods. Count Beust extended to Saxony the system, known in Prussia and elsewhere, of “Chaining” the Provincial Press, that is, bribing it by insertion of official advertisements in such papers as would agree to support the King’s Government. There are above 70 papers in this Kingdom so ‘chained’ (Vinculirt), and as Germany has nothing analogous to the country circulation of a Times, or Daily Telegraph, the politicians of the Voigtland or the Lausitz, are very much in the hands of the Government for their news and opinions. The ultra National Liberal “Tageblatt”⁷¹ was till lately the officious organ for Leipzig, where the Bürgermeister⁷² and Town Council are said to Prussianize. The Tageblatt has constantly accused the Saxon Government of treachery to the Empire and of various other offences. It has helped to disseminate the insinuations and backstairs gossip of the Reptile Bureau,⁷³ whose agent here, a discharged Post Office Clerk, Herr Badewitz, is as well known as the King or Baron von Friesen. After for months, or years, treating the Tageblatt with contempt, the Minister of the Interior,⁷⁴ – the authority directly concerned – suddenly awoke to his German instincts and ordered the Municipality and Judicial authorities of Leipzig to take some other officious organ. The Judicials obeyed: the Municipals obeyed under protest, and got up a so-called Public Meeting,⁷⁵ at which, as far as they dared, some speakers accused the Minister of hatred of the Empire, and talked of invoking the Reichsrath⁷⁶ in favor of the liberty of the Saxon Press. The flame was fanned by the National Liberal Leipzig “Allgemeine Zeitung”,⁷⁷ a paper owned and edited by D^r. Biedermann, the chief of

⁷⁰*Nationalliberale Korrespondenz*, Berlin.

⁷¹*Leipziger Tageblatt*.

⁷²Otto Koch.

⁷³Strachey is referring to the press relations section in the political department of the *Auswärtiges Amt* (Foreign Office). Its activities were funded by the so-called ‘Guelph’ or ‘reptile fund’ (see n. 40 in this section).

⁷⁴Hermann von Nostitz-Wallwitz.

⁷⁵The meeting took place on 29 June 1874.

⁷⁶*Reichstag*.

⁷⁷*Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*.

the Saxon National Liberal party, who is said to have gone to Berlin in 1866 to invite P^{cc} Bismarck to annex the Kingdom to Prussia. Soon the National Liberal Correspondenz gave the cue, and the usual chorus followed, the National Zeitung of Berlin, for instance, thundering against reactionary, separatist, Dresden, suggesting that the Reichsrath should take the Saxon Government in hand, and expressing the conviction that Saxony “must, after all be obliged to associate itself with progress of Prussia and the Empire.” This language was, as usual, repeated at all points of the Reich. It is a rule of the new German controversial style that neither in politics, theology, literature, science, or art, shall anything be heard on the other side. From their worship of authority the Germans are impatient of any teaching which is not completely dogmatical: Sir Robert Peel with “three courses open” to him would be their ideal of a quack statesman.⁷⁸ Conformably to this temper, the newspapers rarely allow discussion, or rectification of the contents of their own columns. In a case like the above the Saxon Fortschritt⁷⁹ Organs would comment, or refute, the charges brought, but their answer, though reproduced in Stuttgart, Breslau, and Cologne would only meet the eyes of their own partizans. No National Liberal journal would quote the replies, so that the final result is – “haeret lateri letalis arundo”.⁸⁰

The Prussian Press has not yet dropped this matter. Recently the word was passed that the Saxon Government had dismissed the Chambers on a certain day to prevent the discussion of the “Chain” question. While on the strength of “a Berlin correspondence” – (the usual euphemism for the letters written in Dresden by the Ex-Post-Office Clerk) – several National Liberal journals have made the following statement: ~ “Saxon Particularism, which for its’ silence, passed for converted, is beginning to raise its’ head again. As long as it keeps within the barriers marked out for it at Berlin it has nothing to fear. But if it proceeds again to the kind of excesses in which it indulged last Summer, it will soon feel the reins. That should be already understood in Dresden.”

I need hardly say that complaints of Saxon reaction are absurd. The Government of Baron von Friesen is progressive, and it receives the support of the Fortschritt party. While looking to the comprehensive Administrative Reforms⁸¹ lately made here, the word “stagnation”

⁷⁸Robert Peel, in his statements on the abolition of the Corn Laws, repeatedly referred to three possible courses of action (i.e. to keep, repeal or alter the laws).

⁷⁹Progressive Party.

⁸⁰The deadly arrow sticks in the side’: Virgil, *Aeneid*, IV, 73.

⁸¹Strachey is referring to five laws of 21 and 24 April 1873, concerning central, regional, municipal, and communal administration.

applied in Berlin to the Saxony system, might more appropriately be associated with Prussian institutions. The fact is that D^r. Biedermann and his party are anxious for the spoils of office, and they hope by working on German credulity with fables, and Saxon fears with threats, to create a feeling favorable to the appointment of a National Liberal Cabinet. The existing Administration will not be easily overturned, but until it is the National Liberals of the Empire will continue to promulgate inexact, calumnious reports of Saxon affairs.

FO 68/158: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 36, Dresden, 13 November 1874

[Received 20 November by Berlin. X]

Public indifference to Landsturm bill

It might have been supposed that the Landsturm Bill⁸² would evoke some sign of public approval or dislike in a city which has Moreau's grave at its' gates, the place where Vandamme surrendered almost on the horizon, and the field of Lützen and Bautzen within an easy distance.⁸³ No such interest has been shewn. The newspapers of course, have something to say on the subject. The National-Liberal journals, taking their usual Berlin cue, and following the speech of the Saxon deputy Koch in the Reichsrath,⁸⁴ say that the measure is perfect, and that the powers for which it asks should be conferred without discussion on an Exalted Kaiser. The 'Presse', and the wire pullers of the Fortschritt party,⁸⁵ approve the principle of a Bill which marks a return, if not to the facts, at least to the phraseology, of 1813. But their suspicion of Prussian intentions, and jealousy of irresponsible military dominion, inspire them with certain amendments. Guarantees they say ought to be exacted that the Landsturm shall not be treated as a mere 2nd ban of the Landwehr,⁸⁶ and be liable to be marched to Calais or Constantinople. The right of mustering the 'Stormers' in peace time should be carefully defined. In time of war the nomination of their officers should partly devolve on the soldiers themselves, or

⁸²The *Landsturm* bill – regulating the general obligation of military service during wartime – was introduced in the *Reichstag* on 5 November 1874 (1st reading).

⁸³Strachey is referring to the battles of Dresden (1813), Lützen (1632), and Bautzen (1813).

⁸⁴Sitting of the *Reichstag* on 5 November 1874.

⁸⁵Progressive Party.

⁸⁶On completion of their mandatory service – and after an additional two years in the reserves – all German conscripts were transferred to the *Landwehr* reserves for three or five years where they had to attend regular manoeuvres.

on the organs of district self government. Means should be found to prevent the Bill degenerating into a measure for prolonging the liabilities of old soldiers: left to themselves, the War Offices will pick out the men who have previously served, instead of going fairly and indiscriminately to the whole category liable as Landsturm.

The Social-Democrats restrict themselves to sneers: military matters are a very dangerous ground for them, or, indeed, for anyone, to tread. I do not believe that their avowed dislike of the army amounts to much. The Saxons do not strongly delight in the *gaudia certaminis*,⁸⁷ but here, as in most other parts of Germany, the obligation to serve is, on the whole, a popular institution.

FO 68/158: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 43, Dresden, 24 December 1874

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

Saxon views of Arnim affair; comments on German legal instincts

The most inveterate of generalizer would be puzzled to collect the currents of Dresden opinion on the Arnim case into a single expression.⁸⁸ Many National-Liberals had made up their minds before the trial began: since Count Arnim was a criminal in Prince Bismarck's eyes he must necessarily have committed a crime: on the Berlin Stadtgericht devolved the mere formal function of justifying this prosecution and administering punishment. In the same way many Particularlists, Conservative and Radical, were sure from the first that the right must be with the victim of the Avatar of revolution, or reaction; perhaps this was the predominating sentiment. There was also a minority of intelligent neutrals who declined to judge without facts: under the influence of the revelations of the trial most of these passed to the Reichskanzler's side.

The Germans have in perfection the exhaustive, deductive, and argumentative faculties. On the other hand they fail to separate the essential from the irrelevant, they mistake guesses for certainties, and the judicial temper they do not possess. Then, as is natural in a country where law procedure, still in great part secret, excludes the Grand Jury & follows but a limited recourse to the Petty Jury – (institutions ill compensated as public educators by the occasional intervention of the

⁸⁷Latin: 'the delights of battle'.

⁸⁸For the Arnim affair, see nn.159 and 188 in Berlin section.

Schöffen),⁸⁹ – the legal instincts of the average citizen are imperfectly developed. In the present instance, there seemed to be a general incapacity to detach the real gravamina of the case from the illustrative facts and conjectures with which the prosecution “characterized”, or “blackened”, the defendant. Then the notion of an overt act, as a test of criminal intention, or behavior, had not dawned on people’s minds, so that the interpretations and constructions of Herr Tessoroff⁹⁰ almost fell with the force of direct testimony. The old diplomatic halo is not yet dissipated here. Ambassadors are believed to be men of superior powers, knowledge, and charms; despatches to be mines of wisdom; chanceries schools of order and discipline. With such ideals Count Arnim’s correspondence and management did not tally. His political and official reputation vanished: he was pronounced to have been insubordinate and negligent.

The sentence was a surprize to every body, and was not, on the whole, well received. The Particularists had hoped for a complete acquittal. The National-Liberals were irritated at a judgment which was within a hairs’ breadth of ‘not guilty’, and absolved Count Arnim from the special imputability alleged by the indictment. The neutrals complained – they are still complaining – of the sentence, on the very grounds for which I have heard Englishmen and Americans praise it. They say that the Court was exclusively governed by legal motives, that it neglected moral probabilities and deductions, and was enslaved by technical rules of interpretation. People are so accustomed, especially in cases with a political colour, to hear the Bench adopt such oblique evidence as what Count Holstein said Herr Beckmann said Count Arnim said, and give way to subjective appreciation’s and constructions of the sort adopted by another Deputation of the Berlin Stadtgericht in the trial of deputy Most,⁹¹ that they cannot quite take in a straightforward decision of the modern English stamp. In the public offices here Particularism predominates, in the Army it is strong; but in these quarters the anti-Arnimites now find many allies. Whatever the merits of this case, the sentence, it is said, is bad, as setting a premium on insubordination: – in other words, let discipline be maintained, and justice perish.

Diplomatists are not always well placed for studying public feeling. What the Germans think happened to Count Arnim has happened to many a better, and may happen to a weaker, man. Our natural centre of social gravity is in circles where, as a rule, politics are not much or intelligently cared for, and where such discussion as occurs with

⁸⁹Lay judges.

⁹⁰Tessoroff was public prosecutor in the Arnim trial.

⁹¹See n. 67 in this section.

foreigners is carried on in reluctant and conventional syllables, which mean and reveal little. This being the case in Dresden, and people being dull, slow, and politically tepid, I venture on no opinion as to which of the above described currents runs the strongest. I may safely say that the Arnim affair has been more debated in London than in Dresden, and that the Saxons have talked about it less frequently and less intelligently than the resident English and Americans.

I have seen nothing in the local journals which could be called an original article on the case. The Reptile-Bureau⁹² has, as usual, performed its work with admirable efficiency. Some days ago an identical attack on Judge Reich's sentence appeared in three Saxon papers: the next day's post brought me the Augsburg Allgemeine-Zeitung with the same criticism in the same *ipsissima verba*⁹³ under the rubric of a Berlin letter! The National-Liberal press has, of course, reproduced the arguments of the Berlin National-Zeitung and other party organs. The independent newspapers have described Count Arnim as morally condemned and politically dead, and hinted that Prince Bismarck has again shewn himself a necessary Evil. The Fortschritt 'Presse'⁹⁴ approves the infliction of the minimal punishment, and sneers both at prosecution and defendant. The Social-Democratic 'Volkbote' suggests that Count Arnim is not the defeated party, but declines to sympathize with an aristocrat, and rejoices that the hated Empire should have washed so much dirty linen in public.

FO 68/159: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 3, Dresden, 20 January 1875

[Received 2 February. For: The Queen / Disraeli; D[erby]]

Danger of ecclesiastical conflict in Saxony

In previous Despatches I have mentioned certain attempts to draw Saxony within the circle of the Prussian ecclesiastical conflict, which were foiled by the determination of the Cabinet and the Apostolic Vicar to maintain the confessional peace of the Kingdom. Bishop Forwerk has unfortunately just passed away from the scene of his labours which, according to the common voice of Catholics and Protestants, he discharged with a fervour, unction, and conciliatory temper, not often found together in a single episcopal person. The

⁹²See n. 73 in this section.

⁹³Latin: 'the precise words'.

⁹⁴*Dresdner Presse* (Progressive Party).

Vicar died of a casual illness, and was buried in Dresden with appropriate honours, the Protestant Church being represented by the President of the Consistory.⁹⁵

Should the Pope⁹⁶ blunder in the new appointment, as he did in the in the affair of Monsignor Mermillod,⁹⁷ and fix on some injudicious Ultramontane as successor to the mild Forwerk, the present religious quiet will probably be disturbed. The King's brother, Prince George, who is described even by Catholics as a narrow minded zealot, has just committed the absurdity of selecting a priest named Fritzen,⁹⁸ lately a professor in the now closed Prussian Seminary of Gasdomk [*sic*],⁹⁹ to teach his children history. The Saxons are tolerant, and there is little sympathy with the Bismarckian coercive legislation. But this priest comes with a certain Jesuitical odour, his call was superfluous, and the public are not pleased to think that the heir to the throne will get his early notions about Frederick the Wise, and John the Steadfast, and Gustavus Adolphus, from an instructor imported from a presumed hotbed of "recusant Papist convicts".¹⁰⁰ If this unwise proceeding is followed by the nomination of an objectionable Vicar the cry of "écrasez l'infame"¹⁰¹ will not fall quite so flat as before.

FO 68/159: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 5, Dresden, 27 January 1875

[Received 2 February by Berlin]¹⁰²

Exposition on the insufficiencies of diplomatic pay

My Despatch No. 5. of the last series drew Your Lordship's attention to the scale of my official Enrolments, which in virtual equivalency do not exceed one half of my predecessor's pay and are inadequate

⁹⁵Gustav Ludwig Hübel.

⁹⁶Pius IX.

⁹⁷After being dismissed as parish priest by the radical government of the Swiss canton Geneva in 1872, Gaspard Mermillod was elevated to the position of Apostolic Vicar in 1873. The Swiss authorities saw this as an unconstitutional instalment of a new bishopric and expelled Mermillod to France where he headed his Geneva parish in exile.

⁹⁸Adolf Fritzen.

⁹⁹The Collegium Augustinianum in Gaesdonck was closed in 1873 and reopened in 1893.

¹⁰⁰Strachey is alluding to the sixteenth-century Roman Catholics who refused to attend services of the Church of England.

¹⁰¹'Écrasez l'Infâme' (wipe out the infamy) is an oft repeated motto in Voltaire's letters.

¹⁰²Note in file: 'Mr Strachey's application for an increase of salary has been answered privately in the negative. [Illegible initials, probably those of Thomas Sanderson], FO 5 February 1875.'

to the support of the proprieties of my position as Her Majesty's Representative here.

Further experience enables me to confirm the contents of that Report.

1. For £190 per annum I have a "very large" or *Luxus-Wohnung*. Such is the local qualification of a 2nd floor with 4 'rooms', 5 poor 'chambers', a kitchen, a dark cupboard, but no larder, pantry or other accessory space. On the 4th floor I have some attics for £20 a year on a separate lease: total rent £210. This domicile was thought advantageous at the price. The internal noise is such that I can hardly write the present, or any other, Despatch: the one drawing room will not warm in cold weather: in summer the apartment is nearly uninhabitable for heat: in all seasons the rooms are constantly filled with overpowering Cloacine Exhalations.

From 700 to 800 English live in Dresden. Personal demands on the Legation from this colony, from travellers, and from Germans with financial and commercial interests in England, and from other quarters, occur daily. For want of a Chancery, my small library, which in cold weather is our only family drawing-room, has to be opened not only to visitors of the stamp just named, but also to vagrant paupers, jockeys, acrobats, and the like, British and Colonial. I have to receive in my room singing women, ballet girls, and female artists of a still baser sort, where they might have 'collided' with my wife,¹⁰³ or a Lady in waiting from the Court, or an English Bishop. On the other hand respectable persons must often wait in a most objectionable neighbourhood, in contact with domestic processes which need not be described.

My family convenience and comfort should be sacrificed at once for the public advantages, but as comfort and convenience are here unknown to us, there is nothing to give up. Far from being able to afford a dearer, I am seeking a cheaper apartment. I will mention for comparison's sake, that for the Dresden equivalent of the small suburban villa occupied at Darmstadt by Mr. Ford and his predecessors for £150–180 (?) per annum, from £400 to £450 would be asked. I could not be housed in the style usual in the junior ranks of our diplomacy for less than from £270 to £300 a year.

2. Although in my journey from Bern, stay in the hotel there, and in furnishing me, the closest economy was observed, the transfer to Dresden mulcted me in a sum equal to 1/3rd of my entire income. Even if not burdened with this deficit my means would be too narrow to allow me to observe those traditions of active and passive respectability which however inquisitorial and senseless they may in some respect

¹⁰³Catherine Strachey.

seem, cannot be defied by diplomatists of the representative rank with advantage to their public character.

In Dresden the train of life usual in the national colony (where a middle-class standard prevails) gives a minimum term of comparison below which the Legation ought hardly to fall. But both in the liberalities and the forbearances this test would be too severe for me. Like the Chaplain of All Saints' Church¹⁰⁴ and M^{rs}. Gilderdale Her Majesty's Representative and his wife are driven to visible thrift in daily expenditure, to the assumption, coram publico,¹⁰⁵ of certain commissariat functions usually left to servants, to relative defect in the outward signs of gentility.

Our relations with the English colony are embarrassing. The suspension of social intercourse between the Queen's subjects and her Representative, to whatever cause due, would have given such deep offence, that I am obliged to accept a certain amount of hospitality on the non-reciprocal terms allowed to the poorer members of the colony, and to submit, besides, to be the recipient of attentions which might be more accurately called acts of charity in disguise. This curious arrangement is the best which, under the circumstance can be contrived. It prevents the growth of an objectionable feud, and gives opportunities for the cultivation of cordial personal sentiments. It cannot prevent the Existence of a strong national dissatisfaction provoked by failures in entertainment and appearance with which our colony connects an inevitable loss of prestige for the Legation, and hence for the country, and themselves. Censures in this sense are not unfrequent: I believe that their incidence is not altogether on me.

3. Another aspect of the case is thus approached. Your Lordship would, I think, hear from my South German colleagues that unless they received in the manner appropriate to their grade, their situation would be intolerable, and their independent rank a mere phantom advantage. My predecessor,¹⁰⁶ who had some insight into my financial possibilities, was of opinion that the degree of social prominence proper to our position could not be obtained unless the Legation dispensed some material civilities at home. Rooms are small, purses are short, onesided reception is not in fashion, and there seems no reason why "the English Minister" (the style in which almost everyone describes and addresses me) should be privileged to go about in forma pauperis.¹⁰⁷ The result is that while treating us with the icy and ponderous politeness of the country, and displaying an ordinary

¹⁰⁴John Smith Gilderdale.

¹⁰⁵Latin: 'in public'.

¹⁰⁶Joseph Hume Burnley.

¹⁰⁷Latin: 'in the manner of a pauper'.

good will, private Saxons dole out their invitations with very sparing hand. As a substantial Attachè [*sic*] to the Bavarian Legation I should go everywhere without effort. As an impecunious Representative of the greatest and most luxurious nation in the world my place is, at best, in the second line. Economically considered, this is a welcome gain. Professionally speaking, it is not desirable that Her Majesty's Chargè [*sic*] d'Affaires and his wife should be assimilated with casual foreigners, and even stamped as socially inferior to some English (and American) families which having claims on native hospitality, are admitted to houses closed against us. Two circumstances intensify the difficulties in point. The first is, that, as already said, people habitually expand me into a Minister. It is obvious that a person so entitled cannot achieve popularity and respect as long as he is chiefly conspicuous for neglect of the customary liberalities and courtesies of his attributed position. The second circumstance is, that in such a sentina gentium¹⁰⁸ as Dresden, the good or bad repute of the Legation as regards the proprieties of hospitality and equipment is as much a cosmopolitan as a local fact.

4. The last considerations refer to respectability. But there is also a loss of utility. Dresden is in one sense an official suburb of Berlin. No Prussian military secret is withheld from the Saxon War Office. Baron von Friesen receives copies of whatever is important in the German diplomatic correspondence. At the same time Dresden is one of the strongholds of Federative, as Leipsig is of Centralizing, German opinion. The political intercourse between Berlin and this capital is frequent: the Saxon members of the Bundesrath and Reichstag are always coming and going. In the Saxon army there is a strong Hanoverian contingent (constantly being reinforced) for whom Sedan has by no means effaced Langensalza.¹⁰⁹ On these and other grounds Dresden is probably unsurpassed as a German "Ear of Dionysius",¹¹⁰ a peculiarity by which I am at present hardly able to profit.

5. Perhaps what has been said may seem to justify the belief that there is some disproportion between the salary and the financial responsibilities of this post. Few English residents would call Dresden a cheaper city than London: rents are decidedly higher. The Bavarian Minister,¹¹¹ speaking from personal experience, says that Dresden is dearer than Paris was under the Empire, 20 per cent dearer than

¹⁰⁸ Latin: 'the dregs of nations'.

¹⁰⁹ Strachey is referring to the Battle of Sedan of 1 September 1870 and the battle of 27 June 1866 when Hanoverian troops – during the Austro-Prussian War – successfully recaptured the town of Langensalza from Prussia.

¹¹⁰ A limestone cave in the city of Syracuse with outstanding acoustics; according to legend, the tyrant Dionysius used the cave to eavesdrop on prisoners held there.

¹¹¹ Rudolf von Gasser.

Stuttgart is now, 30 p.c. dearer than Munich. Further the gaiety of the Saxon Court, and the extent of the visiting list, make even passive participation in a Diplomatsists' social duties far more expensive here than in the quieter Southern capitals.

6. I must apologize for the intrusion of domestic topics into a public Despatch. But in a case like this it is not easy to draw the line between official and personal details.

Insinuations or complaints of an altered, or unsatisfactory, footing of Her Majesty's Legation in Dresden may conceivably reach London. Should this occur, Your Lordship's disappointment or dissatisfaction will not, I trust, exclude a recollection of the fact, that my censors had twice been anticipated by my own emphatic declarations, that my efforts to keep things as my predecessor left them were completely frustrated by the scale of my allowances.

FO 68/159: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 9, Dresden, 13 March 1875

[Received 22 March by Berlin; For: Disraeli / Circulate; D[erby]]

Remarks on socialist parties in Saxony in light of manifesto proposing a programme for a United Social Democratic Party

The Leipzig "Volksstaat" the organ of the "Socialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei", or "Bebelianer", has just published a manifesto from the heads of the two groups into which German Social Democracy fell after the death of Lassalle, proposing a Programme and Rules for a United Social Democratic party, and convoking a Congress in May for their discussion, and eventual acceptance.¹¹² Among the signatories are Hassellmann [*sic*], deputy to the Reichstag for Elberfeld: and Hasenclever, member for Altona, and President of the "Allgemeine Deutsche Arbeiterverein"¹¹³ founded by Lassalle for specifically Socialist objects during the Berlin Constitutional conflict of 1863,¹¹⁴ in opposition to the Self-Help movement of

¹¹²The programme – drafted in a pre-conference on 14 and 15 February 1875 and published in the *Volksstaat* on 7 March – was presented to the Gotha congress (22 to 27 May), and resulted in the foundation of the *Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands*.

¹¹³General German Workers' Association, founded in Leipzig on 23 May 1863.

¹¹⁴The Prussian constitutional conflict (1859–1866 and which reached its peak in 1863) revolved around the plans for the reorganization of the army. It resulted in a power struggle between Wilhelm I, his ministry, and the liberal chamber of deputies; the latter advocated parliamentary rights against the monarchy and its executive.

Schulze-Delitzsch,¹¹⁵ which its' author was pressing into the service of the Prussian Liberal party and the German unitary agitation. For the "Bebelianer", also called "Eisenach honorables", (from the place where the schism of 1869 occurred),¹¹⁶ stand the names of the Saxon deputies Liebknecht, Motteler, Geib, Vahlteich: Bebel and Most being in prison could not sign.

As regards the leaders the appearances of agreement are decisive. I may remind Your Lordship that the division into groups was confirmed by the subsequent suspicions of connivance with Prince Bismarck fastened on Lassalle's successor, D^r. Schweizer [*sic*], and the partially national attitude of the A.D. "Arbeiterverein" as also by the Internationalist learnings of the "Bebelianer", who in Saxony exhibited a violent Particularism, and were accused of taking money from the King of Hanover. But with these circumstances was associated no fundamental difference of programme, so that after D^r. Schweizer had been expelled from the Union of the "Lassalleaner", and the "Bebelianer" throwing off the influence of Marx, had taken a less cosmopolitan, and more German, line, no ground of separation seemed to survive except the unimportant one that the "Bebelianer" were, on the whole, a South German, Saxon, and Thuringian party, the "Lassalleaner" belonging principally to North Germany. There was no serious obstacle to a fusion of the groups, which Prince Bismarck's recent Socialist Crusade, simultaneously carried on in Prussia, Hesse-Darmstadt, and Bavaria was admirably calculated to suggest and facilitate.¹¹⁷ The manifesto expressly refers the present result to the pressure put on the Social Democrats by the violent persecution to which they are exposed. The signatories might take a malicious pleasure in ascribing an eventual fusion to the coercive policy of Prince Bismarck, but there is, I imagine, no doubt that the Reichskanzler has been their best friend.

The new Programme, which is in studiously moderate language, includes three articles: the following gives a condensed version of them.

1. Wealth and culture spring from labour, whose fruits belong to the entire social body, in and through which, alone, productive labour is possible.

¹¹⁵For the self-help movement, see pp. 340–341.

¹¹⁶The *Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei*, which developed out of the *Sächsische Volkspartei*, was founded on 8 August 1869 in Eisenach and adopted the so-called Eisenach programme, largely influenced by ideas of Marx, Engels, and the Socialist International.

¹¹⁷Strachey is referring to the ban on various local branches of socialist parties; on 18 March 1875 the *Allgemeine Deutsche Arbeiterverein* was forbidden in Prussia.

The instruments and means of labour being now in the hands of the Capitalist class, whose monopoly causes misery and bondage (Knechtschaft), the class of workmen must emancipate labour, and raise its' instruments to be a common possession of Society, in view of an associated distribution of work and its' products.

The class of workmen must strive to attain these objects conformably to the possibilities offered by the existing National State, in the conviction that the result of their efforts would be an international confraternity of peoples.

2. The German workmen's party must try by all legal means to achieve the Socialist organization: the abolition of wages, with their "brazen law" (law of Lassalle, or, as we should say, of Ricardo), as well as of "every social and political disability."¹¹⁸

3. Productive-Associations with "State-Help", on a scale adequate for a complete organization of labour, both in Industry & Agriculture. Universal suffrage, parliamentary and communal. Popular legislative initiative and Veto (after Swiss models). Popular army and universal service. Abolition of restrictive laws on the Press, Associations and Meetings. Popular and gratuitous justice. Compulsory and gratuitous education: no class schools. Freedom of Science and conscience. Progressive Income Tax.

These are the Reforms of the Future. Present demands are: – Recognition of the right of coalition. Institution of normal work-day and prohibition of Sunday labour. Limitation of female, and prohibition of child, labour. Official inspection of Industrial establishments; Regulations of Prison work.

On reference to the Eisenach programme of 1869, I find the Socialist movement called a Kampf a battle or struggle, which notion is now superseded by a less energetic and more general description applicable to a regular constitutional agitation. The phrase "by all legal means" is new. Again, the Eisenach "honourables" expressly constituted themselves a filial of the International, while the new creed makes a mere vaporous allusion to a brotherhood of peoples, which is now conceived, not, as before, as a means, but as a result. A previous categorical denunciation of "Privileges of Rank, Birth, and Confession" is replaced by the vague remarks given under 2. "Separation of Church and State, of School and Church" was an article of the Eisenach programme, and is now dropped. The

¹¹⁸According to Lassalle's 'brazen law' of 1863, a labourer works at his cost price; thus wages under the conditions of unrestricted competition do not exceed the margin of subsistence. As a solution to wages, Lassalle proposed the scheme of so-called 'productive associations' subsidized by state credit.

guarantee of “State Credit” for the National Productive Association is dropped, and “State-help” substituted.

On the religious point I would observe, that the Mainz Congress of “Bebelianer” in 1872¹¹⁹ adopted a resolution recommending to members a formal renunciation of their respective churches. This is the style of Bakounin, and is disapproved by the “Lassalleaner”, who generally leave such questions untouched. The present abstention was, I presume, dictated by the desire to make the Programme acceptable to Roman Catholic workmen, who, unlike their Protestant fellows, would be shocked by disrespect to religion – to catch the sympathies of the “Christian Socialists” – to avoid even indirect approval of Prussian ecclesiastical policy.

“State-Credit” is the old Lassallean Shibboleth, and has been attacked by some “Bebelianer” as implying a recognition of the National State. Lassalle proposed to maintain his Productive Associations (which Louis Blanc would claim as his National Workshops) by issues of State-Paper. His Assignats¹²⁰ have been much ridiculed, and it was prudent for his present followers to acquiesce in a vague demand for “State-Help”, which, as nobody can understand, nobody can criticise.

These matters, are, as stated in my Report on the Saxon Social Democrats, too low for the Respectable Press of Germany. In no Dresden journal have I seen any allusion to the subject. Of the prospects of the fusion I can have no knowledge. I should observe, however, that the present move has been the subject of long discussion and negotiation. Supposing it to succeed, it’s effects could hardly be more than passive until the present severe industrial depression has passed away.

FO 68/159: George Strachey to Earl Derby, No 14, Dresden, 26 April 1875

[Received 1 May by post. For: ~~The Queen / Disraeli~~; ‘(No)’, D[erby]]

German view of Tichborne case

Having had opportunities which, perhaps, may bear comparison with those enjoyed by D^r. Kenealy, of observing German opinions on

¹¹⁹The fourth congress of the *Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei* was held in Mainz on 7–11 September 1872.

¹²⁰*Assignats*, French paper currency during the French Revolution 1789–1796, initially issued as state bonds.

the Tichborne trial, I venture to state that the press and public are perfectly unanimous both as to the deserts of the “unfortunate nobleman” and the behaviour, forensic and parliamentary, of the member for Stoke.¹²¹

As D^r. Kenealy attaches such importance to the verdict of the German intellectual nation, he might profit by a knowledge of the fact, that in the country of his esteem Arthur Orton and his advocate will henceforth rank amongst the most accomplished types of criminal and professional rascality. German lawyers quite concur with D^r Kenealy in condemning the second trial, but their criticism fall on English procedure, which, they say, cut a ridiculous figure, compelling Judge and Jury to tolerate a line and length of defence irreconcilable with any fit conception of juridical, decency, dignity and promptitude.

FO 68/159: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 30, Dresden, 27 November 1875

[Received 3 December by post. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate; D[erby]]

Unfavourable impression of Prince Bismarck's Reichstag speech on German budget

Prince Bismarck's speech in the Reichstag has fallen flat here.¹²² The general judgment is, that he was inferior to himself, and that oratory with a little more matter and little less wit would have been more appropriate to a debate on the Budget of Germany.

On expressing my surprise at the Prince's Political Economy to the person¹²³ named in my No. 25 of the 16th Instant, I was told that exclusive Indirect Taxation was an ideal which might find favor at Varzin, but that it was altogether rejected by enlightened German administrators and thinkers.

Every one knew that a fiscal system, to be fair and solid, ought to be mixed, and there was now a strong current of opinion, especially in

¹²¹The Tichborne case concerned the claims of the Australian imposter, Arthur Orton, to be the missing Sir Roger Tichborne; they were rejected in a civil case in March 1872. In a second trial, in 1874, Orton, who was represented before court by Edward Kenealy, was sentenced for perjury. In his dispatch Strachey is referring to Kenealy's speech in the House of Commons of 23 April 1875, in which he stated that 'the German nation agrees with the English people generally that justice has not been done'. Kenealy's motion to take the Tichborne case to a Royal Commission was declined on the same day.

¹²²In his speech of 22 November 1875, Bismarck, notably, defended the proposed tax increase on brewing (*Brauststeuer*) and the introduction of a financial transaction tax as a makeshift solution to compensate for the insufficient contributions of the German states (*Matrikularbeiträge*), and a first step towards fundamental fiscal reform.

¹²³This dispatch is not included in FO 68/159.

democratic circles, in favor of an increase not of indirect but of direct burdens. The remark was approved, when I said that provided Prince Bismarck could escape “ignorant impatience of taxation”, he would not much enquire whether the weight and incidence of imposts were such as to be compatible with public prosperity.

Arguments, or statements that a tax on brewing improves the quality of beer, and that slaughter dues were a cause of good meat, also that petroleum and coffee are German luxuries, might in the mouth of an inferior personage be called nonsense. Your Lordship may have been surprised at Prince Bismarck’s assertion that taxes on the necessities of life (bread, meat and beer were specified) do not fall on the consumer, who shifts them from himself by the easy process of charging more for his work or services. This notion, however, is merely an exaggerated application of Lassalle’s so-called “brazen law” which affirms that the rate of wages is not a function of the wages-fund and the demand for labour.¹²⁴ Here then the Chancellor of the Reich was talking Socialist doctrine, for the “brazen law”, which Lassalle borrowed from Marx, who, I suppose, was indebted to Ricardo, is fundamental to the economic programme of Bebel and Hasenclever and their adherents in and outside the Reichstag.

FO 68/159: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 32, Dresden, 4 December 1875

[Received 13 December by Berlin. For: The Queen / Disraeli; D[erby]]

‘Indignant’ Saxon response to Criminal Code amendment bill

The Criminal Code Bill¹²⁵ is causing “great indignation” all over Saxony. That is to say, people are saying and writing, that the passing of the ‘Novel’ will destroy “the remnants of German liberty”, and enable Prince Bismarck, or, what may be worse, his Successor, to throw Germany back to the epoch of the Carlsbad decrees.¹²⁶ But such is the national apathy, and want of true political instincts, that there is no attempt to move the machinery of constitutional agitation. Even after Stuttgart[,] Tübingen & Reutlingen have shewn the way of holding public meetings neither Dresden, nor Leipsig, (the capital of German culture), nor Chemnitz (nor any other city of Central or

¹²⁴For Lassalle’s ‘brazen law’, see n. 118 in this section.

¹²⁵The amendment bill to the Criminal Code of 15 May 1871 was discussed at the 1st reading in the *Reichstag* on 3 December 1875; it was passed on 10 February and became effective on 26 February 1876.

¹²⁶See n. 42 in this section.

North Germany) seems disposed to try to bring popular feeling to bear on the Reichstag. However strong the sense of a common necessity, parties do not care to form even a temporary combination. On the lukewarmness of the National-Liberals I may remark: firstly, that their fraction, which is largely commercial and industrial, elements: includes many reactionary,¹²⁷ secondly, that many of them are satisfied with the arguments that the Novel is aimed against Social Democrats and Clericals, who are fit objects for coercion, and that the elasticity of the so-called “India-Rubber Paragraphs” need not alarm loyal adherents of Prince Bismarck, or prevent respectful criticism of his measures.

Your Lordship would scarcely be interested in demonstrations that the most docile of European nations is fit for a free press and a free platform, and that the most determined of Ministers and the most powerful of Governments have no need to gag a submissive people, or to tremble before the Papacy as if Pius IX were Innocent or Hildebrand.¹²⁸ Lawyers admit that there are actually grounds for revising the limitations of the Code in the matter of Prosecutions on Information: a larger margin, ought, it is said, to be allowed for the initiative of the Public Prosecutor in cases of ordinary Crime. On the other hand they contend that a Criminal Code loses its proper character when, instead of following the scale indicated by general principles, its punishments are constantly readjusted to suit fluctuating social conditions, or fancies, or personal interests of particular Ministers. Legal reforms should stand on their own ground, and nothing can be more repugnant to the spirit of sound Jurisprudence than Prince Bismarck’s device of introducing Technical Revision as a mere “decorative” appendage to the Political Paragraphs, in the hope that the whole Novel may thus bear a decent scientific appearance.

The Arnim and Duchesne Paragraphs¹²⁹ are condemned as flagrant examples of what the Germans call “Occasional” Legislation. The

¹²⁷The number ‘2’ is written underneath the word ‘elements’ and ‘1’ underneath the words ‘includes many reactionary’ to indicate sentence reorganization.

¹²⁸Strachey is alluding to Gregory VII (originally Hildebrand; pope 1073–1085) who secured papal sovereignty over secular princes, and Innocence III (pope 1198–1216) who asserted the independence of the church in the dispute over the appointment of the archbishop of Canterbury.

¹²⁹The ‘Arnim paragraph’ (§ 353a) was added to the German Criminal Code in 1876 and made unauthorized disclosures of official documents a criminal offence (for the Arnim case, see n. 159 in Berlin section). The ‘Duchesne paragraph’ of 1876 (§ 30 of the German Criminal Code) made punishable the attempted involvement or the offer to participate in a crime. The introduction of the latter was in reaction to the attempt by the Belgian boilermaker Duchesne to gain a reward for the (planned) murder of Bismarck (see n. 195 in Berlin section).

notion that Prince Bismarck cannot govern his Ambassadors and Attachés unless he can send them for misconduct at the House of Correction, lies outside the pale of serious discussion. The Duchesne Paragraph, it is noticed, is recommended in the ‘Motives’ on the ground that its’ principle is recognized in Belgium, – as if every one did not know that Prince Bismarck himself was its’ author there. Is all this serious statesmanship?

If Herr Lasker firmly keeps to the understanding established between himself and the Fortschritt party in the Reichstag, the representatives of that party here will be agreeably surprised. However this morning’s Telegram seems to indicate dispositions on the part of Prince Bismarck which will encourage the National-Liberal Trimmer to keep to his compact.¹³⁰

FO 68/160: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 9, Dresden, 4 February 1876

[Received 7 February by Berlin. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Printed; D[erby]]

German impressions of the Suez Canal incident

German politicians are looking with unusual interest to the approaching Session of Parliament. They hope for light on the Eastern question, which continues to cause serious apprehensions for the peace of Europe, and thus aggravates the difficulties of the domestic and commercial crisis. The belief prevails, that Her Majesty’s Government will be encouraged to persist in the vigorous policy of which the Suez incident passes for the first step.¹³¹ The so-called “effacement of England’ is, it is thought, at an end, and the opening of Parliament by the Queen in person¹³² is connected with the desire to give our new programme a suitable inauguration.

Since the date of My Nos. 31, 35 of Decr. 2, & 9, much extravagant language has been used in the Press, and elsewhere. The purchase was “a provisional seizure of Egypt”; M^r. Cave’s mission¹³³ has been called an assumption by Great Britain of the rights of sovereignty,

¹³⁰Strachey is referring to Bismarck’s conciliatory speech in the *Reichstag* on 3 December 1875 in which he avoided harsh reactions to liberal requests to modify the bill.

¹³¹For the British purchase of Suez Canal Company shares, see n. 224 in Berlin section.

¹³²On 8 February 1876; this was only the fourth time since Albert’s death in 1861.

¹³³In December 1875 Stephen Cave led a special mission to Egypt to report on the country’s financial situation. He returned to London on 9 March 1876.

and the Khedive¹³⁴ described as already converted into an African Scindiah or Nizam.¹³⁵ Such exaggerations have nearly subsided, but the impression remains that a stroke worthy of the best days of the British diplomacy has been done, and that its' inevitable consequences will not be evaded.

According to my observations, this transaction has brought us a great deal of general prestige; the effect has been the better, as there was no expectation either amongst the public, or leading politicians that the activity of English statesmanship would again be asserted in foreign affairs. An impression of power has suddenly arisen, and this will not be lost as our relations with the Khedive correspond with the expectations that have been formed. If, on the other hand, Her Majesty's Government should be thought to be commencing a retreat, as, for instance, by abandoning the avowed objects of Mr. Cave's mission, or declining the responsibilities of our alleged Protectorate, the prestige recovered would perhaps be lost, or more than lost, almost as quickly as it came. The Germans have formed a magnificent idea of the meaning of the purchase, and by this they will abide, all authoritative language notwithstanding. On my remarking, some time since, to Baron von Friesen, that less nonsense would be talked and written on the affair of the Canal, if people would condescend to take the interpretations of policy from its' authors', instead of indulging in imaginative explanations of their own, His Excellency, who is by no means addicted to looking for the mysterious sides of things, replied that official commentaries were always taken *cum grano*, and that even the admitted honesty and directness of English statements could not alter their liability to the constructions natural under this rule.

I think that the Edinburgh Reviewer's idea¹³⁶ that our assumption of anything like an Egyptian protectorate would arouse continental resistance is, as regards Germany, quite erroneous. International jealousy is not a German vice. All steps likely to further the civilization of Egypt would meet with warm approval here. The Germans would be glad to know that there was a prospect of the resources of Africa being opened up by the only power competent to attempt the work.

¹³⁴Isma'il Pasha.

¹³⁵The Scindia were the ruling dynasty of the Gwalior State in British India; Nizam the title used by the rulers of the Indian state of Hyderabad.

¹³⁶Strachey is referring to the anonymous review article 'The Suez Canal' on various diplomatic documents, published in the January issue of *The Edinburgh Review*.

**FO 68/160: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 18,
Dresden, 9 March 1876**

[Received 13 March. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate; Seen at Berlin; D[erby]]

First chamber vote on railway question; misrepresentations of 'reptile press' regarding railway question

In continuation of my No. 14 of yesterday's date, I have the honor to report, that the 1st Chamber has adopted, with a single dissentient voice, the resolution of the Lower House on the Railway Purchase scheme.¹³⁷

I observe that the Prussian National-Liberal journals are doing their utmost to prevent the German public understanding the attitude of Saxony on this question. Prussia's generous desire to sacrifice her railways for the good of Germany is, it seems, being thwarted by a black coalition between the Bavarian and Saxon "Enemies of the Empire": people have refused to look at the economic bearings of the proposed purchase; careless whether German railway tariffs, traffic &c, be susceptible, under a centralized management, of reforms unattainable under the separate system, Saxony, like Bavaria would hear no arrangements but those of the venomous Particularism which has its' nest in the Kingdom.

Such commentaries, and others not worthy refuting, distort the elementary facts of the case. There is neither coalition, nor community of opposition, between Bavaria and Saxony. Far from considerations of the economic order having been unheard here, these are the precise reasons which have occupied the foreground of all spoken and printed discussions. Nearly every speaker or writer has laid emphasis on the financial and administrative confusion which might be anticipated from the suggested purchase. It was first pointed out, that a centralized system would be costly and inefficient, and derange the finances of the Empire and single States; also, that the enormous money transactions supposed, which involve the disposal of an amount twice as large as the French Millions,¹³⁸ would inaugurate a new era of swindling and "grounding". After this the political consequences of a transfer were in some cases mentioned, though rather by way of a *praeterea censeo*¹³⁹ than as a main argument. Furthermore, as I have previously explained, the Saxon opposition is not confined to Particularists: it is universal,

¹³⁷The resolution of the second chamber of 3 March 1876 called upon the Saxon government to oppose any eventual scheme for the purchase of railways by the empire in the Federal Council. For the imperial project, see n. 234 in Berlin section.

¹³⁸For the French war indemnity, see n.107 in Berlin section.

¹³⁹'Furthermore, I believe' from Cato the Elder's '*praeterea censeo Carthaginem esse delendam*'.

and its' expression in the lower House came from National-Liberals, Fortschritt⁴⁰ men, and "Free-Conservatives" of a very liberal shade, and consequently from an assembly which is "Friendly to the Empire".

The language of the Prussian National-Liberal 'Reptiles' is,⁴¹ of course, calculated to stir up a really political quarrel. The Particularists are delighted that a controversy should have arisen so certain to bring them partizans. When the Saxons are authoritatively told from Berlin that the vote of their Chamber has induced Prince Bismarck "to take up the glove", they will begin to ask what kind of Government it is under which private susceptibilities are decisive of the gravest official resolutions.

FO 68/160: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 19, Dresden, 3 April 1876

[Received 10 April. Printed. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate / Egypt / Constantinople; D[erby]]

King's reaction to Suez Canal incident

In the course of a conversation a few nights ago on English affairs, the King of Saxony told me that the Suez Canal Incident had given him the greatest satisfaction. The Purchase, he thought, was a master-stroke, which had produced excellent effects in raising our prestige.⁴² During the last twenty years of liberal Government there had been an increasing renunciation of our authority abroad, until English statesmanship seemed to contemplate something like complete withdrawal from Continental affairs. In our abandonment of the position indicated by our antecedents, and, till lately, accepted by our people and Government as an inevitable political fact, the King saw a positive misfortune to Europe. A return to our old traditions would bring great advantages to the Continent. There was now as much room as ever for the exercise of British influence abroad. In the present state of things Great Britain was the natural adviser and moderator of Europe, and our assumption of the responsibilities of this position was urgently to be desired. The King added that his hopes let him to look at the Suez incident as a "reentrée en scène",⁴³ for which reason our intervention has all his sympathies and approval.

⁴⁰Progressive Party.

⁴¹For the 'reptile press', see n. 40 in this section.

⁴²For the British purchase of the Suez Canal Company shares, see n. 224 in Berlin section.

⁴³French: theatrical term for '(re)entrance'.

**FO 68/160: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 33,
Elster, 13 July 1876**

[Received 16 July. For: The Queen / Disraeli / Circulate; D[erby]]

Observations on public and political feeling with respect to foreign policy: England out of fashion; animosity towards Russia; criticism of new Slav power

Some English newspapers appear to have been quoting Herr von Treitschke's article on Turkey in the *Preussische Jahrbücher*,¹⁴⁴ in proof of the sentiments of German Liberals to Great Britain and Russia. But general conclusions can never be safely drawn from the writings of the Saxon Professor, who is more read for the excellence of his rhetoric than for the solidity of his arguments, which are usually those of a rabid and vituperative "Bismarckite sans-phrase",¹⁴⁵ or "Mameluke-Jannissary"¹⁴⁶ – such are the newest compliments of German political controversy.

It is true that England is no longer in fashion here. Junkers, and even Free-Conservatives, are aware that our Conservatism has nothing in common with theirs. Our perfect liberty is positively obnoxious to many of the National-Liberal party, in whose ranks there is much tolerance of reactionary aims and practice, and, besides, a certain account of irritation at English hostility in 1864 and 1870–1,¹⁴⁷ and at English unsympathetic criticism of Prince Bismarck's methods of ecclesiastical and general domestic government, while the argument is often heard that with our adoption of Manchester ideals and motives we have forfeited the respect formerly deserved by a great and successful policy. If the Fortschritt party are better inclined, the Social-Democrats for their own obvious reasons, have nothing to say in our favour.

Unfriendly dispositions, are, in fact, in the ascendant, but unless excited by some special incident, like the wreck of the 'Deutschland',¹⁴⁸ they remain in a very dormant state; and it follows from the conditions of the German Press, that there may be much newspaper declamation without any corresponding public irritation. Unless I much mistake,

¹⁴⁴Heinrich von Treitschke's essay 'Die Türkei und die Großmächte' was published in June 1876 in the monthly *Preußische Jahrbücher*.

¹⁴⁵'Outright Bismarckite'. The term 'Bismarck sans phrase' was also used for the pro-Bismarckian *Freikonservative Partei*.

¹⁴⁶Mameluks were members of a military caste with Turkish, Mongol, and Circassian slave heritage; they remained powerful in Ottoman Egypt until 1811. Janissaries were elite infantry units that formed the Ottoman sultan's household troops and bodyguards.

¹⁴⁷During the Second Schleswig-Holstein War and the Franco-Prussian War.

¹⁴⁸The passenger steamship *Deutschland* ran aground on a sandbar at the mouth of the Thames on 6 December 1875; 157 people died.

the Russian sentiments of the Prussian Review,¹⁴⁹ and the National-Zeitung, represent a narrow sectional, perhaps an individual opinion. The hatred of the Russians for the Germans is fully reciprocated here, and the Triple-Alliance¹⁵⁰ owes the limited approval it has obtained to the weight of Prince Bismarck's authority. Intelligent Germans do not think the maintenance of the Turkish Empire possible; and much as they deprecate the growth of a new Slav power, they do not consider that its attempted creation, or even the Extension of Russia to the Balkans or Bosphorus would be sufficient ground for active German interposition. But the failure of Russia's intrigues and schemes, by the collapse of the Montenegro-Servian aggression,¹⁵¹ or from any other cause, would give universal satisfaction. Some National-Liberals lean to the insurgents and their allies, but the Turkish side appears to be the generally favored.

In this, as in all political questions of the graver kind, Germany is satisfied with barren aspirations. The prevalent apathy, timidity, and servility being what they are, all responsibility is left to Prince Bismarck, on whom neither the Confederated Governments, nor public opinion, exercise any pressure, however weak. Any occasional concurrence of his policy with the national wishes is fully understood to be a mere coincidence, and by no means as a deliberate condescension to popular desires.

FO 68/160: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 38, Dresden, 8 September 1876

[Received 13 September. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

Wilhelm F's warm reception upon his visit to Leipzig

I have the honor to report my return from Leipsic, where the Royal Family shewed me their usual cordiality. The King was evidently gratified to hear that Your Lordship had authorized my appearance during the Emperor's visit. His Majesty invited me to the large military

¹⁴⁹Strachey is probably referring to the conservative daily *Neue Preussische Zeitung* (*Kreuzzeitung*).

¹⁵⁰For the League of the Three Emperors, see n. 108 in Berlin section.

¹⁵¹In the wake of the Serbian revolt of 1875 the semi-independent principalities of Montenegro and Serbia went to the aid of Bosnia and Herzegovina and subsequently declared war on the Ottoman empire (Serbo-Turkish War June 1876 to March 1878).

dinner which he offered his Imperial and other guests, when I was presented to the Emperor and Count Moltke.¹⁵²

The arrangements for his reception, and the excitement displayed by the public, were such as the head of Empire had not yet witnessed except in his own capital after the peace with France. Never were civic authorities so magnificent in constructing triumphal arches, pillars and colonnades, or streets so spontaneously and continuously decorated with flags, draperies, wreaths, flowers, and inscriptions, illuminated with such unbroken lines of light and filled with such respectful and (for Germany) enthusiastic crowds.

Leipzig is almost the only large German city which is Imperialist without reserve: its' ultra National Liberal sentiments have, in fact, been described as amounting to dispositions to 'Medize'.¹⁵³ Unless I mistake, the late festivities there will have tended to stimulate local Saxon patriotism. The people came into prolonged contact with the King, who is a man of considerable abilities and accomplishments, and has, unusual hold of the arts and instincts of popularity. They heard with pride the Imperial reply to the civic address, in which the Emperor emphatically declared that the nation should for ever be grateful to the heroic Prince who, first at Gravelotte,¹⁵⁴ and afterwards as Commander of the Meuse Army, proved himself to be one of Germany's most brilliant generals. They were flattered to see the King in the Theatre surrounded by his 16 Imperial and royal guests, and leading a cortège of more than two hundred German and foreign military visitors. They noticed that the Emperor, if I may say, did not bring the Empire with him to Leipzig. Not a word or a movement suggested the existence of any relation between himself and his royal host but that of equal sovereignty. At the Parade of the Saxon Corps, His Imperial Majesty even recognized the King of Saxony as his superior officer, by galloping to the head of the Infantry Regiment "Kaiser Wilhelm", and leading it past the King with his sword dropped.

The Emperors' energy, and power of work, whether with troops or in his cabinet, are almost incredible. He is still quite vigorous, and upright in the saddle: after a long morning on horseback on the Parade ground, which had to be reached by carriage and railway, and a gala dinner with its' inevitable series of speeches and presentations,

¹⁵²The emperor visited Leipzig from 5 to 7 September 1876 on the occasion of the German army's autumn manoeuvres. On 6 September he attended a parade of the XII Army Corps, the first of the so-called *Kaiserparaden*.

¹⁵³'Medize', Greek verb, that appeared during the Persian wars and stands for siding with the Medes (i.e. the Persians) rather than the Greeks.

¹⁵⁴Battle of Gravelotte, 18 August 1870.

the Emperor proceeded to the Theatre in State where he finally stood about in the Balcony for nearly two hours, evidently insensible to the fatigues of which men 20 or 30 years younger than himself were complaining.

The Crown Prince¹⁵⁵ and Count Moltke seemed to divide popular favor with the Emperor. His Imperial Highness never loses an opportunity of shewing his partiality to England: and accordingly he conversed with me for a considerable time in the amiable and intimate manner which is so peculiarly his own. I was interested to hear from himself the most energetic assertions of that loathing of war which is generally ascribed to him.

Lord Napier¹⁵⁶ and his staff attracted much attention at Leipsic. The German military consider the capture of Magdala a most audacious and well executed enterprise, and acquaintance with His Excellency's personal qualities could not fail to extend the sympathies inspired by his professional reputation. I had myself every reason to be sensible of his courtesy and kindness, and was glad to be able to be of use to him and his officers in their presentations to the Royal Family.

On taking leave of the Bürgermeister,¹⁵⁷ the Emperor said he had been much touched by his splendid reception. The personal kindness shewn in Leipsic to himself was, he said, the expression of the attachment of the inhabitants to their German citizenship, which they combined with a loyal devotion to the Sovereign of the country. The Emperor's voice is still strong and his speeches are rambling enough to leave the idea that they are in form; at least, more or less impromptu. Studied or spontaneous, they are certainly marked by great tact, and the Emperor's delivery, like his whole bearing and manners (even, as I more than once noticed, to servants.) suggests the utmost good nature and simplicity of character.

The King of Saxony has gone to Merseburg, where he will be the Emperor's guest during the IV Corps Exercises, and Manœuvres against the XIIth (Saxon) Corps.

¹⁵⁵Friedrich Wilhelm.

¹⁵⁶Napier was the emperor's guest at the German manoeuvres in 1876; as commander of the Abyssinian expedition he was responsible for the storming of the fortress of Magdala in April 1868.

¹⁵⁷Otto Robert Georgi.

**FO 68/160: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 45,
Dresden, 20 October 1876**

[Received 23 October. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield; D[erby]]

Remarks on retirement of Friesen; subsequent ministerial changes

Some time ago Your Lordship was informed that Baron von Friesen would shortly quit office. He has this week formally retired, and has left for Italy. He is only 68, but the German bureaucratic system entails continuity of service unbroken by the intervals of repose enjoyed by statesmen under parliamentary government. The “Reptile Press”¹⁵⁸ may ascribe other motives, but the real grounds of his resignation were his age, and increasing sense of fatigue.

Twenty years management of the Exchequer has brought Baron von Friesen the reputation of a safe conscientious and successful administrator and reformer in Finance. As successor to Count Beust at the Foreign Office he carefully avoided the appearance of Particularism, accepting the new order of things after Sadowa,¹⁵⁹ and the “masterly inactivity” which is entailed on Saxony, with a loyalty which, as I have heard my Prussian colleague¹⁶⁰ remark, has been highly appreciated at Berlin. He has been better reconciled to the Empire than to Prince Bismarck, with whom Baron von Friesen has had few sympathies. He always seemed to think of the Chancellor as Wurmser and the Aulic Council judged that rash and ill informed innovator Napoleon.¹⁶¹ For Baron von Friesen Prince Bismarck is a brilliant impostor in statesmanship, full of some of the more flashy qualities by which men are dazzled and led, but without the knowledge, wisdom, and self control, proper to a Stein, Peel, or Cavour. Of the Princes’ policy Baron von Friesen has constantly disapproved, altho’ his timidity has seldom allowed him to go beyond a faint preliminary opposition in the Bundesrath,¹⁶² which has often been recanted by an affirmative Saxon vote. I can best convey to Your Lordship His Excellency’s intellectual, moral, and personal, description, by saying that he is in all respects as unlike as possible to Count Beust. Judging

¹⁵⁸See n. 40 in this section.

¹⁵⁹The Battle of Sadowá (Bohemia) of 6 July 1866 – also known as the Battle of Königgrätz – was the decisive battle in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866.

¹⁶⁰Eberhard Graf zu Solms-Sonnenwalde.

¹⁶¹Strachey is referring to the Austrian Field Marshal Graf Wurmser whose unsuccessful Italian campaign against Napoleon in 1796 was constrained by the instructions of the Aulic Council (*Reichshofrat*), the judicial council of the Holy Roman Empire.

¹⁶²Federal Council.

from present appearances he is followed into his private life by the regrets and esteem which were denied to his predecessor.

The Minister of War, General von Fabrice, succeeds, by seniority, as President of the Council. Herr von Könneritz, Governor of the Province of Leipzig, goes to the Ministry of Finance. Herr von Nostitz-Wallwitz, the Minister of the Interior, will take the Foreign Office. The last named gentlemen are members of the "Free-Conservative" party: their appointments have no political signification.

FO 68/160: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 46, Dresden, 20 October 1876

[Received 23 October. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Print; D[erby]]

General apprehensions about war; German wish for neutrality; effects of article in The Times

Now that the public believes war to be imminent, the hope that Germany will leave the East to itself grows stronger and stronger. An efficacious public opinion does not, cannot, exist here; as far as the German people are concerned, Prince Bismarck is entirely free to choose between neutrality and action. But, as I have before had the honor to report, intelligent Germans are of opinion that although a Russian army on the Danube would be a great evil, the mobilisation, to say nothing of the active interference, of a German army to stop it would be considerably worse. Afterwards, should Constantinople be in immediate danger, or Austria severely defeated, other feelings might possibly arise.

Prince Bismarck's inactivity may furnish the opposition press with convenient sneers at Count Moltke's appeal on behalf of the septennial military budget on the ground that Germany was the sentinel of Europe.¹⁶³ But there is no sign anywhere of sympathy with the 'Times' entreaty to the Chancellor to settle matters by an authoritative, categorical, prohibition of war.¹⁶⁴ I observe that even journals extremely Turk in sentiment approve the remark of the *Kölnische Zeitung* – itself ultra-Turk – that the Germans are not going to pull English chestnuts out of the fire at the suggestion of the 'Times'. I need hardly observe that Germany has not the slightest wish to promote English objects. There is no general desire whatever for an alliance with England.

¹⁶³Strachey is probably referring to Moltke's speech in the *Reichstag* of 24 April 1874 in which he endorsed the army bill compromise. See pp. 80–82.

¹⁶⁴The *Times* editorial of 16 October 1876 ascribed a crucial role to Bismarck in resolving the Eastern crisis.

We have some friends, or, to be more accurate, some admirers, in the “Fortschritt” party: the nobility, Courts, and Governments are well disposed. But these are sectional views, which do not amount to popular feeling. Language like that of the ‘Times’ will check rather than promote their spread.

**FO 68/160: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 47,
Dresden, 16 November 1876**

[Received 20 November. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Print; D[erby]]

Nostitz-Wallwitz on Bismarck's attitude towards Austria; disposition of German people

A few days ago I drew the attention of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the plan persistently attributed to Prince Bismarck in some quarters, and treated by Russian diplomatists as an axiom above all discussion, according to which the eventualities of the Eastern question include the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy by Russia and Germany. I said that although the Prince's antecedents were not beyond reproach, they hardly warranted the belief that he was capable of a crime more flagitious than the League of Cambray,¹⁶⁵ or the worst usurpations of Louis XIV or Napoleon I. Was there any justification, known in German political circles for the said suspicion?

Herr von Nostitz replied that in his opinion all this was mere wild talk. He had never heard any sensible person attribute to Bismarck schemes, or even wishes, unfavourable to the continuance of Austria within her present dimensions. If Bismarck wanted to destroy his own work, the German Empire, he could not begin better than by announcing hostility to Austria, which would rouse the jealousies of the Bavarians, Wurtembergers and others, and be reprobated everywhere. Bismarck was very strong, but strength had it's limits. With all his power, he would be unable to drive Germany into an aggression for which no political cry, or necessity, could be invoked, nor any other ground but the circumstance that a good opportunity for plunder had turned up. It was scarcely conceivable that the Germans, however otherwise docile, would permit so fatal and dastardly a course against the very power which their sentiments and their interests alike called them to sustain. The annexation of parts of Austria might be a logical deduction from the doctrines of certain publicists, but whatever the

¹⁶⁵The League of Cambrai combined the Papal States, France, the Holy Roman Empire, and Spain against the Republic of Venice and gave its name to a major conflict (1508–1516) during the Italian Wars.

errors and exaggerations of the National Liberals, it would be calumny to describe them as wishing for the territorial changes supposed. As far as he knew, their repudiation of such aspirations would be as empathic as that of his own friends the Free Conservatives.

The Ministers remarks on German sympathies for Austria agree with a statement of D^r. Löwe-Calbe, the President of the Stuttgart Rump Parliament of 1849, now head of the Fortschritt 'Cave' in the Reichstag. That eminent politician told me, that the Austrian connexion was the one foreign alliance which the several liberal fractions had at heart, their grand aversion being Russia.

FO 68/160: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 52, Dresden, 30 November 1876

[Received 4 December. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Print; D[erby]]

Responses of the public and press to Lord Salisbury's mission to Constantinople

Some of our newspapers have represented "the Germans" as shrugging their shoulders at Lord Salisbury's Mission, and ridiculing its evident futility.¹⁶⁶ If I may venture an opinion, "the Germans" in question are not to be found here, but in the Editors rooms in London. Everyone puts faith in His Lordship's high political and personal qualifications, excellent results are hoped from his Mission, and the belief prevails that the diplomatic mediocrities in the Conference will be no match for serious statesmanship like his.

Such has been the anxiety to know, or seem to know, any details of his movements or views, that the 'Dresdener Nachrichten' has pretended that their special 'Interviewed' Lord Salisbury at Tetschen, on the frontier, (where he may have stopped two minutes),¹⁶⁷ and extracted his real opinions.

The same journal, in its' anti-Russian zeal, has interpolated in the Czar's explanations to Lord Augustus Loftus¹⁶⁸ an expression of his belief that if Russia and England are agreed the other powers must submit to their decision! It has escaped notice here, that the alleged

¹⁶⁶Salisbury was sent as Britain's representative to the conference of the Great Powers on political reform in Bosnia and Bulgaria, which was held on British initiative in Constantinople from December 1876 to January 1877; its resolutions were subsequently rejected by the Ottoman empire.

¹⁶⁷On 24 November 1876, on his way from Berlin to Vienna.

¹⁶⁸Conversation of 2 November 1876 at Livadia in which Alexander II assured Loftus that he had no intention of acquiring Constantinople.

language is borrowed verbatim from the conversations of the Emperor Nicholas with Sir H. Seymour.¹⁶⁹

FO 68/160: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 51, Dresden, 11 December 1876

[Received 18 December. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

Debates on civil criminal justice organization and procedure bill; remarks on arguments made by Saxon minister of justice

The Saxon Minister of Justice¹⁷⁰ has taken a leading part in the debates on the Civil and Criminal Justice Organization and Procedure Bill, throwing his weight, with his Prussian colleague,¹⁷¹ on the unpopular side.¹⁷²

For judges tenure, the Commission¹⁷³ had adopted life appointments, *quam diu bene se gesserint*,¹⁷⁴ with removal by a juridical sentence only. Such guarantees would be novel in Germany, and they can hardly be called necessary, although the remembrance of Prince Bismarck's "conflict-time",¹⁷⁵ and of the Arnim trial,¹⁷⁶ may suggest to Prussians that the independence of their bench is not sufficiently secured, or enough above suspicion. Herr von Abeken does not disapprove the English principle, but he maintains that in asserting it the Reichstag is invading the prerogatives of the separate States. He says that all officials ought to be subject to the power that appoints them; that sovereignty is infringed when questions of personal efficiency and discipline are removed from local competence, and the servants of the state encouraged to direct their wishes, expectations, and finally, no doubt, their complaints, to a foreign authority. Thus considered, the proposed clause is, he says, by no means a constitutional development, but an innovation, and a radical departure from the fundamental ideas of the constitution, which gives the administration of justice to the separate States and not to the Empire.

¹⁶⁹The 'Seymour conversations' of January and February 1853 with Nikolai I – published in 1854 – dealt with the future of the Ottoman empire.

¹⁷⁰Christian von Abeken.

¹⁷¹Adolf Leonhardt.

¹⁷²For the judicial reform of 1877, see n. 158 in Darmstadt section.

¹⁷³The judicial commission's propositions were passed by the *Reichstag* on 2 December 1876 and, at the time of this dispatch, were under discussion in the Federal Council.

¹⁷⁴'As long as they conducted themselves satisfactorily'; the usage of this phrase, which is quoted in Thomas Hobbes' *Behemoth* (1688), dates from the English Civil War.

¹⁷⁵For the Prussian constitutional conflict of 1859–1866, see n. 114 in this section.

¹⁷⁶For the Arnim affair, see nn. 159 and 188 in Berlin section.

On this I would remark, that the adoption of fixity of tenure will hardly do much to raise the independence, self-esteem, and importance, of the bench. So long as German judges are not gentlemen, and paid salaries on which they can hardly live, they will never reach the unquestioned dignity of their French and English colleagues. Nor can any practicable change invest them with the prestige which tradition gives the magistracy of countries where Séguier, d'Aquessau [*sic*], Gascoigne, Mansfield, are great historical as well as great professional names. Further, a legislative guarantee given in Dresden is obviously as good as one given in Berlin: a Tudor age is much more likely to arrive through the Government of the Empire than through those of the separate states. So that, on the whole, Herr von Abeken, may be right in treating the question as essentially one of Federalism versus Centralisation, and, as a Saxon, in resisting the last. It seems, however, idle to appeal to constitutional morality when institutions are only ten years old, especially as the Chart includes an article which Expressly grants the principle that the constitution of the Empire is infinitely elastic.¹⁷⁷

Herr von Abeken also declared against the adoption of the Bavarian, and Austrian practise, which reserves all press offences for trial by jury. Here his position was entirely technical. By Saxon law (which is analogous to that of other German states) offenders only come before a Jury when their eventual punishment would be at least 4 years imprisonment with labour. Press offences in Germany are, as a rule, in the nature of libel and defamation; they would generally be contraventions, at most delicts of a low order, to which class belong Prince Bismarck's endless actions for *Beleidigung*,¹⁷⁸ and the famous prosecutions of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, which arose from an obscure insinuation against an obscure schoolmaster. Positive political imputability seldom occurs. Herr von Abeken argues that there is no reason for assigning wrongs committed through a printing press to a criminal tribunal, and process, which, in the natural order of things, is reserved for much heavier offences. If it is improper to bring political reasons to tell against the press, neither should this receive exceptional political protection, which is what the liberal parties say journalists will obtain from jurors, in the equity of whose public sentiments a barrier will be found against reactionary officials. 'At this rate', said the Minister, 'all political offences whatever ought to be removed from the cognizance of juries, for you assert that you rely on jurors deciding in accordance with their subjective sentiments instead of according to law.'

¹⁷⁷Stachey is referring to Article 78 of the imperial constitution of 16 April 1871, see n. 4 in Stuttgart section.

¹⁷⁸Libel.

Some jealousy, or contempt, of the Press underlies these scholastic objections. Herr von Abeken is, besides, a strong partizan of the Saxon system of Schöffren (Assessors, or Scabini)¹⁷⁹ as against the Anglo-Saxon jury. He is a judicial bureaucrat, more interested in jurisprudence than in liberty or loss of liberty, who does not sympathize with the reactionary views of National Liberals like Professors Gneist and Sybel. For my own part, I believe that the proposed reform would chiefly tell on paper in favor of the “respectable classes” – by whom it is little wanted. The socialist Bebel, or Herr Majunke of the Germania, would probably fare better at the hands of a judge, than with a jury of Leipzig National-Liberals. No German judge is a Scroggs or Pollexfen and the majority, as a class, does not belong to a political party. What is wanted is not a new tribunal or process, but milder criminal provisions, more tolerance, and less of the paltry personal susceptibility which at the present disfigures most German statesmen and officials, and, on the other side, a more intelligent and conscientious, less calumnious, more courageous journalism, backed by a sensitive, determined public opinion. Until Germany attains to these conditions, which I am afraid, make a vicious circle, the press will not arrive at its’ proper dignity as Fourth Estate, whether its’ offences be tried by Juries or Schöffren.

It is characteristic of the prevalent apathy, that these important questions should have not even called forth an article in the leading journals here, so that I have been altogether left, in the above, to my own imperfect appreciations. I may add that Herr von Abeken always professes to disapprove Prince Bismarck’s system of prosecuting obscure slanderers, and that like his Ministerial Colleagues, and most intelligent Germans, he despises German journalism, as falling in ability, honesty, and enterprise, far below the level attained by the Press in some other countries.

FO 68/160: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 56, Dresden, 14 December 1876

[Received 18 December. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

Public indifference towards Eastern Question

It would be an abuse of language to speak of a German “public opinion” on Turkish affairs. Beyond desiring a settlement, of whatever kind, that shall allay the present financial calamities, people have no

¹⁷⁹*Scabini*, *Freischöffren* or lay jurors were part of the juridical system of the Holy Roman Empire.

real feeling in the matter. Turkey and Russia are not topics of the day: unless specially challenged Germans do not speak of these things. No one within my acquaintance, official or private, cares for them, or has any knowledge, even by name, of the historical and ethnographical controversies included in the Eastern question, or any accurate notion of recent diplomatic discussions.

No particular effect was produced by Prince Bismarck's explanations,¹⁸⁰ which have been chiefly criticized in reference to his conflict with D^r. Hänel, the National-Liberals resenting, with the Chancellor, the unwarrantable intrusion of a "dilettante" politician, while the Fortschritt party have represented the Princes' speech as a mere string of ill considered and unconnected exhortations more remarkable for ill humour than for wisdom.

FO 68/161: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 7, Dresden, 9 February 1877

[Received 12 February. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

Account of violent pamphlet against Prince Bismarck and the Berlin 'Grounders'

The continued intensity of the economic crisis in Germany has afforded plausible arguments to the "Enemies of the Empire".¹⁸¹ Prince Bismarck has been charged with following, on National Liberal instigation, a system which has divided the 5 Millions¹⁸² amongst a clique of jobbers and founders, ruined trade and enterprise, impoverished Germany, upset the monetary circulation, and brought the Empire to the edge of bankruptcy. It might seem, at first sight, a waste of time to notice the ignorant, or malicious calumnies of Agrarians, Protectionists, and other reactionary Politicians, who thus select for attack the particular part of the Prince's administration which has been the most beneficial to Germany, and where his personal initiative and interference have notoriously been so little felt. But the accusations of this kind derive importance from the fact, that owing to the very low economical intelligence of the Germans, they have been believed far and wide, and that their acceptance as true is one of the

¹⁸⁰Strachey is referring to the *Reichstag* debate of 5 December 1876 in which Bismarck, in answer to an interpellation on the increase of Russian custom duties, outlined Germany's policy towards Russia.

¹⁸¹Following the financial crisis of 1873 (Panic of 1873 or *Gründerkrach*) Germany, along with the rest of Europe and the USA, experienced a period of prolonged economic depression.

¹⁸²For the French war indemnity, see n. 107 in Berlin section.

main reasons why the extreme parties were so largely reinforced at the late elections.¹⁸³

D^r. R. Meyer, the well known “Christian-Socialist”, and political writer, has just brought out a bitter and powerful pamphlet¹⁸⁴ against the Reichskanzler, which is being rapidly sold, and is said to be producing a considerable effect in Germany. Leaving aside D^r. Meyer’s descriptions and statistics of Bismarckian “Grounding” I will give a slight outline of his impeachment.

[...]

D^r. Meyer, as Your Lordship will observe, exonerates the Reichskanzler from personal corruptibility. But the whole pamphlet practically asserts the libel which particular words may repudiate. Few of D^r. Meyer’s readers will believe, that a man of Prince Bismarck’s high powers and energy could become the unconscious tool of a band of Grounders and jobbers.

FO 68/161: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 17, Dresden, 6 April 1877

[Received 9 April. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

Views of Saxon justice minister on Reichstag vote for Supreme German Court to sit in Leipzig

With reference to my No. 13. of the 8th Ult^o I have the honor to report, that the Saxon Government does not quite follow the enthusiasm with which the general public has received the decision of the Reichstag that the Supreme German Court shall sit in Leipzig.¹⁸⁵ The Minister of Justice, who took part in the debates, brought back from Berlin a very pessimist view of the situation created (as he thinks) by the defeat of Prussia. His Excellency told me on his return, that the higher Prussian officials, and the right of the National-Liberals were beside themselves with rage: disappointment he had anticipated, but not the furious anger actually displayed. Saying that what I called his laurels were rather a “crown of thorns”, Herr von Abeken observed that he feared this incident would serve as excuse, now or hereafter, for an agitation for reform of the Constitution in the centralizing sense, either by concession of the Imperial Veto, or by readjustment in favor

¹⁸³Elections to the *Reichstag* were held on 10 January 1877.

¹⁸⁴Rudolf Meyer, *Politische Grönder und die Corruption in Deutschland*, Leipzig 1877.

¹⁸⁵The *Reichstag* passed the law for the establishment of the *Reichsgericht* at Leipzig on 21 March; the imperial law became effective on 11 April 1877; the court opened on 1 October 1879.

of Prussia of the voting machinery of the Bundesrath.¹⁸⁶ Under any circumstances the heavy defeat of Berlin would be treasured up, and an opportunity sought for inflicting a return blow on Saxony.

This language is, I presume, exaggerated. The fact that half the Prussian members voted for Leipzig and Decentralization reduces to a minimum the risks supposed. Some of his Excellency's colleagues think the matter of minor importance. Extreme Particularists here say that Leipzig is already quite un-Saxon enough, and does not need to be further Imperialized by the presence of a staff of German officials. An absurd argument has been circulated, that the Seat of the Supreme Court is *ipso facto* 'Immediate', so that Leipzig, like the Free Cities of the ancient Empire will acquire Exterritoriality.

FO 68/161: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 18, Dresden, 7 April 1877

[Received 12 April. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

Opinions of Nostitz-Waltwitz on Bismarck's purported resignation; remarks of King of Saxony

Herr von Nostitz informs me that although the Emperor may possibly wish Prince Bismarck's resignation to assume for the present the disguise of a temporary withdrawal from office, he is none the less aware that the Prince's definite retirement is now a real necessity.¹⁸⁷ Amongst Prince Bismarck's chief difficulties His Excellency places his relations with the Empress,¹⁸⁸ whose antagonism to the Prussian Church policy is unabated. On previous occasions I have reported the fears of Germans with respect to "the 3rd Punic war".¹⁸⁹ Prince Bismarck is known to be haunted by the conviction that this war is inevitable and that Germany, without waiting for France to strike, must anticipate the blow. The Empress altogether opposes such a speculative system, and desires the removal of Prince Bismarck as the most powerful advocate of defensive aggression. Besides the better known causes of the "friction", Herr von Nostitz named the Chancellor's recent differences with Herr von Camphausen regarding economical policy. The Chancellor has Protectionist leanings, and is,

¹⁸⁶Federal Council.

¹⁸⁷Bismarck offered his resignation on 27 March 1877; it was declined by Wilhelm I on 7 April.

¹⁸⁸Augusta.

¹⁸⁹The Three Punic Wars were fought between Rome and Carthage and saw the gradual destruction of the Carthaginians. Here, Strachey is referring to a possible third Franco-German war after the Napoleonic wars and the war of 1870–1871.

in particular, at variance with his colleague as to the basis of the Commercial Treaties.¹⁹⁰ Further Prince Bismarck's family has been pressing him to resign, he being, in truth, unfit for the work, which overweighed him, and, his, peculiarities of temperament being what they are, kept him in a state of prolonged and aggravated conflict.

This morning I saw the King of Saxony, who told me that when he was in Berlin for the Emperor's birthday¹⁹¹ not a syllable was breathed of this event. Prince Bismarck was described as being in broken health, and he declined to see the King. Last year, however, the Prince informed His Majesty that he should shortly retire, said his determination was irrevocable, and spoke of "the person" (evidently Count Stolberg) whom he wished to assume his succession.

**FO 68/161: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 23,
Dresden, 31 May 1877**

[Received 4 June. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

German feelings towards Britain and Russia

I do not believe that any one who fairly follows the feeble currents of German opinion can come to the conclusion which the 'Daily News' Berlin correspondent¹⁹² reiterates, that this public disapproves our controversial attitude towards Russia.¹⁹³ Individuals exist who condemn our policy; but these are mostly National-Liberals, who participate in the systematic hostility to Her Majesty's present Government shewn by the parliamentary and literary leaders of the Bismarckite party, – a line inspired by the notion that their politics are equivalent for Germany to those of M^r Gladstone,¹⁹⁴ a comparison which I have often taken the liberty to tell Germans no well informed English liberal would be likely to accept either as historical or complementary. To say that we are favorites in this Empire would be false: certainly the Germans have not for us the

¹⁹⁰At the time, the renewal of the commercial treaties with Austria-Hungary, Italy, Spain and Switzerland was under discussion.

¹⁹¹Wilhelm's 80th birthday on 22 March 1877.

¹⁹²Herbert Tuttle. His article 'Germany and the Eastern Question' was published in the *Daily News* on 21 May 1877.

¹⁹³The Anglo-Russian relationship was burdened by the Russian declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire in April 1877. British neutrality, despite sympathies for the Balkan states in their struggle against Turkey, was made conditional upon the protection of British interests in the Middle East and Asia.

¹⁹⁴Gladstone, in contrast to his successor Disraeli, supported the idea of the liberation of the Balkans and took a definite anti-Turkish stance on the Eastern crisis.

regard which they view e.g. the Italians, or the people whom they must most like and admire – the French. But between us and Russia the balance cannot be doubtful. Official persons and partisans may be bound by argumentative necessities arising out of the existence of the Triple-Alliance,¹⁹⁵ but the genuine public instincts are anti-Russian. All the unbiased intellectual currents set strongly that way, and in commercial and industrial regions the same tendency prevails. Quite lately a large National-Liberal manufacturer here, Herr Siemens, brother of the inventor in telegraphy,¹⁹⁶ came to me with a tirade against the barbarism of Russia, the hermetical sealing of the frontier, the passports, the prohibitory tariff, the eccentric railway gauge, the hostility of the natives to the German colonies in Russia, &c &c &c. Circumstances like these, added to the anticipation of an inevitable conflict with the Slav power, keep up a constant irritation which, I think, is visible enough even at the surface.

FO 68/161: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 28, Dresden, 15 June 1877

[Received 18 June. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

Results of Gotha Congress; report on state of Social Democrats

Two years ago I announced the projected union of the groups into which the Social Democrats of Germany fell after the death of Lassalle. The personal antipathies and pretensions that had separated the Bebelianer and the Lassalleaner having mostly subsided, leaving little but mere geographical antagonisms to remove, the fusion was accomplished in the Congress of Gotha, and a programme of party ideals and organization accepted.¹⁹⁷

Many of the persons in Germany best placed for judging held, that the Congress would fail to allay the dissensions, or to revive the activity of an expiring faction, which must gradually collapse under the indifference of the working classes, and the improved efficacy of legal coercion.

What happened was the reverse of this. The compromise of Gotha was followed by a large apparent addition to the Social Democratic strength. Indeed of the 379,000 votes recorded in 1874 the party polled 559,000 at the general election of last winter: their 9 seats in the

¹⁹⁵For the League of the Three Emperors, see n. 108 in Berlin section.

¹⁹⁶Friedrich August Siemens and Werner von Siemens.

¹⁹⁷See pp. 299–302.

Reichstag became 12: in Dresden, where Lassalle never counted more than 12 (twelve) sympathizers, Bebel headed the poll with 10,830 votes. This change was probably the mixed effect of improved electoral energy, a fortuitous accession of strength from particularists and disappointed officials, a certain positive spread of Social-Democratic opinion, and the German system of persecution.

The Report to the Congress which sat at Gotha a fortnight ago,¹⁹⁸ confirmed previous accounts of the good organization and untiring energy of the party. The results obtained seem very large in proportion to the pecuniary resources of German Social-Democracy, which are still extremely limited, the whole amount raised in 9 months for general purposes, and for the Election fund, being only £2,700, or less than a penny a head of the Socialist voting body.

From the debates of the Congress, compared with other evidence, I collect the following facts and inferences.

1. However loudly the “Liberal parties[?]” may assert the contrary, the force and unity of the Social-Democratic agitation is no longer impeded by personal rivalities. The Saxon programme has the upper hand: the authority of Bebel and Liebknecht is now scarcely disputed.

2. The differences visible in the Congress related to subordinate questions, like the patronage to be accorded or refused to special organs, or the propriety of literary contrasts between “men with callous hands” and a so-called “intelligence party” in the Socialist ranks. Hasselmann was slightly, not venomously, refractory, on the subject of a fly sheet called the ‘the Red Flag’, of which the Congress desired the eventual Suppression; but his resistance was easily, though not too authoritatively, overcome by Bebel.¹⁹⁹

3. Bebel and Liebknecht are trying to avoid the character of Hébertists [*sic*]²⁰⁰ and to impart to the movement as much moderation as is compatible with the maintenance of the enthusiasm necessary to keep it alive. Like some of the subordinate leaders here, and Gambetta in France, they have learned the advantages of self-restraint. They renounce the International, or Bakunin, element in Social Democracy as anarchical, – (a barefaced departure from their old opinions!) – and have urged great caution in the selection of a representative for the approaching International Congress.

¹⁹⁸The congress of the *Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands* was held on 27 May 1877.

¹⁹⁹Hasselmann intended to establish *Die Rote Fahne* – originally a publication for the 1877 election campaign – as a weekly journal, which would have been competitive to the central party organ *Vorwärts*.

²⁰⁰Hébertists, a radical political group during the French Revolution, named after the journalist Jacques Hébert.

4. Without quite accepting the assurance that the Prussian Attorney General²⁰¹ is the most successful of all the promoters of the cause, I infer that the demand of “a yearly tribute of victims from the reactionary state” actually stimulates the growth of Social-Democracy, and that by imprisoning editors and partizans the German Governments are educating a far more efficient race of agitators than would otherwise arise. The Socialists appear to be absolutely indifferent to the persecutions for press offences of which they are so constantly the objects. They admit that they can practically meet and talk in public as much as they like. With the law of association they are satisfied, except in Prussia, where, however, the prohibition of Corresponding Societies only interferes with the corporate existence of the party, leaving the particular local unions untouched.²⁰²

5. The distance between Social-Democracy and the “legitimate parties” was much increased by the events of the Paris Commune.²⁰³ Dealings like those of D^r Schweizer with Prince Bismarck are hardly conceivable now.²⁰⁴ In the Reichstag the Socialists have tried for “feeling” with the new “Bourgeois Democrats” who, however, have declined parliamentary negotiations.

FO 68/161: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 30, Dresden, 29 June 1877

[Received 2 July. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

Trials of Bebel and Liebknecht in Berlin; two editors sentenced for libel in Dresden

Bebel has been sentenced in Berlin to 9 months imprisonment for defamation of Prince Bismarck, in a pamphlet on the Parliamentary sessions of 1874–7.²⁰⁵ Bebel had said – that ‘Bismarck talked about God, in order to carry favor with stupid’: that ‘the attitude of the Reichstag towards him was worthy of a Hausknecht (boots): – that Bismarck had abused his position to secure 1,000,000 Thalers by ‘grounding’. The *Fortschritt* organs are usually very uncivil to the Social-Democrats, but the last sentence on the members for Dresden is described by the

²⁰¹Hermann Tessendorf.

²⁰²In Prussia the right of association was regulated by the *Vereinsgesetz* of 11 March 1850.

²⁰³For the Paris Commune, see n. 14 in Berlin section.

²⁰⁴As president of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein* Schweitzer was suspected of having received contributions from Bismarck’s ‘reptile fund’ (see n. 40 in this section).

²⁰⁵Bebel’s pamphlet was published under the title *Die parlamentarische Tätigkeit des deutschen Reichstags und der Landtage von 1874 bis 1876* (Berlin, 1876). Bebel was sentenced on 12 June 1877.

‘*Presse*’²⁰⁶ as outrageous, and they observe that this brutal continuity of persecution is injuring the oppressor more than the victim, although the pecuniary loss to Bebel, who is a turner, from interruption of his business, must be serious.

The Prussian Attorney General²⁰⁷ has long held that press offences ought to be arraigned without reference to the recognized principle of the *forum delicti*.²⁰⁸ He has prosecuted Liebknecht for a libel on the Emperor contained in a song called ‘The gun shoots, the sword hacks’ in allusion to Count Eulenburg’s famous threats of last year.²⁰⁹ The Berlin Stadtgericht declared itself incompetent, as the supplement of the Berlin paper²¹⁰ which contained the song was a sheet printed in Leipzig for local use, and issued, besides, to various Socialist organs. Herr von Tessedorff’s attempt to obtain a *projudicium*²¹¹ for his proposed innovation was therefore defeated.

My Prussian colleague²¹² is very punctual in drawing Prince Bismarck’s notice to any strong criticisms on him which may be printed here. On his denunciation two Editors²¹³ have been sentenced for minor libels on the Prince: They will no doubt be far more malicious on the next opportunity.

FO 68/161: George Strachey to Earl of Derby No 38, Dresden, 10 December 1877

[Received 12 December. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Chancellor of the Exchequer; D[erby]]

Discussion in Landtag on Saxon diplomatic representations in Vienna and Munich

The discussion of the biannual budget has given the National-Liberals an opportunity of renewing their attacks on the Saxon Legations at Vienna and Munich.

²⁰⁶ *Dresdner Presse*.

²⁰⁷ Hermann Tessedorff.

²⁰⁸ The principle according to which the place of jurisdiction is dependent upon where the crime occurred.

²⁰⁹ Eulenburg’s utterance in his speech to the *Reichstag* on 27 January 1876 was parodied in a poem, which was anonymously published in *Die neue Welt*, a popular socialist journal and supplement to various socialist papers.

²¹⁰ *Berliner Freie Presse*.

²¹¹ Latin: ‘prejudgment’.

²¹² Eberhard Graf zu Solms-Sonnenwalde.

²¹³ One of the editors in question was Isidor Landau.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs²¹⁴ argued that although some of Herr von Helderff's work at Vienna could be done by the Imperial Embassy, the contiguity of Saxony to Bohemia gave rise to much minor diplomatic business, which could not be satisfactorily managed except by a Saxon official. The presence in the Austrian capital of a Saxon resident was, besides, indicated by considerations of comity. As to Munich, said His Excellency, under the new Empire the contact of the German states had become more intimate and frequent, so that the Government of Saxony was more than ever interested in the details of Bavarian policy and legislation. The arguments against the post at Munich would apply to the mission at Berlin, to the Prussian Legation here, and so on indefinitely. Sweep away the existing diplomatic machinery, and the German Governments would cease to exchange confidential explanations, and small misunderstandings, now easily removed, would grow into complications and collisions.

A leading National Liberal²¹⁵ said, that the way to obtain useful information on any German matter was to send to the place concerned a person fitted to understand it. Diplomats would seldom fulfil this condition, and competent specialists could always be found. In most cases you could get what you wanted by the post, while the direct application of a Saxon department to the proper local authority elsewhere would immediately produce the results now obtained, or sought to be obtained, by diplomatic *circum bendibus*.²¹⁶ The Free-Conservatives and Particularists did not care for the practical questions at issue, but were afraid of the prerogatives of the Crown being jeopardized. "As long as a struggle is in progress between the Empire and the particular states and the tendency exists to extend the Imperial Authority, so long must every right of the Crown be maintained."

The votes were finally carried by decisive majorities.

The Government have asked for £40,000 to build a house for the Saxon representative²¹⁷ in Berlin, but the grant has been refused on economic grounds.

²¹⁴Hermann von Nostitz-Wallwitz.

²¹⁵Karl Gotthold Krause.

²¹⁶Latin: 'roundabout way or means'.

²¹⁷Oswald von Nostitz-Wallwitz.

FO 68/161: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 41, Dresden, 27 December 1877

[Received 31 December. X]

Discussion in first chamber on justice bill; Saxony attacked in north German 'reptile press'

The Upper Chamber has been considering a Bill for giving effect to the German Judicial Organization law of last session.²¹⁸

In the debate, the National-Liberal Bürgermeister of Leipzig, Georgi, contrasted the Saxon measure unfavorably with the corresponding Prussian bill,²¹⁹ chiefly on the frivolous ground, that while Herr Leonhardt's 'motives' gave an analysis of the whole German reform projected, Herr von Abeken had supplied no such information. This comparison, and a hint that Saxon judges might someday be found too compliant with official wishes, brought up two Conservatives,²²⁰ who retaliated with sarcasms on Prussian justice, observing that the Arnim trial²²¹ had shewn whether there were now, as in the days of the miller of Sans Souci, 'des juges à Berlin'.²²² The North German "Reptile Press"²²³ replied by accusing Saxony of various offences, such as the pestiferous Particularism of the Kingdom, the dearth and discomforts of Dresden &c; the threat being added, that unless the Saxons changed their style of naming Prussian things and persons, these amenities would be continued.

In the last number of the Prussian "Jahrbücher", Professor von Treitschke has tried to add fuel to the fire by saddling Saxony with the responsibility for the constitutional "Chancellor-Crisis", which he ascribes to the Reichstag's decision that the seat of the German Court of Appeal should be at Leipzig.²²⁴ "Everywhere in the Empire the bob head of Particularism is now being lifted. The grand sin of omission of 1866, the neglect to annex Saxony, is now being felt."

²¹⁸The bill was passed by the first chamber on 21 December 1877. The imperial juridical laws of 1877, which standardized the jurisdiction of Germany, comprised the laws on the constitution of the courts (27 January), and the code of procedure in civil (30 January) and criminal cases (1 February).

²¹⁹The Prussian bill to implement the imperial law on the constitution of the courts, was presented to the house of deputies on 14 November 1877; it was passed on 23 March 1878 and enacted on 24 April 1878.

²²⁰Friedrich Robert von Criegern and Bernhard Edler von der Planitz.

²²¹For the Arnim trial, see nn.159 and 188 in Berlin section.

²²²Legend has it that the miller of Sans Souci responded to Friedrich II's threat to confiscate the mill (the noise of which was regarded as intrusive) by telling him that he could do so, if there were no judges to be found in Berlin.

²²³See n. 40 in this section.

²²⁴The *Reichstag* approved the decision of the Federal Council on 24 March 1877.

As von Treitschke is a Saxon, and is great master of rhetorical and controversial insolence, his articles are calculated to provoke much irritation in Dresden. But as the Germans have not the literary habits which we attribute to them, high class periodicals only reach a restricted circle here, so that the general public is scarcely informed of the Professor's medizing,²²⁵ of which the newspapers have said little or nothing.

FO 68/162: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 4, Dresden, 9 February 1878

[Received 5 February. Seen at Berlin. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

Nostitz-Wallwitz on recent ministerial incident in England and Eastern Question; Bismarck's policy; press judgments

Herr von Nostitz observed to me yesterday, speaking of our recent Ministerial Incident,²²⁶ that of the very few persons here who try to form independent judgements on foreign affairs, the majority, no doubt, were on the side of Your Lordship and Lord Carnarvon, but that some thought the time had come for a demonstration against Russia, in which sense the advance of our fleet to Constantinople would necessarily be read, in spite of all Parliamentary assurances that intervention was not contemplated.

I remarked that it was a curious thing to see this great and cultivated nation keeping absolutely dumb in presence of an European crisis, renouncing all attempts to influence the international policy of the Empire, and allowing the moral energies of Germany to be used to promote objects which most Germans hold in detestation. Herr von Nostitz admitted the fact; and said that the feeling was general that Russia ought not to be permitted to possess herself of the mouths of the Danube, but there could be no confidence that Prince Bismarck would oppose an effective resistance to the rectification of the Bessarabian frontier rumoured to be among the conditions of peace.²²⁷ The Emperor William was enthusiastically devoted to Russia, and Prince Bismarck was very anxious to please the Emperor, thinking

²²⁵For 'medize', see n. 153 in this section.

²²⁶On 4 February 1878 the secretary of state for the colonies, the Earl of Carnarvon, resigned on account of his disagreement with Disraeli's policy towards Russia and the Eastern Question.

²²⁷The controversy concerned the southern part of Bessarabia (Budzhak), which belonged to Russia until 1856; it was transferred back to Russia by the Treaty of Berlin of 13 July 1878.

it wise, moreover to continue his adherence to the system of Frederic the Great in respect to the Northern Alliance.²²⁸

The press here has been very severe on our late policy, charging us with breaches of neutrality and treaties, tergiversation, truckling, cowardice, weakness, lust of conquest, and various other offences.

FO 68/162: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 7, Dresden, 14 March 1878

[No date. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; D[erby]]

Conversation with Friesen on 'Chancellor Crisis'; his wish for a responsible German ministry

In spite of Baron von Friesen's withdrawal from office,²²⁹ he is the only person with whom I come into contact whose conversation throws real light on affairs.

I had observed to his Excellency that the debates on the Chancellor's Substitutes Bill²³⁰ struck me as not creditable to German parliamentary honesty and sense. This measure, as every one knew, was not political, like the reforms of Cleisthenes or the Graecchi.²³¹ Its plain purpose was to make things comfortable for an individual. The object was, to cover with an explicit constitutional sanction Prince Bismarck's new system of doing at his own times just the kind and amount of work omitted to the capacity and caprice of an invalid. But in the Reichstag people pretended not to see that. No one had ventured to call spades spades: most of the speakers had launched into barren enunciations of principles and had ventilated political ideals, involving the subject in a cloud of obscure talk until an ordinary mind could scarcely understand what was meant.

Baron von Friesen said that the Bill, as I justly remarked, had a personal object. Bismarck was the mere shadow of his former self: the decline of his powers was associated with aggravation of his irritability, reserve, jealousy of contradiction or criticism, of his impatience of "friction", love of isolation, and his other morbid susceptibilities

²²⁸ Strachey is referring to the Russo-Prussian alliance of 1764.

²²⁹ Friesen retired as minister president on 1 October 1876.

²³⁰ The bill which became imperial law on 17 March 1878 (*Stellvertretungsgesetz*) authorized the chancellor to request the emperor for a deputy should he (the chancellor) be prevented from performing his duties of government; in addition, responsibility for imperial departments (*oberste Reichsbehörden*) under the authority of the chancellor could be consigned to their presidents.

²³¹ Strachey is referring to Cleisthenes's democratic reforms in Athens (509–508 BC) and the agrarian reforms by Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus in the 2nd century BC.

and ways. His desire was to be solitary, governing or seeming to govern, Germany from Varzin, out of the reach of colleagues, selecting work according to his fancy and strength. This was neither correct nor easy, and he wished for powers to enable him to legalize and facilitate his way of conducting affairs. Bismarck's objects are personal, not constitutional, and, as usual with him, his method is empirical: certainly he was not trying to begin to realize a theory of government, so as to infringe on the rights of the separate States. His faults did not include Prussian Particularismus: he was very German and had no centralizing schemes.

I then asked the ex-Minister if, according to his experience, the defects of the Imperial Government as a working machine, were serious, and fundamental, or whether they arose from personal and incidental causes. The Baron said that the machine had practically gone very well until Prince Bismarck had thrown up part of the duties assigned to the Reichskanzler: by his withdrawal from Berlin, coupled with Delbrück's resignation,²³² and the appointment in his place of a man of such inferior talents and influence as Hofmann, the energy of the central administration had been impaired. The inconvenience was, that competent German authority could not be got at in ordinary matters of business. The responsible head of the Executive was nearly inaccessible so that Bavaria, e.g. or Saxony, could get no contact for current affairs except with a mere set of upper clerks who knew nothing and were worth nothing. In spite of this, things went on tolerably; it was nonsense to talk of anarchy or dead-lock. 'The remedy wanted continued Herr von Friesen, is one which you may be surprised to hear me name. I do not approve of this constitutional patching to suit the case of a particular statesman. I have become a heretic, and want, like the National-Liberals, a regular Constitutional Government. The affairs which the Empire has to transact in the Bundesrath,²³³ and with the States, should be sustained by responsible Ministers of recognized capacity and political weight. The Particularist arguments against such a development of the Central power are mere declamation. The spheres of Imperial and Local Government do not touch: and I do not see how, e.g. the Saxon Minister of War is to be extinguished by the appointment of a German official. But Bismarck is an obstacle in this. He wants his colleagues (if any) to be mere clerks, or, indeed, servants, in accordance with what he so perversely calls the English ministerial system, and thus comes to the same point as my late colleague Herr

²³²Delbrück resigned as president of the imperial chancellery on 27 April 1876; he was succeeded by Karl von Hofmann on 1 June.

²³³Federal Council.

von Nostitz who, as you know, has been making a strong speech in the Reichstag against the pernicious idea of a German Ministry.²³⁴

I observed that if my appreciation was correct there was no such thing in Germany as an effective public opinion. Until that was aroused, no constitutional machine, however well devised, would work properly. His Excellency said I could not put that too strongly. The political torpor was partly owing to the wretched state of the press, for which Bismarck was largely to blame. Then how could the people take an interest in a body like the Bundesrath, which debated in secret? Here was an absolute necessity for reform: let in the light, do not corrupt the press, and a better political education and interest will gradually develop.

**FO 68/162: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury,
No 12, Dresden, 25 April 1878**

[Received 30 April. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; S[alisbury]]

Remarks on description of 'the Germans' in the Daily News

The Berlin correspondent of the 'Daily News'²³⁵ is fond of reinforcing the doctrines of his friends at home by the arguments of "the Germans", who according to his description, are now little below the extreme English party mark in vituperation of Lord Beaconsfield. His "Germans" may always be confidently reduced to two or three National-Liberal members of the Reichstag, or, perhaps to a fraction of the Editorial Staff of the *National-Zeitung*, or some other notorious recipient of the bounties of the 'Reptile Fund'.²³⁶ At any rate they have no existence in Saxony. Great Britain cannot be said to enjoy excessive popularity here, but an improvement has lately set in; and this is due, in part, to the respect inspired by our preparations, and the attitude of our Premier, who is credited with a return to the genuine traditions of old English policy and Eloquence. From the King downwards as I can say from my personal knowledge, there is hardly any one of note here who has not applauded all our more energetic acts and manifestos. The idea has perhaps arisen that we are going too far, but such supposed excess is criticized as an exaggeration of patriotic

²³⁴In the debate on the *Stellvertretungsgesetz* of 8 March 1878 Nostitz-Wallwitz rejected the plans for a responsible imperial ministry or governmental secretaries.

²³⁵Herbert Tuttle. Strachey is probably referring to the coverage of the Eastern Question and the pending negotiations at Berlin in the *Daily News* of 22 April 1878. For the Congress of Berlin, see n. 324 in Berlin section.

²³⁶For the so-called 'reptile press', see n. 40 in this section.

energy, certainly not ridiculed in the style of the “Germans” with whom the correspondent of the ‘Daily News’ manages to come into contact.

FO 68/162: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury, No 13, Dresden, 6 May 1878

[Received 8 May by post. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; S[alisbury]]

Observations on decline of technical skills in Germany

Although the present time may not be favourable for the consideration of industrial topics, I beg leave to offer a remark on Mr. Cowper-Temple’s reiteration of his favourite fancy, that our workmen are behind those of Germany in technical knowledge and skill.²³⁷

If Mr. Temple had any acquaintance whatever with his subject, he would be aware that within the last few years the Germans have been exhaustively discussing their own industrial skill and trade and that they have come to conclusions diametrically opposed to his. He would know, for instance, that the verdict of Professor Reuleaux of Berlin on the German ‘exhibits’ at Washington – “billig and schlecht”²³⁸ – was universally accepted as true by savants, employers, and workmen, who were unanimous in recognition of the fact that the German artizan had lost his old place, and was no longer up to the average European standard.

All the reports, private or official, on the Vienna and Munich exhibitions,²³⁹ confirmed this view, which is treated in Germany as an axiom, into which further enquiry is superfluous. An assertion that German work was at the English level of technical perfection and manual skill, would be ridiculed here as the raving of mere Chauvinism.

Taking up yesterday’s “Dresdner Journal”²⁴⁰ I find, that the recent opening of a Watchmaker’s school at Glashütte in Saxony, has inspired

²³⁷Strachey is referring to a speech made by the Liberal MP William Cowper-Temple at the opening of a trades’ school in Southampton on 30 April 1878. He attributed German superiority in handicrafts to a wider diffusion of instruction in science and the technical arts.

²³⁸In a letter from the Centennial International Exhibition at Philadelphia of 2 June 1876 – which was published in a collection of letters in 1877 – Franz Reuleaux stated that the ‘basic principle of Germany’s industry is “cheap and bad”’.

²³⁹Strachey is referring to the Vienna world exposition of 1876 and the Munich *Kunst- und Industrieausstellung* of 1876.

²⁴⁰*Dresdner Nachrichten*.

the “Deutsche Uhrmacherzeitung” with an article which illustrates my position. The writer says, with respect to the decline of German watchmaking, that, patriotic men have lamented the deterioration of German work, especially in art industry. The complaint has been made “that our neighbours, the French English Dutch and Swiss have surpassed us, while in the good old times pilgrims used to flock to Germany to form themselves in German workshops, and to imbibe enthusiasm so as to imitate the artistic products created by the German hand”. Times, says the writer, long vanished, – the hope remaining that with the opening of schools like that of Glashütte there may be some recovery of the lost ground.²⁴¹

**FO 68/162: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury,
No 14, Dresden, 16 May 1878**

[Received 18 May. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; S[alisbury]]

Reactions in Saxony to assassination attempt on Wilhelm I; general comments about treatment of Social Democrats

The news of the attempt on the Emperor’s life were received here with suitable demonstrations of the respect and regard entertained for His Majesty by all but extreme Socialists or Particularist partizans.²⁴²

Incidents of this lamentable kind must be expected to recur, while the German way of dealing with obnoxious minorities remains what it is. About 3½ years ago I shewed in a comprehensive report,²⁴³ based on my own observations, how it was that although the Social-Democrats enjoyed full political rights, no active members of the party could escape the permanent certainties of prosecution and punishment for press misdemeanors and defamation. The sectaries of a destructive creed are nothing if not attacking persons and institutions, and they are easily incriminated under the elastic German law of libel. No political trial has happened in Saxony, for instance, for seven years, but private actions for Beleidigung,²⁴⁴ (like the complaints of which Prince Bismarck is said, of course with some exaggeration, to have laid from

²⁴¹The Deutsche Uhrmacherschule Glashütte opened as the educational establishment of the central association of German watchmakers on 1 May 1878.

²⁴²On 11 May 1878 Emil Max Hödel, a plumber from Leipzig, tried to shoot Wilhelm I in Berlin. The failed assassination became a pretext for the 1st draft of the Anti-Socialist Law in May 1878.

²⁴³FO 68/158: George Strachey to Earl of Derby, No 42, Dresden, 3 December 1874; not included in this volume.

²⁴⁴Libel.

7000 to 8000,) are of very frequent occurrence. The infirmities of the national temper make the Germans very intolerant of criticism, so that there is a constant flow of prosecution initiated by sensitive officials, or by the representatives of public bodies, institutions, professions, and departments, (the Army, Clergy, Police, &c &c) which may have been impugned in their corporate character and actions. Then, as the German conception of the duty of the *Staatsanwalt*²⁴⁵ obliges that functionary to interpose, without reference to consideration of general utility, whenever he becomes officially aware that this law has been broken, his additions to the score of prosecution are by no means small.

The attempt of Hödel in Berlin has suggested to some of the National-Liberal organs the reiteration of their old hints on the propriety of a legislative crusade against the Socialist propaganda, which, they argue, has no claim to the tolerance proper for the "Legitimate Parties". Responsible politicians will no doubt resist the insertion of the thin end of the wedge of reaction, but the recent augmentations of Social-Democratic strength, indicated, e.g. by Bebel's return to the Reichstag for Dresden, and the surprising elections in Berlin,²⁴⁶ to say nothing of the gradual intrusion of the party into communal offices, have so alarmed the public, that the adoption of some system of Six-Acts²⁴⁷ would not, in my opinion, be generally disapproved. Severe repression would without doubt attain some of its' objects, whereas under the above described state of rub and conflict no Social-Democrat was ever intimidated, still less silenced, while the most venomous class enmities and political passions are shored and kept alive. The capacity of Socialist theory for suggesting assassination is sufficiently large, but as a still surer source of the last and worst impulses of fanaticism I should look to the daily German round of prosecution, punishment, and surveillance.

The Social-Democratic management disown Hödel, as an 'Anarchist', or adherent of Bakunin, and assert that he was formally expelled from their ranks a few days ago; but his work as a subordinate wirepuller of the party in Saxony, gave him daily experience of persecution, so that he was just the man to be full of the rancorous, revengeful, temper, of which the National-Liberal Bamberger spoke

²⁴⁵State attorney.

²⁴⁶In the *Reichstag* elections on 10 January 1877 the *Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei* won two Berlin constituencies.

²⁴⁷Strachey is referring to the suppressive Six Articles of 28 June 1832 (German Confederation).

some time ago as making the Empire “the classical land of class hatred”.²⁴⁸

[...]

P.S. My Despatch No. 9. of March 13, 1875, gives a history of the reconstitution of the German Social-Democratic party, with their new political and social programme.²⁴⁹

**FO 68/162: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury,
No 15, Dresden, 26 May 1878**

[Received 28 May. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; S[alisbury]]

Remarks of Saxon justice minister on anti-socialist bill; public satisfaction at bill's rejection

The Bill against the Social-Democrats has been almost universally condemned here.²⁵⁰ The most effective criticism I have heard came from the Saxon Minister of Justice, who told me that in his opinion this measure ignored the proper functions and limits of law, confessed the complete bankruptcy of the German system of political and criminal legislation, and claimed for the police powers far in excess of their rightful authority and liable to the gravest risks of abuse.

But, said Herr von Abeken, the time was come for doing something, and the Government of the State where Social Democracy has its principal seat could not refuse to sanction the Bill, which, as they are well aware, proposes too little or too much.

The satisfaction at the rejection of the measure is universal; the belief prevailing, that it would have introduced a kind of state of siege, since the Social-Democrats, besides their special phantastic objects, have ‘Aims’ of which the moderate parties on both sides desire the attainment.

Saxon constitutional morality and tolerance are doubtless more developed than the equivalent Prussian traditions and habits; Still I do not think that this Government ought to be trusted with the sort of powers demanded by the rejected bill. I often hear in high political places sentiments of malignant Junker reaction; even Free Conservatives like Herr von Nostitz are constantly backsliding into very questionable regrets and aspirations.

²⁴⁸Ludwig Bamberger coined this phrase in his book *Deutschland und der Sozialismus*, published in 1878.

²⁴⁹See pp. 299–302.

²⁵⁰The 1st draft of the anti-socialist bill sought to endow the Federal Council with the power to suppress socialist publications and organizations, and to empower local police to dissolve socialist meetings and imprison participants. It was rejected by the *Reichstag* on 24 May 1878.

**FO 68/162: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury,
No 25, Dresden, 8 October 1878**

[Received 10 October. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield; S[alisbury]]

Anti-socialist bill; Saxon official views

Herr von Nostitz informs me that he expects the Social-Democrat Bill to pass in a shape acceptable to the Governments: he does not think that the opposition will be able to carry the 2½ years limiting clause.²⁵¹

The Saxon Minister has more faith than any Englishman is likely to have in the possibility of extinguishing feelings and ideas by act of Parliament, and he has the usual German instinctive sympathy with repressive laws. But the constitutional aspects of this Bill have preoccupied him almost more than its' probable efficacy.

This is not surprising, seeing that the sacrifice of sovereignty now to be imposed on the separate states, is thought to be more serious than any previous concession of Particular rights. The proposed measure is specially administrative, and the appointment of the Court of Appeal will give the central power a control over state administration.²⁵² The new encroachment – so it is argued – will be more dangerous in practise, and as a precedent, than the interference of the Empire with the Army, Post Office, Sanitary Police, the Codes, and the like.

Such considerations have had weight here in deciding a preference for a Court of Appeal exclusively constituted from the Bundesrath²⁵³ – that is, of representatives of the Separate States. It is the personal opinion of Herr von Nostitz that such Tribunal ought to include no judicial members. Things, he says, should be called by their right names; and words are misused, and ideas confused, when judges are required to administer a sort of justice which is not according to law.

²⁵¹The Anti-Socialist Law (Law against the publicly dangerous endeavours of Social Democracy) was passed by the *Reichstag* on 19 October 1878 and the Federal Council on 21 October, when it was also signed by Wilhelm I; it became effective on 22 October. It banned social democratic and socialist societies, associations, meetings, and publications which aimed at 'the overthrow of the existing political or social order'. The law, which was originally limited to the duration of two and half years, was extended four times until 1890.

²⁵²The law provided for a committee or *Reichskommission* which was made up of four members of the Federal Council and five members of the supreme courts of the *Reich* and the *Länder*; complaints could be lodged against the prohibition or surveillance of associations, and the prohibition of publications.

²⁵³Federal Council.

**FO 68/162: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury,
No 27, Dresden, 17 October 1878**

[Received 19 October. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate; S[alisbury]]

Anti-Socialist German Workman's Congress in Dresden

The 2nd “German Workman’s Congress” has just been held in Dresden.²⁵⁴

This is the second meeting of the representatives of the Anti-Socialist movement inaugurated two years ago by D^r. Max Hirsch, the author of the non-Socialist Trades Unions of Germany, known as the Hirsch-Duncker “Gewerkvereine”.²⁵⁵ These societies were founded to complete and control the Loan-Banks, Cooperative Stores, Productive Associations, &c, organized by Schulze-Delitzsch on the anti-Socialist principle of ‘Self-Help’. The apparent philanthropy of D^r Hirsch and his friends has been called a mask assumed to cover a political design. These ‘Trades-Unions’ have, in fact, been useful in promoting the objects of the liberal bourgeoisie, and in particular, of the *Fortschritt* party, from which, however they have lately been slipping away.

The anti-Socialist Association of which I am writing, is described by its’ promoters as resting on the above named ‘Trade Unions’, which do not appear to muster more than 20,000 members. The description of *Arbeiter-Congress*²⁵⁶ was a misnomer: working men were only represented by half a dozen Social-Democrats, who expressed some slight contempt for the proceedings and then retired.

Debates on the means of restoring “harmony between capital and labour” could not fail to turn chiefly on old facts and suggestions. D^r Hirsch reproduced the familiar *crambe repetita*,²⁵⁷ that the sharpest sword to slay socialism is *Culture*. Given better educational methods and subjects, inducements to original thought, and solid courses of lectures in Political Economy, and the scales will begin to fall from the workmen’s eyes. Further – the relations of capital and labour must be controlled by a comprehensive system of philanthropic legislation, which has to embrace the entire industrial, social, and physical existence of the workman and his family. The rest is within the competence of ‘Self-Help’.

²⁵⁴The congress was held on 13 and 14 October 1878.

²⁵⁵The *Hirsch-Dunckersche Gewerkvereine* were founded in 1869. Local English and Scottish trade unions, which were studied by Hirsch on a journey to Britain in 1868, served as models.

²⁵⁶Workers’ congress.

²⁵⁷Metaphor for the tiresome repetition of arguments (the phrase *crambe repetita* literally means ‘warmed up boiled cabbage’); based on a Greek proverb (Juvenal).

The most important special discussion turned on the Apprentice question. The abolition of the Guilds, and the disruption of the obligatory ties between masters and learners, has been followed by a progressive deterioration in the character and technical skill of German workmen; and the quality of German work. A return to restrictive rules and legislation is impossible, and the Congress, while recognizing and deploring a great and growing evil, was content to resolve that it was an educational difficulty which must be met by private effort, and by the restoration of the family footing between apprentices and masters.

**FO 68/162: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury,
No 38, Dresden, 31 December 1878**

[Received 15 January. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Chancellor of the Exchequer; S[alisbury]]

Bismarck's letter to the Federal Council on tax reform and protective tariffs; character of new tax scheme

Prince Bismarck's Letter to the Bundesrath opens so large a field for discussion, that the present report may perhaps be found to include considerations to which other and better informed critics have not adverted.²⁵⁸

Germany, I mean, not the 26 States, but the Empire, is now spending her £26,500,000 per annum. Equilibrium between disbursements and income has not been attained, and the Reich has been paying its' way by help of the French War Indemnity²⁵⁹ and by borrowing. Unlike most other Governments, that of Germany always magnifies the Deficit, which is as regularly pared down by the Reichstag under the authority of Herr E. Richter.

A certain portion of the expenditure may be equivalent to investment, and the German income is such that no satisfactory line can be drawn between normal and extraordinary receipts. Under these circumstances it is best to drop the idea of Deficit, and to say that the fixed resources of the Empire yield an annual £15,000,000, leaving an 'Under-Balance' of £11,000,000.

This was the supplementary amount to be provided in the current financial year. It has been met,— partly by a contribution from the

²⁵⁸Bismarck's letter to the tariff commission of the Federal Council, the so-called *Weihnachtsbrief* (Christmas letter) is dated 15 December 1878; it was published on 25 December.

²⁵⁹For the war indemnity, see n. 107 in Berlin section.

still unexhausted, (and, indeed, unexplored) remainder of the French Indemnity, augmented by aids and windfalls of which I need not speak in detail – and partly by loan (£4,000,000),– the full balance (£4,300,000) being covered by the so-called Matricular Impost,²⁶⁰ which is not collected by the Reich itself, but is paid by the separate States proportionally to population, and raised by them as they think fit.

The epoch of supplies and surprises from the Five Millions, and from the special Funds derived from them (Invalid, Fortress, Railway, Houses of Parliament Funds &c), will soon be closed. And Germany's next fiscal prospects are – growing expenditure, and diminishing normal revenue. To that, unless new resources are assigned to the Reich, there must be new loans and, perhaps, an increasing Matricular Impost.

Although this tax has its admirers (of whose motives I do not speak), it is, on the whole unpopular. Being in the nature of a Poll-Tax, its incidence is unfair: rich Hamburg, for instance, pays no more for a population of merchants and shopkeepers than a poor Thuringian principality for an equivalent number of peasants. Then, as German constitutional theory and practise reserve the Indirect Taxes for the Empire,²⁶¹ the 26 States have to raise their Matricular Dues by Direct Taxation which is every where heavy, if not oppressive. Again, the Poll-Tax is assailed by National-Liberals, and others, as being a chapter of Income for which the Reich is dependent on the Separate States, and they would be glad to see some other impost adopted in its' place.

Prince Bismarck's view of this Tax appears to be more personal than scientific. He is not troubled by its' injustice, or by its' incompatibility with the 'Idea of the Empire', but he dislikes it as being specially accessible to Parliamentary discussion and revision. Unlike the Prussian Landtag, whose prerogatives are seriously limited by the 109th Article of the Constitution,²⁶² which guarantees to the Crown the continued enjoyment of all taxes not specifically repealed by law, the Reichstag votes Receipts as well as Expenditure. But over the Income accruing to the Empire from the Custom House, the Sugar, Salt, Tobacco and Liquor Excises, and other similar sources, the control of the House is necessarily ineffective, the more so as by the concession of the Military Septennate²⁶³ they have surrendered their right of discussing the regular Army Estimates. Indirect Taxation has thus become Prince Bismarck's favourite panacea, as is natural for

²⁶⁰For the *Matrikularbeiträge*, see n. 181 in Darmstadt section.

²⁶¹Articles 35 and 70 of the imperial constitution of 1871.

²⁶²Prussian constitution of 31 January 1850.

²⁶³See n. 131 in Berlin section.

a Minister with his impatience of criticism and contradiction, – his want of fiscal knowledge, his increasing inferiority in debate, in whose domestic measures and ideals it is always easier to read the history of his own personal situation than to discover the perfect objectivity of statesmanship which marked the legislation of Turgot, Cavour, and Peel. It would be unfair to the Reichskanzler to forget, that he has no majority at his back, and that his budgets are habitually subjected to such parings and manipulations as no English or Italian minister would accept.

Prince Bismarck's first proposals for economic Reform were too partial to satisfy the majority in the Reichstag, which wanted changes more organic than those contemplated by him.²⁶⁴ The liberal leader asked, besides, for securities that any eventual surplus obtained by the Empire should be distributed to the separate States, and for guarantees that the Budget control of the German Parliament should not sink to the mere residuum of a right to which, as above explained, the Landtag of Prussia is reduced under Article 109 of the Constitution of that Kingdom. The guarantees were chiefly to consist in a constitutional reorganization of the Government of the Empire, to proceed *pari passu* with the economic reform, and in the appointment of representatives of the National-Liberal Party to German Cabinet Offices.

The negotiations between Prince Bismarck and Herr von Benningsen [*sic*] led to no positive result. Their rupture was followed by the adoption of a small organic reform (*Stellvertretergesetz* of last winter)²⁶⁵ devised, as usual, with reference to the accidents of the Reichskanzler's personal position, and by the announcement of the plan of Tobacco Monopoly,²⁶⁶ which, according to some sanguine calculators, was to yield no less than £25,000,000 a year. This scheme executed, the Imperial Exchequer would, no doubt, be in a position to defy Deficit, and there might probably be a margin available for the large annual subsidies which were to be poured into the Treasuries of the Separate States, to be applied by them in the reduction of Direct general or communal Taxation.

The disapproval of the Tobacco project, especially in North and Central Germany, has been almost universal. The Saxon objections are, at present, irremediable: one of them rests on the belief of the Government and of the public that this is no time for risking the disturbance of labour and capital which would be entailed by the suppression or transformation of the local Cigar and Cigarette

²⁶⁴For the tax proposals and negotiations of 1878, see pp. 133–134.

²⁶⁵For the Deputization Law of 17 March 1878, see n. 230 in this section.

²⁶⁶Bismarck publicly advocated the tobacco monopoly in the *Reichstag* on 22 February 1878.

industry, now located in no less than 24 towns of the Kingdom. The Saxon Minister of Finance²⁶⁷ is a great enemy of all schemes built on the idea of a German surplus, which, he says, when attained, would never be distributed in the way promised, but would be swallowed up in the “Serbonian bog” of the Expenditure of the Empire.

Public opinion has not yet had time to settle down to a final judgement on the portion of Prince Bismarck’s new financial plan revealed in his letter to the Bundesrath. The Particularist radical-reactionary ‘Dresdner Nachrichten’ (one of the most widely circulated German journals) which is addicted to systematic abuse of the Reichskanzler, calls his manifesto “a taper on the German Christmas tree” and welcomes him back to those doctrines of patriotic common sense from which he has so long been preserved by the influence of doctrinaires and ‘Grounders’. On the Free-Trade side only faint and ambiguous voices have been heard. With the usual servility and timidity of the “Reptile Press”,²⁶⁸ the National-Liberal journals have reprinted the Chancellor’s Manifesto without particular comment, hinting, at the most, that parts of it may require consideration, perhaps, correction.

The question is, whether the Prince and Herr von Varnbühler have not overshot the mark. Most Germans believe unreciprocal Free-Trade to be an absurdity: I have found many Saxon Free-Traders so called holding to this view. Still, there has been no clamour for the indiscriminate Protection indicated in Prince Bismarck’s programme, only for help to such important branches of industry as might be shewn to be succumbing to foreign competition. The agriculturalists have been loudly calling for a customs duty (now foreshadowed in the Friedrichsrühe [*sic*] Manifesto) on foreign corn, vegetables, fruit, live stock, and timber, but the general public is not anxious for augmented food prices in this time of diminishing incomes. If the agriculturalists are thrown over, they will no longer have any motive for backing the demand for industrial protection: the manufacturers have to consider the purport of advantages which are to be countervailed by import duties on coal, timber, and wool. Both parties may be puzzled to discover how protection will be possible at all, if, as Prince Bismarck, argues, import duties of from 5–10 per cent have no sensible effect in raising the price of commodities. However, Prince Bismarck’s new and authoritative proclamation of all his favorite heresies will do much to popularize them in Germany, while the Free Traders are refuting them for the benefit of the converted.

²⁶⁷Léonçe von Könneritz.

²⁶⁸For the so-called ‘reptile press’, see n. 40 in this section.

Foreign countries may be comparatively little interested in Prince Bismarck's motives, but I would remark that his fundamental object still is – to place the Empire in possession of a large independent revenue. Protection is an incident of his policy, not its' keynote – which remains, as before, Revenue, and Revenue of the kind the least susceptible of parliamentary control.

The Saxon Government are not committed in detail, but the Prince's plans will receive their general support. In the opinion of Herr von Nostitz the Reichskanzler's programme will ultimately prevail.

FO 68/163: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury, No 3, Dresden, 22 January 1879

[Received 24 January by post. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield; S[alisbury]]

Nostitz-Walkwitz as surprised as the general public at Bismarck's parliamentary 'muzzling' bill

Herr von Nostitz informs me the Parliamentary 'Muzzling' (Maulkorb) Bill was almost as great a surprise to him as it was to the public.²⁶⁹ Some time ago the Reichskanzler told him he thought that incendiary language, like that of Hasselmann in a recent speech,²⁷⁰ ought to be checked, and that he was in communication with the German Justice-Department on the subject. Herr von Nostitz had received no other hint that proposals of this kind were forthcoming.

His Excellency always answers questions, as far as possible, in tangents, and when I asked him if he agreed with Prince Bismarck, he replied that he could not understand why expressions in themselves punishable, or actionable, should be privileged when spoken in Parliament. In the Saxon Landtag, e.g., members could libel and slander to their hearts' content, and there was no redress for the sufferers. This Government had not yet considered their course, but would, (he hinted,) probably accept the Bill with modifications.

I said that this was not Prince Bismarck's point. He did not want to protect the public against Parliamentary defamation, but to gag eight individuals.²⁷¹ The attempt to found this measure on English precedent was quite unwarranted. Sir T. E. May, who was quoted in

²⁶⁹The bill was introduced in the Federal Council on 9 January 1879 and passed on 5 February. On 7 March the bill was rejected by the *Reichstag*.

²⁷⁰This probably refers to Hasselmann's speech against the anti-socialist bill in the *Reichstag* on 10 October 1878.

²⁷¹i.e. the socialist members of the *Reichstag*.

the ‘Motives’,²⁷² would be the first to repudiate the analogy assumed between a code intended to muzzle a particular minority, and rules and traditions impartially applied, without reference to party, for the maintenance of discipline and decorum in debate. – *Duo quum faciunt idem non est idem*²⁷³ – The ‘Motives’ introduced the case of Lord Leitrim,²⁷⁴ and others equally irrelevant: The parliamentary ideals of Prince Bismarck belonged, however, not to the reign of Queen Victoria, but to our Stuart and Tudor times.

FO 68/163: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury, No 6, Dresden, 8 February 1879

[Received 12 February by post. X; S[alisbury], 13 February]

Feelings in Saxony on resignation of conservative French president, Marshal MacMahon

The changes in the Government of France is hardly an event to interest Society here, so that conversation is not easily diverted from its’ natural channels to that topic.²⁷⁵ It is however, apparent, that the Court, the Military, the Ministers and the rest of the Civil Hierarchy, as well as the Diplomatic Body, deplore the resignation of Marshal MacMahon – Religion and “Order” – so people argue – have no longer an official French representative, and the Marshal’s departure from the Elysee is the beginning of the inevitable descent of the Republic to the depths of Atheism[,] Anarchy and the Commune.²⁷⁶ M. Grévy is the lackey of Gambetta, whose Red instincts and intentions are ill concealed beneath the whitewash of Conservatism and restraint which he has thought fit to assume. If my interlocutors were at home enough in History to make comparisons with ’89, they would describe the President of the French National Assembly as a mere Camille Désmoulins waiting for the opportunities of Jourdan Coupe-tête.²⁷⁷

²⁷²The ‘motives’ (explanatory statement to the bill) quoted passages (in German translation) from Thomas Erskine May’s *A Practical Treatise on the Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament* (4th edition 1859).

²⁷³Latin: ‘when two do the same thing, it is not the same thing’. Proverb ascribed to Terence.

²⁷⁴The ‘motives’ referred to the exclusion of strangers from the sitting of the House of Commons on 12 April 1878, during the debate on the murder of Lord Leitrim.

²⁷⁵MacMahon resigned as president of the Third Republic on 30 January 1879; he was succeeded by Jules Grévy.

²⁷⁶Paris Commune 1871 (see n. 14 in Berlin section).

²⁷⁷Mathieu Jouve Jourdan was a revolutionary involved in the Storming of the Bastille in 1789. He earned the nickname Jourdan Coupe-tête (head-chopper or cut-throat) for his brutal behaviour towards enemies of the revolution.

The sympathies of the higher Military with the Marshal are very strong. He is forgiven for temporizing with “the Revolution”, and is admired for refusing to submit the great Army Commands to “mob nomination”.

The feelings of the Middle and Professional Classes are not very dissimilar. Their kindness for MacMahon is not so active, and they do not much share the courtly hatreds of a Republic, or hanker after a visionary Legitimate order of things. But they think that the Marshal was a safe stopgap, and that the most mobile of European nations will not long keep quiet under the loose rein of the President of a Constitutional Republic. Of the faith in Gambetta which is so common in England I have never seen any sign here.

**FO 68/163: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury,
No 17, Dresden, 5 June 1879**

[Received 7 June by post. For: Chancellor of the Exchequer]

Rumours on abandonment of gold standard and adoption of a monetary double standard

As the newspapers continue their reiterations of the statement that the German Government contemplates the adoption of the Double Standard, I asked Herr von Nostitz, a few days ago, whether his accounts from Berlin threw any light on the subject.

His Excellency replied that he had no reason to suppose that such an idea was entertained. The specialists whose opinions weigh most in currency questions adhered firmly to the Gold Standard²⁷⁸ and it was hardly likely that the Confederated Governments would agree to its' abandonment. He imagined, however, that the Reichskanzler would turn out to be a partizan of the Double Standard. But this, added Herr von Nostitz, is a speculation of my own, deduced from Bismarck's way of taking economic questions.

Unless I mistake, the idea of the Double Standard is decidedly popular. The scientific, or unscientific arguments in its' favor are beyond the comprehension of the public, but the notion is widely spread that the depression in trade is, in part, an effect of the new monetary legislation, which, as many are foolish enough to believe, was a mischievous piece of 'Grounding' desired by the National-Liberals in the interests of their party, and of their banking associates at Berlin.

²⁷⁸The gold standard was introduced in 1871. For the German monetary union, see n. 59 in Darmstadt section.

**FO 68/163: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury,
No 18, Dresden, 15 June 1879**

[Received 18 June by post. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Circulate / Commercial Department; S[alisbury], 19 June]

Railway tariff bill; Saxon opposition to imperial monopoly; implications for grain trade to England

On the announcement, more than 3 years ago, of the plan for the cession of the Railways to the Empire, the Saxon Government placed itself in the front of the opposition to Prince Bismarck's scheme by at once buying up the Dresden and Leipzig railroad, and certain secondary private lines.²⁷⁹

The Tariff Unification Bill now before the Bundesrath is a less ambitious project, but its' adoption would be a serious step in the direction of Railway Monopoly, and this Government is anxious that it should be modified, or, if possible, rejected.²⁸⁰

A large proportion of the revenues of this Kingdom – perhaps 1/3 of all – is derived from the Railways. Under the new Bill the control of that amount of Saxon income would be transferred from the Saxon Landtag, nominally to the Bundesrath, but in reality to the Cabinet of Berlin. For Prussia, in these matters, would always command the votes of a number of the smaller States, which, having no railway property, would prefer identical and cheap Tariffs, so that Saxony, Wurtemberg, Baden, and their supporters would invariably be swamped.

It is the contention of the Saxon Cabinet that the Bill invades the sovereignty of the separate States, in ascribing to the Bundesrath powers in excess of the general right of Railway Tariff Control surrendered to that body by the 45th Article of the Constitution of the Empire. There is, I think, something to be said in favor of this view, and if it prevails, the Bill will fall under the rule of Section 78²⁸¹ of the German Constitution, which lays down that Constitutional amendments are *ipso facto* lost if opposed in the Bundesrath by 14 votes. Saxony (4) can count on the support of Wurtemberg (4), Baden (3), also, I believe, on Lübeck (1) and Reuss (1 or 2). The essential minority of 14 seems, therefore, to be available, so that the Bill may, perhaps, be stopped in the Bundesrath, unless Prince Bismarck sacrifices its' principal provisions.

²⁷⁹On 1 July 1876 Leipzig-Dresdner Eisenbahn-Compagnie (established in 1835) was integrated into the Royal Saxon State Railways.

²⁸⁰The bill on a German goods tariff was presented to the Federal Council on 9 June 1879. For constitutional reasons the vote was postponed that same day; on 27 June the bill was referred to a committee where it was dropped.

²⁸¹Section 1 of Article 78 of the imperial constitution of 1871 (see n. 4 in Stuttgart section)

One of the objects of the Bill is the prohibition of the Differential Tariffs which, in some cases, incontestably operate as a protective duty in favor of foreign produce. The Saxon Railways are not open to much incrimination in this respect, but they carry Hungarian grain in transit for England at reduced rates, and I am told that any interference with these would be followed by the loss of the entire traffic, which would then take Southern routes to our ports. This instance shows that the objections to the Bill are not merely theoretical, and that compulsory Tariff unification, which, moreover, implies unfair assimilation of rates of carriage when expenditure is unequal, may be highly detrimental to local revenues.

**FO 68/163: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury,
Confidential, No 27, Dresden, 22 November 1879**

[Received 24 November by Berlin. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield. Qy: Confidential to St Petersburg; S[alisbury], 5 November]

Saxon dislike of Russia; friendly sentiments towards England

The Czarevitch passed through Dresden on his way to Berlin,²⁸² but the journey having been in the night, no reception took place. In no German Court and Capital would the Grand Duke have found less sympathy with Russia than here. The Saxons are not so ignorant of the salient facts of their history as to be unaware that it was Catherine who deprived their royal house of Poland, and Alexander who enabled Prussia to effect the partition of this kingdom after the fall of Napoleon.²⁸³ Their dislike [*sic*] of that ‘abominable barbaric power’, as they say with Niebuhr,²⁸⁴ may not be as active just now, as our own, but it is visible enough, and the new league with Austria-Hungary²⁸⁵ is universally approved as detaching Germany from a natural enemy and uniting her to a natural ally.

Herr von Nostitz observed to me the other day, that the Russian alliance was a mere private survival of family Hohenzollern sentiment, in which the other reigning houses of the Empire, and the German people did not participate. It is always very difficult to extract

²⁸²Alexander Alexandrovich visited Berlin on 16–17 November 1879.

²⁸³Strachey is referring to the Saxon cession of the Polish throne in 1765 and the Act of the Vienna Congress of 9 June 1815, which granted the Northern part of the Kingdom of Saxony to Prussia.

²⁸⁴Barthold Georg Niebuhr used this expression in a letter to Heinrich Friedrich Karl vom und zum Stein of 25 March 1824.

²⁸⁵For the Dual Alliance of 7 October 1879, see n. 318 in Berlin section.

categorical affirmation from His Excellency, but he added that he considered Russia to be the root of all European evil. His colleague the Finance Minister, his predecessor Baron von Friesen, the Nestor of German statesmen, with many other leading personages here, official, parliamentary, military, and industrial, are decided Russophobes. I attach little importance to the local press, which, in local questions, generally follows in the lines indicated by the representatives party organs at Berlin. However the prevalent direction of the journals here is, as it has been, anti-Russian, a tone that does not exclude very illiberal [*sic*] interpretations of British policy.

In high places similar feelings prevail, with the difference that they are associated with friendly sentiments towards England. During the march of the Oriental complications³⁸⁶ I have occasionally had to report the strong expressions of satisfaction with which the King has commented on the resistance offered by Her Majesty's Government to Russian Encroachment. The heir presumptive, Prince George has used energetic language on this subject. The Austrian and Catholic sympathies of His Royal Highness stimulate his instructive dislike of a power, which, he says, Germany and Europe have double reason to dread, from its' dangerous combination of dynastic ambition and revolutionary zeal. According to the Prince, the heir to the Russian throne is filled with bitter hatred of Germany, and he asserts, as a fact within his own personal knowledge, that the Grand Duke's malignancy has been experienced by German Officers sent to assist at Russian military and court ceremonials.

**FO 68/163: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury,
No 30, Dresden, 20 December 1879**

[Received 24 December by Berlin. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield; S[alisbury], 26 December]

Anti-Semitic agitation in Dresden

The anti-Jewish agitation, which in some parts of Germany has attained considerable proportions, has extended to Dresden.

The new 'Kulturkampf' is not undeserving of Your Lordship's attention. All its' authors disclaim vulgar, confessional, intolerance. Some of them affect to call their Propaganda a mere forlorn attempt to initiate a resistance to the 'Conquest of Germany by Jewry'. It is, of course, absurd to describe the German Jews as a dominant race in

³⁸⁶The Balkan crisis of 1875 to 1878.

a country where, however complete their Emancipation may be on paper, they are, as a rule practically shut out from all but the lower ranks of military, civil, and municipal, place, and, unless they are Rothschilds or Oppenheims, are exposed, except perhaps in Berlin, to ignominious social treatment.

But though no Jew can rise in a public office, or command an Army Corps or a Regiment, or be Burgomaster of Dresden or Berlin, Germany is exceptionally exposed to Semitic influences. The Jews are powerful because they have been persecuted. The jealousy with which most of the trades, handicrafts, and avocations were guarded against them drove the Jews into particular branches of industry in which their energy and talents, and inherited commercial knowledge have given them such advantages over all rivals.

Their intellectual greatness is less conspicuous than it was. But if they have lately had no Börne, Heine, Mendelssohn, or Meyerbeer; through their Laskers and Bambergers they have made their mark on the recent German political evolution, and have, in some respects, been its leaders. Many of the principal newspapers are now their property. Their contingent to the editorial and contributing staff of the National-Liberal & semi-official press is almost numerous enough to justify the assertion, lately made, that ten years hence there will not be an uncircumcised journalist in the Empire.²⁸⁷ In this and other ways the Jews have been able to put forth a strength much in excess of the power naturally available for a minority so numerically weak, and, in spite of the progress of enlightenment, so profoundly obnoxious to popular suspicion and dislike.

The setting in of the Conservative reaction afforded an obvious opportunity for an anti-Semitic crusade. The new propaganda has partly the character of an attack on the National-Liberal system. Clamours against Manchester doctrines, or for a return to the restrictions on labour, or for sharper penal laws, or against Monometallism,²⁸⁸ Usury, the Stock-Exchange, and the 'Golden International',²⁸⁹ were suitably pointed by insinuations or tirades against the Jews. A 'Judenhetze'²⁹⁰ once started, might reckon on the support of the Ultramontane press, which was glad to make reprisals for the part taken by Jewish journalists against the Catholics in the 'Kulturkampf'. And high Protestant feeling, aroused by the virulent

²⁸⁷This 'assertion' was made by Wilhelm Marr in *Der Sieg des Judenthums über das Germanenthum: Vom nicht confessionellen Standpunkt aus betrachtet* (1879).

²⁸⁸Gold standard, introduced in 1871.

²⁸⁹The term 'golden international' for the alleged international conspiracy of economically successful Jews was used by Carl Wilmanns in his anti-Semitic pamphlet *Die 'goldene' Internationale und die Nothwendigkeit einer sozialen Reformpartei* (1876).

²⁹⁰Jew-baiting.

Jewish libels on Lutheran dignitaries, doctrine and practice, could not fail to swell the cry.

The campaign may be said to have opened with a pamphlet of W. Marr entitled 'Der Sieg des Judenthums über das Germanenthum'. The sale of this extremely dull work has been enormous. The author pretends to write as a Pessimist whose only objective is to show in a "document of despair" how completely Germany has been subjugated by Jewry. According to this Jeremiad, the mischief is done. Remedies or palliatives are of no avail. All that remains for the *Deutschtum* is melancholy acquiescence in the inevitable: the 'finis Germaniae'²⁹¹ has arrived, and the only possible commentary on the catastrophe is 'Vae victis'.²⁹²

This poor irony has been almost more successful than the *Drapier* or *Peter Plymley*.²⁹³ It appears to have inspired the exclusion of Herr Lasker from the Prussian Landtag. The National-Liberal leader lost his election at Breslau owing to an agreement that no votes should be given to a Jew.²⁹⁴

About this time an "Anti-Semitic league" was formed in Berlin,²⁹⁵ and similar societies have been organized in Breslau, Munich, Nuremberg, Vienna, Pesth, and other German and Hungarian towns. The first Article of the Statutes of the Berlin league invites all non-Jewish Germans of whatever confessions, parties, or conditions, – "to oppose by all permissible means the dispossession of the Germanism by Jewry, to drive back the Semites to a position corresponding with their numerical strength, to deliver the *Deutschtum* from the weight of Jewish influence which oppresses them in social, political and religious respects, and to ensure for the children of the Germans their full right to offices and dignities in the German fatherland."

Article 2 invites subscribers to come forward and "save their common German fatherland from complete Judification, and to make it a supportable residence for the posterity of the ancient inhabitants of the same."

I do not know whether the formation of this league preceded or followed the delivery of two lectures (afterwards printed and sold

²⁹¹ Latin: 'the end of Germany'.

²⁹² Latin: 'woe to the conquered'. Proverb from Livy, meaning the defeated should not expect leniency.

²⁹³ Strachey is referring to *Peter Plymley's Letters* (1807–1808) by Sydney Smith on Catholic emancipation and by Jonathan Swift's *Drapier's Letters* (1724–1725), which made the case for Irish independence from England.

²⁹⁴ Elections at Breslau took place on 12 November 1879; in addition to anti-Semitic agitation, Lasker's defeat was caused by the lack of support of his own party and its discordance with the Progressive Party.

²⁹⁵ Antisemiten-Liga, founded on 26 September 1879.

enormously) by the Prussian Court Chaplain Stöcker, an influential patron of the Berlin “Christian-Socialists”.²⁹⁶ The reverend gentleman is a powerful controversialist, and, unlike Marr, he takes an optimist view of the situation, which he calls dangerous not desperate. He tries to demonstrate statistically, that the Jews of Berlin form an imperium in imperio,²⁹⁷ which, for its’ concentrated strength, wealth, culture, command of the press, and influence on education and policy, has no parallel elsewhere, and has become a serious peril to Germany. He proposes an organic reform which shall purify capital by imposing severe restrictions on Usury, Mortgages, Credit, and Stock-Exchange speculation, and elevate work by restoring the Guilds. Helped by such carnal weapons, Germany and Christianity may yet be born again, and break the bondage of Mammon and the Talmud. If M^r Stöcker’s language against “the school of Satan” is occasionally strong, his justification by the Hebrew principle of “a tooth for a tooth” is complete. He has been personally subjected to Israelitish insolence, and his extracts from the Berlin ‘Tageblatt’ and “Börsen Courier” convict his adversaries of controversial indecencies such as religious minorities have seldom ventured to perpetrate.²⁹⁸

Of the supplementary literature pro et contra which has appeared in Berlin, Dresden, &c I need not speak. It is described as amounting to “floods”, and must be very remunerative, for Marr, besides accompanying, his first “Trumpet-blast” by some new works of like character, has found it worth while to start a vituperative anti-Jewish monthly called the “German watch”.²⁹⁹

The Saxon phase of the Propaganda was not likely to be very acute. While Berlin alone has over 45,000 Jews, and Prussia 350,000, this Kingdom has only 5,000, a number much below the normal German proportion. With one unimportant exception³⁰⁰ no Jew is here before the public, and there is no sensible Semitic antagonism against Christian political or commercial interests. But a ‘Reform-Union’³⁰¹ lately founded in Dresden for reactionary purposes thought that the persecution or repression of the Hebrews, was an object to

²⁹⁶ Strachey is referring to Stoecker’s speeches in meetings of the *Christlich-Soziale Arbeiterpartei* (founded in January 1878) on 19 September and 10 October 1879. Both speeches were published in *Das moderne Judenthum in Deutschland, besonders in Berlin: 2 Reden in der christlich-socialen Arbeiterpartei gehalten* (1879).

²⁹⁷ Latin: ‘state within a state’.

²⁹⁸ In his second speech, Stoecker quoted ‘libellous’ articles from *Berliner Tageblatt* and the *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, among others, on the proceedings of Evangelical-Lutheran Conference, held at Berlin in August 1879.

²⁹⁹ *Die Deutsche Wacht: Monatsschrift für nationale Kulturinteresse*; the organ of the Antisemiten-Liga was established in October 1879.

³⁰⁰ Strachey is probably referring to Joseph Bondi.

³⁰¹ *Deutscher Reformverein zu Dresden*, founded on 1 November 1879.

which their activity ought to be directed. As this function, however, was not mentioned in the Society's programme, it seemed proper to discharge it in an indirect manner. Accordingly the case was explained to Herr Marr, who at once came to Dresden,³⁰² and lectured on his favorite topic under the auspices of the 'Reform Union'. Herr Marr had changed his tactics, for he now described the Semitic infection as curable by some peculiar remedies of his own. For instance – Jews are not to serve in the Army, but to pay a blood tax for which the Judenthum in the aggregate is to be responsible. The 'Mosaic man' to be removed from all official posts of every description. All Bills owing to Jews to be paid ready money, so that dealings with them shall not fall under regular commercial legislation. Jew newspapers not to publish articles on the religious and political affairs of Christians. Jews not to hold land unless for cultivation by Hebrew labourers. Jewish capitalists to undergo forced loans, and Stock-Exchange transactions to be taxed. These ideas may be thought amazing. Perhaps they are less so than the fact that in 1879, in the so-called 'Elbe-Florence', a large and intelligent audience listened to them with patience, and, apparently without dissent. The leading Dresden journal reproduced the lecture with seeming approbation, and again denounced with appropriate insults and invectives Lasker, Bleichröder, the 'Golden International', Monometallism, and Free Trade.

It is characteristic of German statesmanship that Herr von Nostitz-Wallwitz avows a certain sympathy with this movement. He speaks with regret of the good old 'Ghetto', or 'Jewry', principle, maintained here in full vigour up to the year 1867, which prohibited the residence of Jews in this kingdom except in Dresden and Leipzig. This, said the Minister, was an excellent rule, for it prevented those acquisitions of property by Jewish owners which had been found so mischievous elsewhere.

One of the last incidents of the question was the publication in an unexpected quarter of an article by the (Saxon) Professor Treitschke. In the December number of the "Prussian Review" this eloquent essayist and historian, while affecting to rebuke as "hateful and brutal", certain excesses of the anti-Semitic propaganda, argues that it is not altogether indefensible, and practically pronounces in its' favour.³⁰³ The movement, he says, "runs strong and deep"; it is the "natural reaction of German popular feeling against a foreign element", the result of the gulf between western and Semitic life

³⁰²On 27 November 1879.

³⁰³Treitschke's article 'Unsere Aussichten' ('Our Views') was published in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* on 15 November 1879. In it, Treitschke coined the infamous phrase: 'The Jews are our misfortune'.

which has subsisted ever since Tacitus spoke of the “odium generis humani”.³⁹⁴

Another National-Liberal organ, the Leipzig ‘Im neuen Reich’ has just followed suit in an article³⁹⁵ which says that this Propaganda is rapidly growing, that it is extended to America, that it is founded on deep and bitter antipathies of race, and that it suggests an impartial reconsideration, unbiased by narrow Manchester formulas, of the entire modern economic system adopted by the German Liberals, and popularized by their political allies the Jews.

FO 68/164: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury, Confidential, No 6, Dresden, 30 January 1880

[Received 6 February by post. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield / Prince of Wales; S[alisbury], 7 February]

False rumours about restoration of Poland under Saxony

According to an Article in the Copenhagen “Dagblad” described in Sir C. Wyke’s Despatch to Your Lordship No. 104 of Nov^r 21 last, that journal has a correspondent here whose “intimate knowledge of the leading statesmen and politicians” of Saxony has made him acquainted with a plan attributed by “rumour” to Prince Bismarck for the annexation of this Kingdom to Prussia, and the reestablishment of Poland under the Saxon royal house.³⁹⁶

To the best of my belief, the said correspondent does not exist at all, and his “rumour” has never been current in Dresden.

On my broaching the subject to Herr von Nostitz, His Excellency observed, that the whole thing was a fable. He could conscientiously assert that no such scheme had been spoken of here: until that moment no person had ever mentioned the topic to him, and I might know for myself that a ‘Dagblad’ correspondent placed here as alleged must be an imaginary being.

General von Fabrice, the President of the Council and Minister of War, gave me similar assurances. He had seen in a newspaper a vague allusion to an equivalent project, but had paid no attention to

³⁹⁴Latin: ‘hatred of the human race’.

³⁹⁵The article ‘Die Judenantipathie’ was published in *Im neuen Reich: Wochenschrift für das Leben des deutschen Volkes in Staat, Wissenschaft und Kunst* on 20 November 1879 (No 47).

³⁹⁶Wyke’s dispatch refers to an article that appeared in the Copenhagen *Dagblad* of 18 November 1879.

it; he was positive that neither recently, nor at any period of his official career had the restoration of Poland under the house of Wettin been so much as named between himself and the King or his colleagues, either as an eventuality contemplated by Prince Bismarck, or in any other connexion. The General added, that it was Bismarck who saved this Kingdom from annexation in 1866, and that he had never seen any reason, however slight, for ascribing to the Prince designs against the independence of Saxony.

I have also mentioned that matter to the King, who remarked that not long ago “a Russian” had told him a fable very like this one, and that he had treated it as nonsense, which it was. The whole was no doubt a newspaper fiction concocted out of historic reminiscences as a threat to Russia when the fear prevailed that she was going to attack Germany.

His Majesty went on to say that except from “the Russian” and myself he had never heard of this curious project, and that he was sure his ministers could give equally categorical and sincere denials. The King likewise said, in answer to an enquiry from me, that he was sure there was no ground for ascribing any such scheme to the Reichskanzler. “You have no idea”, remarked His Majesty, “how frank Bismarck is. If he entertained a plan of this kind, the first thing he would do would be to tell me so distinctly. If Bismarck wishes to annex Saxony and send us to Warsaw, he will say it out plainly, and not leave me to discover his views from newspaper insinuations”.

The subject may be hardly worth pursuing, but the ‘Dagblad’ betrays an ignorance of the elements of German political history very curious in a person enjoying the advantages claimed for their informant. According to Sir C. Wyke “National-Liberals” are spoken of in 1863,³⁰⁷ which is like talking of Jacobites before the Revolution,³⁰⁸ or Peelites in 1842.³⁰⁹ The speculations on the strategical [*sic*] conditions of the German-Polish frontier are of similar calibre.

³⁰⁷The National Liberal Party was founded in 1867.

³⁰⁸Glorious Revolution of 1688, when James II was deposed.

³⁰⁹The Peelite faction, named after Sir Robert Peel, came into existence after the split of the Conservative Party in 1846.

**FO 68/164: George Strachey to Marquess of Salisbury,
No 7, Dresden, 4 February 1880**

[Received 6 February by post. For: The Queen / Lord Beaconsfield; S[alisbury], 7 February]

On false reports in The Times regarding establishment of German penal settlements in the South Seas

The ‘Times’ has always cultivated exhaustive ignorance of German politics as a speciality of its’ own. The discovery, thirty years after the event, that the founder of the Zollverein had just joined that Union has become a locus classicus³¹⁰ of journalistic blundering. And the persistent belief, held in Printing House Square, that the Kulturkampf was a Prussian, not a German conflict, has led the ‘Times’ to the most amazing assertions and speculations.

The leading Journal appears to have now turned its’ attention to Saxony. According to the ‘Times’ of January 21, Herr von Nostitz-Wallwitz stated in a debate in the Saxon Landtag that the German Government contemplated the establishment of penal settlements in the South Seas, and that Prince Bismarck was in favor of the scheme, which had been already discussed in the Bundesrath.

This is a pure invention. What Herr von Nostitz said was, – that as Germany owned no colonies, discussions about transportation could not arise, and that the Bundesrath had consequently not had to consider the question at all.³¹¹

**FO 68/164: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 18,
Dresden, 7 May 1880**

[Received 10 May by post. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Public opinion on change of British administration

Events like a change of Administration at home impose on Her Majesty’s Representatives the duty of reporting the feelings which

³¹⁰Strachey is referring to an article of 18 July 1862 in *The Times* – on the occasion of Austrian proposals to join the Customs Union – which announced ‘that the Government of Prussia has determined to enter the Zollverein’.

³¹¹In the debate on the Saxon penal system, on 13 January 1880, Nostitz-Wallwitz stated that as Germany did not yet have colonies, Federal Council deliberations on the question of deportations were academic. The background to this was the discussion of the so-called Samoa bill (see n. 378 in Berlin section).

they cause abroad.³¹² In the present instance the work which thus falls on Your Lordship's subordinates in Germany cannot be an acceptable one. It cannot be performed in terms calculated to effect that *Captivatio benevolentiae*,³¹³ as the Germans say, which we should naturally desire to produce on the occasion of your return to Office. In reluctantly executing my own share of this task, I beg to explain that the facts and opinions which I venture to describe are diametrically opposed to those which my private sympathies would have made me anxious to discover. I take the liberty of obtruding this detail of personal politics, as it may, perhaps be thought to furnish some criterion of my capacity for writing a reliable unprejudiced report.

It is not correct to speak of German Public Opinion with respect to Foreign Affairs. For the effective political force so called does not exist in this Empire. A certain passive interest is however taken in the chief topics of the day by an intelligent minority, who have watched the crisis in England with unusual attention.

At any ordinary conjuncture German liberals would, on the whole, have desired the resumption of power by a party between whom and themselves there is such community of aims and ideals as the different circumstances of Germany and England allow. But the Eastern question directed such sympathies from their natural channel. Their good wishes – the good wishes of Germany – have been as Your Lordship is aware, with the defeated side. Our Liberal victory has, in fact, caused general disappointment, almost dismay.

Amongst the chief grounds of this antagonism has been the fear that an Administration as now formed would attempt to undo the settlement of Berlin,³¹⁴ and by tolerance, or patronage of the Slav propaganda, excite fresh outbreaks in the Balkan Peninsula, and encourage Russia to believe that her attempts on the Bosphorus might be resumed with impunity. The Germans are of opinion that if the Eastern question is reopened at present there will result a great European war. While admitting the claims of “interesting nationalities” (except those of Greece, which are ascribed to the mere desire to plunder a weak neighbour)³¹⁵ they consider that it is desirable that the emancipation of Armenia and Lake Ochrida³¹⁶ should be deferred until it can be effected without setting hostile

³¹²On 23 April Gladstone succeeded the Earl of Beaconsfield as prime minister; Granville took over from Salisbury as secretary of state for foreign affairs.

³¹³Latin: ‘winning of goodwill’.

³¹⁴For the Treaty of Berlin of 13 July 1878, see n. 324 in Berlin section.

³¹⁵For the Turco-Greek frontier dispute, see n. 382 in Berlin section.

³¹⁶Under the stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin, Lake Ohird, as well as Armenia, remained under Ottoman rule. Previously, according to the Treaty of San Stefano, the Ohird region was to be included into ‘Greater Bulgaria’.

armies in motion from the Tiber to the Seine and Neva, and exposing western civilisation to endless contingencies of danger for national independence, society, property, and life. With England ready to draw the sword in the East, and disposed to forbid gratuitous [*sic*] aggression in the West, there may be a prospect – so it is argued – of the continuance of peace. With England effaced as a continental power, and smiling on Slav designs against Turkey, Germany, and Austria, as well as on “Italia Irridenta”³¹⁷, and on French aspirations for the reconquest of Alsace and Lorraine – war cannot be postponed.

These feelings, are, or were, almost universal in Germany. They have been intensified by apprehensions of a revival of our former jealousy of the Austrian Empire. Friendship for Austria-Hungary is the rule with the Germans now: in Saxony and South Germany it is almost a religion. All considerations of political advantage apart, the Alliance lately concluded at Vienna was in complete harmony with German sentiment.³¹⁸ Denunciations of this popular connection, and utterances thought likely to increase the difficulties of a favorite neighbour and dynasty could not fail to provoke irritation here, and to inspire the hope that those who entertained the antipathies thus disclosed would not have the opportunity of embodying them in official language and designs.

The prejudices which I am describing will, no doubt, by degrees subside, and the natural feelings of German liberals towards a liberal English cabinet may be revived. It is however to be borne in mind, that the foreign policy of this Empire is not shaped in any appreciable degree by private initiative or control, and that a strong Conservative reaction is now in process here. The German royalty, the palatial hierarchies, the ministers, the civil service, the military – all are Conservative (though not in the old malignant sense) and, with a few exceptions in Berlin, and, perhaps, in Weimar and Stuttgart, anti-Russian to a man.

Hostility to Russia is the only point of contact which it is possible to discover between them and the Opposition at home. But such is the magic of a name that the Conservatives of Germany instinctively sympathize with ours, while they fully concur in all the above stated suspicions and apprehensions.

The expressions of good will towards the late Government addressed to myself, as Her Majesty’s representative here, during the development of the Eastern question, have been abundant and

³¹⁷‘Unredeemed Italy’; this refers to the nationalist Italian movement which advocated political unity of all Italian-speaking people, and particularly the incorporation of territories under Austrian rule into the Italian kingdom.

³¹⁸For the Dual Alliance of 1879, see n. 318 in Berlin section.

emphatic. The transfer of power to other hands has provoked as strongly accented regrets. This is not a mere political consequence. It is largely due to the personality of the late Premier, which exercised over the German mind such a fascination as has seldom been acquired by a statesman of one country over the people of another.

If these facts had exclusive reference to my somewhat limited Saxon horizon, or to the ornamental classes only, they would hardly deserve notice. There is, however, every reason to believe that Saxony is typical of Germany, and that the feelings in question are characteristic of the worth and intelligence of the Empire.

As Your Lordship is doubtless is [*sic*] aware, the views which I have felt it my duty to report are in concordance with the language hitherto held by the German daily and periodical press. To check my own knowledge on this point I have consulted the director of the leading National-Liberal Review, which is edited in Dresden.³¹⁹ This gentleman, who is a Gladstonian, completely confirms the fact in question: in discussing the subject of the present Despatch, his expressions have been stronger than those which I have ventured to use.

FO 68/164: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 21, Dresden, 15 May 1880

[Received 17 May by post. For: The Queen / Circulate; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Nostitz-Wallwitz on Bismarck's unfounded fears of particularism

The Reichskanzler's speech has failed as completely with respect to the public here as it did in Parliament. Great as his prestige still is, even his followers 'sans phrase'³²⁰ miss in his last Philippic the dignity and powers of his "Canossa" days, and lament that he should have allowed himself to fall into such transports of petulance, invective, and menace.³²¹

The Prince's denunciations of the Particularists who are thwarting his attempts to consolidate the Empire have not alarmed those to whom his warnings were addressed here. On my asking Herr von Nostitz what these fresh thunders meant, His Excellency laughed,

³¹⁹Strachey is probably referring to Hermann Thenius (*Dresdner Anzeiger*).

³²⁰See n. 145 in this section.

³²¹Strachey is referring to Bismarck's speech of 8 May 1880. For his 'Canossa speech' of 1872, see n. 449 in Berlin section.

and replied that nothing particular had happened, but that Prince Bismarck's nerves were in a highly excitable condition. The alleged Particularism was, as I might know myself, a mere Phantasm.

Differences of opinion must occur; and certain Governments – amongst them Saxony – had been unable to follow all the Prince's latest suggestions. But in no case; that of Hamburg-St. Paul's excepted,³²² had these differences been of a serious character, and with Particularism they had nothing to do. It was notorious that the Federal idea had taken root, that the Empire was strongly established, and that the hopes and opposition of its' enemies were enfeebled. Domestic enthusiasm for the new Germany might not, at this moment, be very hot, but Particularism proper, far from shewing a recrudescence, was in steady decline.

Herr von Nostitz added that he did not expect Prince Bismarck to resign. There would be great difficulty in finding any one to take his place. His method of doing business had produced a serious Parliamentary confusion, and his peculiarities of temperament had made the post of Reichskanzler one which it would be no easy matter to bring back to a normal style of administration.

FO 68/164: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 24, Dresden, 25 June 1880

[Received 28 June by post. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]; 'Pascal says that truth is the first rule, but discretion the second. A little reticence is desirable in a diplomatist in discussing the internal affairs of the country in which he is living', G[ranville]]

Nostitz-Walkwitz on Bismarck's Catholic Church bill and the Kulturkampf in Saxony

Herr von Nostitz told me yesterday that he expected to see the Prussian Church Bill to pass on the 3rd reading, although much of the original measure would, no doubt, be found to have evaporated.³²³

When I asked His Excellency how he could suppose that Professor Gneist and the rest of the National-Liberals would be brought to accept Paragraph 4, after their recent denunciations of the proposed amnesty to the deprived Bishops, he said that, as I must be aware,

³²²For the failed incorporation of St Pauli into the Customs Union (*Zollverein*), see n. 368 in Berlin section.

³²³The bill which attenuated the provisions of the May (Falk) Laws (see nn. 111 and 139) was presented to the Prussian *Landtag* on 20 May; after substantial changes it was passed on 28 June (house of deputies) and 3 July (first chamber); the law came into effect on 14 July 1880.

it was the characteristic habit of that party to turn their backs upon themselves at the eleventh hour, and that they would be only true to their antecedents if they destroyed the Bill in detail and then voted for it en bloc.³²⁴

The personal opinions of Herr von Nostitz on the Prussian Ecclesiastical conflict are those of the majority of intelligent Protestants in Saxony and Germany. He dismisses the system of *'libera chiesa in stato libero'*³²⁵ as totally inapplicable to the German Romist Church, which, he thinks, ought to be kept in strict submission to the State (as has always been the case in this kingdom) by rules similar, in outline at least, to the provisions of the Falk laws. But His Excellency holds that the moment taken by Prince Bismarck for inaugurating a reform too long neglected in Prussia was inopportune, that the particular measures introduced were defective, that their partial execution has entailed undeserved hardship on the Roman Catholic clergy, and, what is worse, inflicted a serious injury on religion, that is, on one of the fundamental Conservative influences in civilisation. Many of those who agree so far with the Saxon minister would dissent from his further belief that the adoption of the wholesale temperaments of the Falk laws now proposed by Prince Bismarck would not much compromise the dignity of the Prussian state, or encourage the Pope and the hierarchy to fresh resistance.

I observed that the Prince's church legislation appeared to me to be the most gigantic political failure of our time, and that it was hard to understand how his reputation for the higher forms of statesmanship could survive the collapse of a system essentially due to his personal initiative, and now to be sacrificed in favor of that "road to Canossa" which, only five years ago, he was declaring in a phrase now classical, that Prussia should never take.³²⁶

Herr von Nostitz replied, that in fairness to the Reichskanzler we must look at his cards. The fact was, that the present Bill was, to a great extent a concession to the wishes of the Emperor William, who was exceedingly anxious that a religious peace should be arranged before he died. The Emperor was an old man, and he had set his heart on a ceremonial of combined architectural inauguration and religious

³²⁴Article 4 of the bill concerned the right of the King of Prussia to reinstate bishops who were dismissed under the provisions of the law of 12 May 1873.

³²⁵The principle of *'libera chiesa in libero stato'* ('a free church in a free state') was put forward by the Count of Cavour on 27 March 1861, the day that Rome was proclaimed as the Italian capital.

³²⁶For Bismarck's 'Canossa speech' of 1872, see n. 449 in Berlin section.

revival, to be transacted in the autumn in Cologne Cathedral (which is now verging on completion).³²⁷

I said, that on this explanation, the political condition of Prussia was a sad one. It was surely an absurd state of things for the year 1880, if a system established only yesterday with such deliberation was to be knocked down to day, not because it was bad, but because it vexed a sovereign who happened to be old, and who desired to see a picturesque display of Romish ritual in a particular church, conducted by a particular Archbishop.³²⁸

His Excellency observed that he should be sorry to pretend to dispute my conclusion: the absurd always played a considerable part in human affairs.

FO 68/164: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 35, Dresden, 15 October 1880

[Received 18 October by post. For: ~~The Queen; Gladstone~~; G[ranville]; 'Ask Mr Strachey to be so good as to report fully the language which he uses in defence of the government which he represents, when he invites discussion upon it's conduct', G[ranville]; 'Done', P. Le P.T. [P.H. Le Poer Trench], 25 October]

Nostitz-Wallwitz's explanation for attacks in German press on Gladstone and British Eastern policy

When I saw Herr von Nostitz after his return a few days ago, His Excellency asked me what I thought of Eastern affairs. I replied that the question was too comprehensive, but that it suggested a detail on which I should like to make a remark. Her Majesty's present Government, I said, took office six months ago, and there was no sign of a diminution of the bad feeling exhibited towards them throughout Germany. Antipathies had, in fact, grown into aversion, our Premier, in particular, being the daily mark of the most violent newspaper hostility, which was in harmony with general opinion.

The language of the German press, I continued, and of political and private persons, with respect to Mr Gladstone, was amazing. It was as virulent and offensive as the howling of the continental adherents of Metternich, which I was old enough to remember, against "Lord Firebrand",³²⁹ who however was chiefly vilified by the ornamental and ignorant classes. For sustained daily vituperation of a Minister and a country nothing could surpass the "Dresdner-Nachrichten": that

³²⁷Strachey is referring to the Cologne *Domfest* of 15 October 1880 on the occasion of the final completion of Cologne Cathedral (after 632 years in the making).

³²⁸Archbishop Paul Melchers.

³²⁹Lord Palmerston.

paper was edited by a maniac,³³⁰ but what was to be said for the official “Journal”,³³¹ always so rigorously neutral in foreign questions, but which now, forgetting its’ usual decorum, had called M^r Gladstone a turbulent agitator? Our policy was the policy of the Great Powers: if people disapproved the proceedings in the Adriatic, why did they not abuse Prince Bismarck, who had made Germany a participator in the naval preliminaries which had given so much offense?³³²

Herr von Nostitz replied that it was felt that the Prince was only remotely responsible for a policy which he appeared to have adopted with reluctance. M^r Gladstone was the “auctor intellectualis”³³³ of the diplomatic campaign of the last 3 months, and it was therefore not unnatural that the odium should fall on him. If unreasonable language had been used, might not the jealousy and distrust exhibited, be justified, to a certain extent, by an appeal to facts?

England was shewing a warlike temper – an eagerness to strike out right and left – a preference for violent solutions of pending questions.

This aroused suspicions and antipathies in Germany, where after so prolonged a period of European agitation, and domestic commercial collapse, there was a strong desire for some years of repose and recovery. There was much to be said, (as I had argued) in favor of settling the Turkish question once for all, but he, for one, now that the Dulcigno difficulty seemed to be in process of settlement, should be glad for the present to go on a little with the old system, and defer the experiment of a grand policy, so that we might all sleep quietly in our beds for a season.

The above is neither clear nor connected, but the Saxon Minister, as usual with Germans, is not lucid or continuous in conversation. So that as he is, besides, extremely reserved, his remarks are often difficult to understand and always hard to report.

³³⁰Julius Reichardt.

³³¹*Dresdner Journal*.

³³²The Montenegrin boundary question and Turkey’s continued refusal to comply with the conditions of the convention she had agreed with Montenegro, of 12 April 1880, led to a naval demonstration of the Great Powers in the Adriatic from 26 August to 5 November 1880 when the combined fleets appeared off Dulcigno. On 4 October, in order to increase pressure on Turkey, the British government proposed to occupy Smyrna (İzmir); this action was declined by Germany. On 11 October the Porte finally consented to cede the town and district of Dulcigno to Montenegro. After further complications due to Albanian resistance, a convention between Turkey and Montenegro, which revised the original stipulations of Article XXIX of the Treaty of Berlin of 1878 (see n. 324 in Berlin section), was concluded on 25 November.

³³³Latin: ‘creator’ or ‘intellectual father’.

**FO 68/165: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 8,
Dresden, 9 February 1881**

[Received 11 February by post. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Circulate; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; 'Several despatches of exactly the same kind, from Berlin, have been sent by me to Mr Chamberlain & Mr Dodson. They take an interest in the subject', Ch.W.D. [Charles Wentworth Dilke]; G[ranville]]

Nostitz-Wallwitz's opinion on workers' insurance schemes

The German Operatives Insurance scheme has been, on the whole, favorably received here, for the reason given by Herr von Nostitz for his own approval, —namely that it is a practical attempt to “do something” for the working class.³³⁴

I recently observed to His Excellency that the workman would not be able to pay his share of the Premium unless his wages, and therefore the cost of labour, were proportionally increased. And that similarly the Employer, for his part of the Premium, would suffer an equivalent deduction from profits. Evidently then the price of commodities must be raised, or the public taxed for the difference.

Herr von Nostitz replied that he could not altogether deny this, but that “something must be done”: remedial as well as repressive legislation was wanted. The objections to the scheme were obvious. Unquestionably it had a Socialistic basis, especially in the provision that the workmen with wages under 750 mark (£38) a year should pay nothing towards the Premium, the whole Insurance being thrown on the Employer and the poor rates. Then he disapproved of the Insurance being organized by the Empire: such arrangements were properly of local not Imperial competence.

The last named point has been discussed in the official “Journal”³³⁵ which has argued with some cogency that Federal Insurance would be unconstitutional. The attributes of the Empire do not include Insurance, and the Constitution does not allow Imperial interference with Poor relief, the control of which, as regards the new purposes of the project, would now be centralized.

This Particularist argument is just, but the adjective “unconstitutional” conveys no necessary reproach, for the German Constitution expressly provides that ‘unconstitutional’ measures may, under certain restrictions, become law. There is more force

³³⁴On 2 February 1881 the newly constituted Prussian national economic council (*Volkswirtschaftsrat*) agreed on the provisions of the accident insurance bill in question. The bill was passed by the Federal Council on 8 March 1881; the *Reichstag* followed suit much later, in July 1884.

³³⁵*Dresdner Journal*, 7 February 1881.

in the objection that Poor Relief, of whatever kind, cannot be properly managed, and becomes, in fact, mischievous, unless cases are individualized, which can be effected by separate domestic management, whereas an Imperial Board sitting in Berlin would necessarily act in entire ignorance of local relations, things and persons. The administration would be cumbersome, and slow, and involve the creation of a large official staff, which would be an extravagant proceeding when the work might be done without appreciable cost by existing local authorities.

**FO 68/165: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 11,
Dresden, 5 March 1881**

[Received 7 March by post. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Colonial Office / Circulate; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; 'I would not send this stuff to the Colonial Office', T[enterden]; G[ranville]

German sympathy towards the Boers over Transvaal question distorted in British press; Saxon press attacks on covetous British policy in South Africa

According to the correspondence of the 'Daily News', the state of German opinion on the Transvaal question is likely to cause international complications, while the accounts of Sir G. Colley's defeat caused "great excitement".³³⁶ Only a writer with a sensational object would use such language; what is true is, that there is some visible sympathy with the Boers.

The official 'Journal'³³⁷ recently devoted an historical article to South-African affairs, which included a profound analysis of the secret motives of our Transvaal policy. According to the Saxon publicist Great Britain coveted the Republic for the wealth of its' hidden resources, but the annexation was principally prompted by the fear of the conclusion of a Treaty between Germany and the Boers, a probable consequence of which was likely to be a large German immigration to South Africa, which would be incompatible with British interests and safety.

In the 'Dresdner Nachrichten' there are almost daily diatribes on this topic. One of the last ran in substance, as follows. The result of the English intrigues against Austria in the Balkan Peninsula is, that

³³⁶In the First Boer War (16 December 1880 to 23 March 1881) the British suffered a decisive defeat at the Battle of Majuba Hill, on 27 February 1881. The article in the *Daily News*, of 1 March 1881, reported German criticisms on the 'ignorance' of British battle tactics and 'bad organization'.

³³⁷*Dresdner Journal*, 3 March 1881.

nowhere has been the victory of the Boers over their English tyrants been [*sic*] so enthusiastically acclaimed as in Austria and Germany. The battle on the Spitzkopf³³⁸ may stand comparison with the struggles of the Swiss peasantry against Austria and Burgundy, of the Dutch against Alba, of the Americans and the Tyrolese. It is remarkable that Africa, the seat of slavery and cruel despotism, should exhibit the grand spectacle of a fight for liberty. The English may gnash their teeth for rage, but their home policy offers a parallel to the infamous and thievish annexation of the independent Boer State, to which they were incited by the vile lust of territory. “Gladstone has strangled liberty of speech in the House of Commons. The arms Bill will be passed without its’ being allowable to offer any objection.³³⁹ “Proud England – Shame on thee”! (Quotation from Schiller [*sic*]).³⁴⁰

FO 68/165: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 21, Dresden, 9 April 1881

[Received 11 April by post. X; G[ranville]]

Saxon-Prussian difference of opinion over necessity of ‘state of siege’ in Leipzig

With reference to the recent declaration in the Reichstag by the Prussian Minister of the Interior, that it might be necessary for the Government of Saxony to ask leave of the Bundesrath to apply the ‘lesser’ state of siege to Leipzig, Herr von Nostitz informs me that Herr von Puttkamer’s statement was as surprising to him as it was to the public, and that he had immediately asked for explanations at Berlin.³⁴¹

If the Prussian Government, continued His Excellency, knew of dangers hatching in Leipzig, they were better informed than he was: Bebel and nine or ten other socialist leaders were settled there, and the old, chronic, evil was not, of course, eradicated, but nothing new

³³⁸Spitskop, Boer name for Majuba Hill.

³³⁹The *Dresdner Nachrichten* of 3 March alluded to the suspension of 36 Irish members of the House of Commons on 3 February 1882. The arms bill (which led to the Peace Preservation Act) sought to limit the right to hold arms in Ireland and was passed in third reading, on 11 March.

³⁴⁰This notorious expression most likely dates back to 1864 when, in a performance of Heinrich Marschner’s opera *Der Templer und die Jüdin* at Hanover, the line ‘*Du stolzes England, freue dich!*’ (‘Proud England – rejoice’) was changed into ‘*Du stolzes England - Schäume Dich!*’ The background to this was anti-British sentiment over British policy in the Schleswig-Holstein crisis.

³⁴¹Puttkamer advised imposing the state of siege (see n. 303 in Berlin section) on Leipzig due to incidents in Prussia which were ‘naturally unknown’ to the Saxon government.

and acute was happening. These people must live somewhere, and they were not doing any particular harm where they were [*sic*], so as to justify the discovery that their presence constituted a danger. If it did, the 'lesser' state of siege would be a useless remedy. He should then have the right to order Bebel and his associates to quit Leipzig, whereupon they would go somewhere else. On the whole, said Herr von Nostitz, I think we may leave our socialists alone for the present. But this, he added sarcastically, is subject to the superior lights which they may have in Berlin.

FO 68/165: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 22, Dresden, 24 April 1881

[Received 28 April by post. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Sir W. Harcourt / Circulate; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Nostitz-Wallwitz satisfied at British prosecution of Johann Most; explanation regarding uncertainties of his conviction

Herr von Nostitz remarked to me recently that the prosecution of Most was a very important step, and that such action undertaken by a Government situated like that of Her Majesty, deserved the fullest recognition and acknowledgments. What did I think of the chances of a conviction?³⁴²

I said that the difficulty was, that our juries were seldom disposed to treat cases of this sort on the merits, while, as a nation, we were jealous of Government prosecutions. And Englishmen had a tendency to think that press offences were better dealt with by contempt than by courts of justice. This was irrespective of politics, and there would always be a possibility that of twelve jurymen who were unanimous as to the infamy of an incriminated article, one or more might hold out for 'Not-guilty' on general political grounds, or on the score that the language used did not amount to effective solicitation to crime.

I mentioned the Bernard affair,³⁴³ and said the Nordd. Allg^e Zeitung has accused the 'Times' of giving a garbled report of the proceedings in

³⁴²On 30 March 1881 Johann Most was arrested and charged for the publication of an article on the assassination of Alexander II of Russia. On 25 May Most was tried in the London Central Criminal Court for libel and incitement to murder; he was subsequently sentenced to 16 months' imprisonment.

³⁴³In 1858 Simon Bernard, a French exile in London, was put on trial for his involvement in Felice Orsini's assassination attempt on Napoleon III. Despite clear evidence against him the jury followed the defence's patriotic argument that Bernard should be acquitted as a result of the French influence on the prosecution and the political character of the trial.

the Police Court, and had preached a continental quarantine against England.³⁴⁴ This was the way to improve Most's chances of acquittal. The defence would vapour about the valiant defiance thrown in the teeth of the French colonels in 1858, and call on the jury to do their duty in spite of Prince Bismarck.

Herr von Nostitz observed that there was truth in this, and that he was sure that Prince Bismarck would be careful not to ignore our susceptibilities on the question of Asylum. For himself, instead of criticizing our traditions and practice, he was surprised when he considered how far Her Majesty's Government had gone.

FO 68/165: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 26, Dresden, 1 June 1881

[Received 6 June by post. X; G[ranville]]

Saxon desires that Hamburg's privileged position as a Free City should come to an end; Hamburg's entry into the Zollverein; implications for Saxony

A report on the feelings entertained here with respect to the Hamburg affair can add little to the explanations given in detail when the question was first provoked.³⁴⁵ There has been the same dislike of the application of pressure and threats, and under such flimsy pretences, (which hardly even deserve to be called quibbles) in order to wrest from a Confederate State the surrender of a right specially reserved by the Constitution of the Empire.³⁴⁶ On the other hand there has been the same perception that it is wisest for Saxony to follow Prussia's lead, whenever Saxon interests are not directly at stake.

With respect to the conflict between the Reichstag and the Bundesrath, this Government, always Conservative, naturally leans

³⁴⁴Strachey was referring to the editorials in *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* of 4 and 6 April 1881.

³⁴⁵In the treaty of 25 May 1881 Hamburg and the German Empire agreed on the entry of Hamburg into the Customs Union in 1888. Hamburg secured the right to build and operate a free port within its port district.

³⁴⁶Strachey is referring to Article 34 of the imperial constitution, according to which Hamburg and Bremen remained free ports until their request to be admitted into the Customs Union. The pressure on Hamburg alluded to in the dispatch included threats to bring St Pauli and Altona into the Customs Union (see n. 368 in Berlin section), and to levy import duties on the Lower Elbe before goods reached Hamburg. Further plans introduced in the Federal Council meeting of 17 May 1881 included abolishing the Hamburg *Hauptzollamt* and measures to protect the customs border.

to the body which represents, and, to a great extent, continues the traditions of the old Empire, and supports the Federative principle in opposition to the interloping, modern, popular assembly, which embodies the idea of the new Germany, and is on the whole, the innovating, centralizing, factor, of the Reich.

The official mind, again, is indignant at the presumption of Herr Richter, who has the audacity to put his beliefs on nice constitutional questions against the superior knowledge and wisdom possessed, without effort, or risk of error, by the professional governing class.³⁴⁷

For the public, Hamburg is Ausland – a foreign city which is not much more to them than Copenhagen or Canton. The notion prevails, that the merchant-princes of the Free State are exclusively bent on private profit, whereas their aim should be patriotic, not personal, and their object the enrichment not of Hamburg but of Germany (i.e. of Saxony).

Hamburg, it is argued, does little or nothing for the German Export trade: her energies are concentrated on importation, and it is a much less honorable form of business to buy their produce of foreigners than to sell them your own. Further, Hamburg personifies and supports Free-Trade, and the abolition of that pestilent system will be incomplete as long as its' chief nursery and example retains its' exceptional privileges.

These arguments may seem absurd, but they are convincing to the German mind, and some of them have the sanction of the authority of Prince Bismarck. They are reinforced for Saxon Particularists by the thought that Hamburg has been one of the chief fulcrums of German Unity and a constant stronghold of the National-Liberal party.

Very characteristic of official Saxon views is a reference to Hamburg in the Report on the Woollen industry described in my No. 2. Commercial, of June 2. This Report asserts, that the decay of the said industry has been stimulated by the masses of French textiles with which Hamburg gluts the Scandinavian markets. Were Hamburg annexed to the Zollverein, her merchants would send the fabrics of Saxony to the Northern customer instead of selling him French goods.

³⁴⁷Strachey is referring to Eugen Richter's motion in the *Reichstag* of 25 May 1881, regarding the unconstitutionality of the Federal Council's proposed measures of 17 May (see preceding footnote).

**FO 68/165: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 30,
Dresden, 2 July 1881**

[Received 5 July by post. For: The Queen; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Actions against Social Democrats in conjunction with anti-socialist legislation

In continuation of my previous Despatch I have the honour to report, that Herr von Nostitz informed me that there had of late been a considerable recrudescence of Social-Democratic activity in Leipzig. The local wire pullers of the party, reinforced by agitators who had been expelled from Berlin and Hamburg, were vigorously pushing their propaganda: they were holding meetings, and communicating with "the Nihilists".

His Excellency's statement of the conflict of the Bebelists with the Russian, or European, party of annihilation, was very shadowy. Now that the Socialists have been driven, so to speak, underground, very little is known of their proceedings. I lately conversed with the official³⁴⁸ specially charged with the execution of the Social-Democrat Law, and found that he could throw no real light on the subject.³⁴⁹

On my remarking to Herr von Nostitz that the first victim of the new rule would no doubt be Bebel, and asking how the member for Dresden was to live if his turner's shop were closed at a day's notice, His Excellency treated this as a matter of mere detail. He made an observation in the style of Mazarin's "je n'en vois pas la necessite'"³⁵⁰, that Bebel could easily find a man of straw to carry on his business.

I subsequently asked for the exact statistics of the expulsions from Leipzig, and of the arrests in Dresden (magnified by the 'Daily News' into the application here of the state of siege[]).³⁵¹ The Director of the Foreign Office gave the requisite details in a letter which I have the honor to enclose, as his ipsissima verba³⁵² will be more interesting than my paraphrase would be.³⁵³

According to M. de Watzdorff's report, which agrees with the accounts in the press, there have been 33 notices to quit Leipzig for the space of a year, and 10 persons have been apprehended in Dresden.

³⁴⁸Name not traceable.

³⁴⁹For the Anti-Socialist Law of 1878, see n. 251 in this section.

³⁵⁰French: 'I don't see the necessity of it' (quotation attributed to the Comte d'Argenson not Cardinal Mazarin).

³⁵¹Strachey is referring to the *Daily News* of 29 June 1881. The 'minor' state of siege (see n. 303 in Berlin section) had been imposed on Leipzig by the Federal Council – at the request of Saxony – on 27 June (with effect from 29 June).

³⁵²Latin: 'the very words'.

³⁵³Enclosure: letter from Watzdorf to Strachey, 2 July 1881.

These last arrests have, I believe, principally arisen from breaches, actual or imputed, of the Social-Democrat Act, in respect to money collections for the furtherance of Socialist objects. Such cases occur from time to time, and they attract no attention.

I have not yet been able to learn if the adoption of the "little state of siege" in Leipzig was spontaneously proposed in the Bundesrath by the Saxon Government, or if it was suggested by Prince Bismarck. Without enquiring into the policy of the measure, I would remark that the conduct of this Government is fully covered by the letters and spirit of the Imperial Act of 1878.

**FO 68/165: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 39,
Dresden, 26 October 1881**

[Received 29 October by post. For: The Queen / Gladstone; G[ranville]]

Forthcoming election to Reichstag; dissolution of old and constitution of new political parties; electoral programmes of Dresden candidates

The General Election for the Fifth German Parliament takes place on the 28th Instant.³⁵⁴ The decomposition of the old parties, and the formation of new, has now reached such lengths, that the Saxon voter is now being canvassed by the representatives of no less than 7 separate political programmes. On Friday next the constituencies of the 23 Electoral Circles of the Kingdom will be polling for Conservatives, National-Liberals, Secessionists, Fortschrittspartei or Progressists, Democrats, Social-Democrats, and Reformers or Anti-Semites.

Particular interest will attach to the contest for Dresden (old-town). Up to 1877 this city was represented by a Progressist,³⁵⁵ who, in that year lost his seat to Bebel. In 1878 the Socialist-leader was again returned by a considerable majority, although his opponent was the Ex-Minister Herr von Friesen, a popular personage in the capital, of liberal-conservative opinions.

Under the law of 1878,³⁵⁶ as interpreted here, meetings may not be held, or addresses published, or bills posted, or any visible signs of electioneering activity displayed, in favor of Social-Democrat candidates. But a proscribed party with the vitality of theirs soon learns the arts of subterraneous agitation, and in the twelve Circles

³⁵⁴The *Reichstag* elections were held on Thursday, 27 October 1881.

³⁵⁵Heinrich Minckwitz.

³⁵⁶For the Anti-Socialist Law of 1878, see n. 251 in this section.

which the Social Democrats contest they are carrying on an active propaganda by personal canvass, the distribution of appeals, and so forth. In Dresden their manifestoes have been pushed in the night under doors, fixed to bell-handles, and otherwise secretly circulated. A few days ago forms were seized at a printer's in Pirna which contained the type of an address from Bebel, of which 15,000 copies had already been struck off.

Very few Saxons are politically educated enough to see that if a Bebel exists he ought to be in Parliament. It is intelligible that there should be an anxiety to deprive the party of the prestige attaching to the occupation of the seat for the capital. The Conservatives and National-Liberals have now jointly set up against Bebel the first Burgomaster of Dresden, D^r Stübel. Although I am well acquainted with the city magistrate, I never could discuss his political opinions, and from his address the constituency might infer that he had none. However the candidate of a Coalition must necessarily use elastic phrases, and leave some burning questions untouched. D^r Stübel's programme is so Conservative in substance, and so Liberal in its reserves, that he faces both ways at once. He speaks of the situation of the artizan as deplorable, and hopes that means may be found to improve it by the cooperative organization of labour: he will support plans for the improvement of protection of work, if they do not infringe on the liberty of trade and business. If workmen are to be insured against accidents the establishment of a public insurance system is unavoidable: insurance for old age is a pious object, but its' realisation may be very difficult. The schemes for an Imperial Railway System, and for a Tobacco Monopoly,³⁵⁷ are in themselves utterly objectionable: but these, and other eventual projects of the Government of the Empire must be judged on their motives and merits. A state system of German colonization is an urgent necessity. The re-adoption of Protective duties for the half developed industry of Germany is absolutely indispensable.

This trimming document is not calculated to excite electoral enthusiasm, but the appropriate declamation, and abuse of adversaries, is supplied in the address of D^r Stübel's Committee.

An average English Liberal, or Conservative, would be disposed to vote for D^r Wigard, the candidate of the 'Fortschritt', or Progressist, party. His language is categorical, almost drastic. He advocates a responsible Ministry for the Empire: economy in military expenditure, and two years service: reduction of taxation: abolition of taxes on coffee, petroleum &c.: effective Protective duties: maintenance of universal suffrage, and of the guaranteed rights of the separate

³⁵⁷See nn. 234 in Berlin section and 177 in Darmstadt section.

States. On the other hand, D^r Wigard exclaims – no new indirect taxes! no tobacco monopoly! no Imperial Railways! no workman's State Insurance, or compulsory Guilds! no laws of Public Safety! no Chancellor dictatorship, and no restrictions on the rights of the people or parliament!

The third candidate for Dresden is the Royal Prussian Chaplain, Stöcker whose participation in the Anti-Semitic crusade is so notorious. His supporters are the 'Christian-Socialists', and 'Reformers' – the Reform in view being chiefly the persecution of Jews, the special taxation of the so-called 'International' capitalist, the subversion of religious tolerance, and the intrusion of clerical control in education, politics, and morals, with the restoration of various medieval ideals. There is bigotry enough in Dresden to ensure D^r Stöcker a certain support, but the votes given him would otherwise fall to D^r Stübel.

In these circumstances it is probable that no 'absolute' majority will be attained on Friday, and that a casting election will be requisite between the sitting member Bebel, and either D^r Wigard, or D^r Stübel, the nominee of the Conservative-National Liberal coalition.

FO 68/165: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 57, Dresden, 26 December 1881

[Received 2 January by post. For: The Queen / Gladstone; Copy to Colonial Office; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; 'Berlin copied'; G[ranville]]

Deutsche Revue on cession of Heligoland

After my Despatch of the previous number was written, I received from the Editor of the 'Deutsche Revue' a further communication, which I have the honor to enclose.³⁵⁸

As the 'Deutsche Revue' is conducted somewhat on the principle of our "19th Century", D^r Fleischer will probably make some sensational use of the letter which he has extracted from Count Moltke on the subject of Heligoland. And, if I had not categorically declined to mix myself up in the correspondence, he would probably have hinted darkly in his next number that the cession of the island was under preliminary discussion owing to his initiative.

³⁵⁸ Enclosure: letter from Richard Fleischer, editor of the *Deutsche Revue*, to George Strachey, undated. In it, Fleischer suggested that the acquisition of Heligoland was just a matter of time. England had previously had intentions of dispossessing Heligoland and although she might be reluctant to relinquish it, the advantages of having a free hand to deal with more pressing affairs (Egypt) might carry more weight than a 'worthless island'.

As criticism of this gentlemen arguments for the cession, or sale, can have, at most, an academic interest, I will only observe that in my opinion, (which is probably that of every one who is acquainted with German feeling), the dislike of England at present prevalent in Germany, is too deeply rooted to be removed by the gift of islands. Further, the Germans, to their credit be it said, are not haunted by Comtist international phantasms of the sort advocated by M^r Congreve and his band,³⁵⁹ but entertain, in regard to territorial questions, a wholesome Chauvinism, which as it actuates themselves, they respect in others. A readiness to dismember Empire would be construed by them as a mark of the Decline and Fall of national courage, patriotism, and power.

I will add that I should have given D^r Fleischer a much sharper reply, but for the fact that his Review is, to my knowledge, the only German periodical of importance which has shewn a tendency to do justice to the policy of Her Majesty's Government. He has, indeed, gone so far as to write in defense of the Prime Minister,³⁶⁰ a line, as he says, not very acceptable to his subscribers.

FO 68/166: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 4, Dresden, 23 January 1882

[Received 25 January by post. For: The Queen / Gladstone / X; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Saxon support for ending Kulturkampf; position of Catholic Church in Saxony; public disapproval of Bismarck's legislation

Herr Windhorst's [*sic*] Bill for the repeal of the Imperial Law of May 1874, and the Prussian ministerial measure for the partial abrogation of the Falk laws, are generally approved by politicians here.³⁶¹

³⁵⁹Strachey is referring to Richard Congreve's 'Church of Humanity' in London, which was inspired by Auguste Comte's positivist 'Religion of Humanity' and called for the abandonment and emancipation of colonies.

³⁶⁰William Ewart Gladstone.

³⁶¹On 12 January 1882 the *Reichstag* approved the motion to abrogate the imperial law of 4 May 1874; however, the Federal Council did not follow suit. The corresponding government bill was presented in the Prussian chamber of deputies on 17 January 1882 (passed on 31 March and effective from 31 May). It prolonged the discretionary powers of the Prussian government, which had been introduced by the law of 14 July 1880; at the same time it provided for the reinstatement of dismissed bishops, and partially abolished the compulsory state exams for church appointments. For the May Laws (Falk Laws), see nn. 112 and 140 in Berlin section.

The “Kulturkampf” has not extended to Saxony. Religious liberty and equality were accorded to the Catholics of the Kingdom under the Constitution of 1832, but their clergy were left in a subservient to the civil powers similar to that which the state has been trying to enforce in Prussia. It was, of course, one thing to acquiesce in a system which was a mere legacy of old Lutheran theological intolerance – another thing to accept new rules devised by nineteenth-century political passion and unbelief. Accordingly the Catholic Church submitted here without complaint to State pretensions which, when imposed in the neighbouring kingdom, were described as tyranny and persecution.

The Protestant instincts of Saxony are not dead, and there is no disposition here to encourage Ultramontane aggression, or to sympathize with priestly resistance to law. But public feeling has, on the whole, been unfavorable to Prince Bismarck’s church policy. The conviction has prevailed, that the “Kulturkampf” was rashly undertaken on small provocation, that the Falk laws have not the elements of permanence, and that the supplementary coercive measures are incompatible with modern doctrines of toleration. As regards the present phase of the question, great objections are taken to the restoration of the deprived Bishops, and to the discretionary character of the proposed repeal, and it is not denied that Prince Bismarck is now dangerously near to that “road to Canossa” which he so loudly declared the State should never approach.³⁶² Still, the general notion is, that the Prussian ecclesiastical conflict is a danger to Germany, and that its cessation is urgently required, not only on religious grounds, but also because until the “Kulturkampf” is definitely laid [*sic*], political parties must remain in their present subdivided and confused condition.

FO 68/166: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 8, Dresden, 13 February 1882

[Received 17 February. For: The Queen; G[ranville]]

Earl of Fife’s successful mission to invest the King of Saxony with the Order of the Garter; no antipathies against England at Saxon court

As the Earl of Fife’s proceedings here have been recorded by himself, I need only draw attention to certain aspects of the

³⁶²For Bismarck’s ‘Canossa speech’ of 1872, see n. 449 in Berlin section.

Garter Mission on which its' Chief will probably have been silent.³⁶³

The King and Queen³⁶⁴ of Saxony being warm admirers of England, and their Majesties having been deeply gratified by the proffer of the Garter, the Earl of Fife could not fail to be loaded with honours at this hospitable and brilliant Court.

But, except in the Palace, English manners and ideas are not particularly popular in Dresden, so that it was uncertain whether Saxon society would give the Mission a sympathetic reception. My opportunities for close observation of the impression actually made were perhaps better than those of any other person, and I am within the mark in saying, that wherever the Earl of Fife and his suite went they created a furore. After the introductory dinner at Court,³⁶⁵ the King spoke to me with much warmth of his principle quest, saying that Garter Missions were sometimes entrusted to a "swell" (sic), but that on this occasion the choice had fallen on a person singularly full of intelligence, vivacity, and fascination. His Majesty's verdict (which I more than once heard repeated by himself) was that of the Queen of Saxony, and of every person of whatever station with whom the Earl of Fife came in contact, and I would observe that this result would hardly have been obtained but for the unwearied and painstaking attention which His Lordship paid to the minutest details of persons and things, and to the exigencies of German etiquette.

If the members of the suite were partly eclipsed by their chief, all of them contributed to the success of the Mission, and their popularity was unbounded, while the normal rigidity of Dresden society seemed to dissolve under the influence of English gaiety and ease.

As a witness of the Investiture I can testify to the careful execution of every part of the ceremony. Want of imagination, and of historic sense, may prevent some persons from appreciating such a pageant, but the German reverence for Ceremonial was, on this occasion, sufficient guarantee that the Investiture would be viewed in an admiring spirit. The universal feeling of the spectators was, that they had witnessed an imposing and picturesque function. The Royal recipient of the blue ribbon was moved and excited by this time-honoured ceremony, so as to have a difficulty in paying the compliment which His Majesty tried to address to me after the Mission had left the throne room.

³⁶³From 4 to 11 February 1882 Alexander Duff, Earl Fife, led a special diplomatic mission to invest the King of Saxony with the Order of the Garter. The ceremony took place on 7 February 1882.

³⁶⁴Carola.

³⁶⁵On 6 February 1882.

I owe it to the Earl of Fife to inform Your Lordship that my own position in the background of these interesting transactions left nothing to be desired. It might easily have been an unpleasant one, but for the unvarying cordiality and confidence with [*sic*] he treated me from first to last, and the courtesy and patience with which he underwent the interminable train of introductions, active and passive, which I had to inflict upon him as head of the Garter Mission.

FO 68/166: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 26, Dresden, 3 June 1882

[Received 6 June by post. ‘?’ – X; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Explanation of German hostility to British policy in Ireland; Bismarck's anti-liberal propaganda depicts England as an exemplary failure of liberalism; German Liberals stand aloof from English liberalism

A person whose avocations bring him into contact with the leading German officials and politicians, remarked to me a few days ago, that it would be hard to overstate the antipathy of his countrymen to English statesmanship. He said that he did not know when he had heard, or read, even a casual approval of our policy, and that, in particular our treatment of Ireland was almost as strongly reprobated here by Liberals and Democrats as by Conservatives.

This opinion of a well informed observer of public feeling, who is a ‘Secessionist’, and individually an adherent of Her Majesty’s Governments, accords with my own observations. As our present objects and ideals, international and d[omestic] are very dissimilar to those of Germany, the antagonism may be thought inevitable: it would, however, have been less acute but for circumstances to which I would draw attention.

1. The English news and articles of the newspapers of the Empire are mainly derived from the correspondence of two or three of the leading journals of North Germany, with the Augsburg ‘Allgemeine-Zeitung’, and, perhaps, the Vienna ‘Neue Freie Presse’. These papers are hostile to Her Majesty’s Government, especially the “Kölnische Zeitung”, which is largely laid under contribution by its’ German contemporaries. The “Kölnische Zeitung” is now, as regard[s] Foreign Affairs, a notorious “Reptile[.]”:³⁶⁶ the relations of Herr Lindau with the German Foreign Office are beyond a doubt, so that looking to this source of influence, or corruption, and to the effect of the so called

³⁶⁶For the so-called ‘reptile press’, see n. 40 in this section.

“Washing-Bills” issued by the Prussian “Literary Bureau”,³⁶⁷ as well as to the general tone of the other papers in question, the German readers’ estimates of English affairs are, on the whole, necessarily drawn from appreciations in which Her Majesty’s Government is the object of systematic detraction.

2. This state of things has been utilized by Prince Bismarck in his attempt to break up the Liberal parties in Prussia and the Empire, and discredit Parliamentary Government. His plan has been to strike Herr Lasker, Herr Richter, and Herr von Stauffenberg, through the representatives of progress in England. The constant language of the ‘Reptiles’, in the press and elsewhere, has been: –“see the depths to which government by majorities, and liberal principles, have brought even the classical land of liberty:! – prestige lost, submission to the Boers, Candahar abandoned, Parliament to be gagged, Ireland in social revolt, anarchical tendencies encouraged at home. From this learn where Herr Lasker and his allies would take Germany”! A similar taunt drawn from the case of Italy was, Your Lordship will remember, openly used by Prince Bismarck in the Reichstag;³⁶⁸ the argument is a regular weapon of the Conservatives, and has not been employed without effect.

3. The German liberals have consequently thought it good tactics to disavow all sympathy, or joint responsibility with the party thus discredited, and their language with respect to Ireland has been almost vituperative [*sic*] than that of the Conservatives.³⁶⁹ A disclaimer of this sort from the Liberal Frankfort ‘Journal’ has just been quoted with approval by the Liberal Dresden ‘Anzeiger’, the organ of the Municipality. The article is characteristic, and I append some of the more emphatic passages.³⁷⁰

** ‘It was reserved to the Gladstone Ministry to adopt the mischievous and unnatural medley of politics and legislation under the sign “Humanity”. It is precisely in the interests of real Humanity (a very different thing from the thin sentimental hazes which haunts the brains of the English quakers) – that we lament this foisting a confused and impotent policy of feeling on to the affairs of practical life.

³⁶⁷ Strachey is referring to the news service of the Prussian *Literarisches Büro*; *Waschzettel* was the derisive name for semi-official information passed to the loyal press.

³⁶⁸ In his speech of 30 November 1881 Bismarck criticized the republican tendencies of the Italian government.

³⁶⁹ Gladstone’s concessionary policy towards Irish tenant farmers led to the Second Land Act of 1881 and the so-called ‘Kilmainham Treaty’ of 2 May 1882. This extended the Land Act in favour of tenants, and gained Gladstone the parliamentary support of the Irish National Land League and Home Rule Party.

³⁷⁰ The article in question was entitled ‘Humanität und Schwäche’ and published in the *Frankfurter Journal* on 25 May 1882; it was quoted in the *Dresdner Anzeiger* on 30 May 1882.

*** When no man dares to respect the law for fear of reprisals, when the Government looks on with arms crossed while murder follows on murder and crime is piled on crime, without drawing the sword of justice, we do not see what such miserable weakness has to do with humanity. But when this same Government goes on to take under its' special protection the admitted authors of this lawless state of things, and enters into negotiations with them, such a proceeding is not humane, but the efflux of a sickly doctrinaire sensibility which may be in its' place in the academic chair, or in the study, where at least it is harmless, but not in the physical world of men and things – so unlike the theoretical 'cloud-cuckoo-land' in which every man passes his life as a born angel.

***** It is neither statesmanslike [*sic*] nor humane to stake the repose of a province and the existence of the state for mere love of a sickly idealism. The fact that the present English Government represents the liberal party of the country is no reason for not severely blaming their Irish policy, for weak submission and aimless experimentalizing have nothing to do with liberalism. It would be a lamentable thing if, for the sake of a catch-word, liberalism were induced to sacrifice the principle of the inviolability of the law, and with it the basis of sound political life: doing this it would cease, not only in England but everywhere else, to be capable of governing.

**** That the pseudo-humane system followed by The English Cabinet in Ireland is destined to make a complete fiasco there is now no doubt. *** The next events in Ireland will unquestionably offer a clear proof that a firm temper of resolution and sharp assertion of the law are, under all circumstances, more calculated to serve the true interests of humanity and of the State than doctrinaire obstinacy associated with pliant weakness and political diletantism'.

The writer observes that whatever wrongs the Irish may have formerly suffered at our hands they have had no worse enemies than themselves. This is the prevalent German belief, and it is argued that only a population with an exceptional incapacity for improvement and alacrity in crime could have brought Ireland to her present pass. A Saxon journalist lately contrasted the Irish with the Wends (Slavs) of the Prussian and Saxon Lausitz who, though they have suffered endless vicissitudes of conquest and misgovernment have happily amalgamated with the dominant race, and still subsist as a flourishing, separate, nationality.³⁷¹

³⁷¹In contrast to this assertion, the Wends or Lusatian Sorbs did suffer suppression, for example, the prohibition of the Sorb language in schools from 1875.

**FO 68/166: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 29,
Dresden, 20 June 1882**

[29 June by post. For: The Queen; H.P.A. [Henry Percy Anderson]; G[ranville]]

Account of meeting held in Dresden by secessionist members of the Reichstag; desires to bring together German liberal factions to oppose Bismarck; speech by Professor Mommsen

On Sunday last³⁷² a deputation of leading ‘Secessionists’ from the Reichstag held here what the Germans call a Public Meeting – that is to say, a closed assembly with admission by ticket, and addresses [*sic*] without discussion, or proposal of resolutions.

The Chairman, D^r Braun of Wiesbaden, enlarged on the present political condition of Germany as one of grave crisis which, in spite of the recent awakening of the people, as evinced at the last general election, might be turned by Prince Bismarck to the profit of his reactionary plans unless the liberal fractions joined to form an united parliamentary Left.³⁷³ D^r Braun delivered a scathing criticism, supported by full statistics, of the Reichskanzler’s financial reforms, skillfully appealing to local sentiments by denunciations of the Tobacco Bill,³⁷⁴ and by describing Prince Bismarck’s repeated calls for more money as dictated by the supposed necessities not of Germany, but of Prussia.

The member for Danzig, Herr Rickert, was rather more optimist than his colleague, laying stress, not on the possibilities of reaction, but on the certainty which, according to his argument, existed, that if Prince Bismarck was confronted by a united liberal party he would prefer to seek their alliance instead of that of the Clerical-Conservative coalition.

Professor Mommsen also spoke, but although the presence of the most illustrious of the many thousand Germans prosecuted by Prince Bismarck for political libel might usefully remind an assemblage of one of the Reichskanzler’s chief failings, the scholastic personality and effete oratory of the great historian is more calculated to damage than to support a cause on a public platform.

I do not know that the exhortations of the Secessionist members will have any immediate results.

To be effective, such appeals should be made by a combined deputation from the various fractions of the left. Then the recurring talk of ‘Reaction’, and a ‘Crisis’, falls flat on the general public. It

³⁷²18 June 1882. For the ‘Secessionists’ see n. 168 in Darmstadt section.

³⁷³The Reichstag elections of 27 October 1881 saw a shift towards left liberal parties and the Catholic *Zentrum*. The National Liberals and conservative parties lost their majority.

³⁷⁴For the tobacco bill, see n. 177 in Darmstadt section.

is within the perception of an average liberal intelligence that Prince Bismarck's powers for evil have diminished of late, and no one believes that he is harbouring dark designs, or that anything particular is going to happen.

FO 68/166: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 35, Dresden, 4 September 1882

[Received 8 September by post. For: The Queen; G[ranville]]

Sedan Day anniversary celebrations; moderate tone of press reportage

The anniversary of Sedan³⁷⁵ was kept here in the usual unassuming, non-official way. The outward signs of festivity were, a limited display of flags from houses, a few extra gas jets at night, and a short musical performance in the great square. Certain societies dined together, and the day was observed as a partial holiday, while in the schools the patriotism of the future defenders of Elsass-Lothringen received a questionable stimulus in the shape of cantatas, essays, and speeches on historical or literary subjects.

On such occasions the tone of the Press is generally admirable, and this year there seemed to be a tacit understanding that all language likely to hurt foreign susceptibilities should be more carefully avoided than ever, lest the temper of the Germans should seem to have been ruffled by the follies of M. Déroulède.³⁷⁶ The papers insisted that the chief significance of the day of Sedan was political not military, and that the Event celebrated on each recurring 2nd September was not so much the defeat of France as the new birth of Germany.

The 'Dresdener-Nachrichten'³⁷⁷ has made the very just observation, that the Germans cannot be accused of wearing Sedan threadbare, whereas if the French had captured 120,000 men, 300 guns, and an Emperor, at a blow, their endless self glorification would of itself, apart from all concomitant political consequences, have constituted an intolerable European nuisance.

[...]

P.S. Since the above was written I have seen the remarks of the 'Times' Correspondent³⁷⁸ on the subject of this Despatch, which are so

³⁷⁵For Sedan Day, see n. 57 in Darmstadt section.

³⁷⁶Strachey is referring to the revanchist activities of Paul Déroulède and his *Ligue des patriotes*, founded in 1882.

³⁷⁷On 3 September 1882.

³⁷⁸Charles Lowe's article on Sedan Day was published in *The Times* on 3 September.

curiously like my own as to make it seem that I have been appropriating Mr Lowe's ideas, and even his language.

FO 68/166: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 38, Dresden, 18 September 1882

[Received 20 September by post. For: The Queen / Gladstone / Mr Childers; 'Copy extracts as marked [1st and last paragraphs of dispatch] to War Office for communication to Sir G. Wolseley'; G[ranville]]

Conversation with emperor on British success in Egypt

After a Banquet at the Palace yesterday the Emperor addressed me in the most cordial manner, and said that he was delighted to congratulate me on the achievements of Her Majesty's forces in Egypt, which had given him real satisfaction. General Wolesley had carried his difficult enterprise to conclusion with rapidity and skill, and the result was very honorable to the General and his troops.³⁷⁹

His Imperial Majesty went on to describe the Telegrams which he had exchanged with the Queen in regard to the Duke of Connaught, and spoke of his warm interest in the proceedings and safety of His Royal Highness.³⁸⁰

I replied that it was hard for me to express the pride and satisfaction which it gave me, as Her Majesty's representative, to hear such a marked and gracious approval of our army from a sovereign whose own military successes had been on so vast a scale: ~ praise like this impressed me as if coming from Frederick the Great.

The Emperor similarly accepted the comparison, and, taking up my allusion to 1870, was so complimentary as to reply – 'you see everyone has his turn!'

On my observing, in a jocular way, that it had annoyed me to find, on searching for the exact dates in Lanfrey,³⁸¹ that the time in which Napoleon I completed the conquest of Egypt was 4 days less than that taken by Sir G. Wolseley. His Imperial Majesty laughed, and said that we had no reason to complain.

The Emperor further said that I had his full permission to report his remarks, and that it would give him pleasure if they reached Sir Garnet Wolseley.

³⁷⁹For the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir of 13 September 1882, see n. 431 in Berlin section.

³⁸⁰During the Anglo-Egyptian War Queen Victoria's third son, Prince Arthur, the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, was commander of the Guards Brigade.

³⁸¹Pierre Lanfrey's *Histoire de Napoleon I*. Strachey is referring to Napoleon's Egyptian campaign in 1798.

**FO 68/166: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 37,
Dresden, 21 September 1882**

[Received 23 September by post. For: The Queen; G[ranville]]

Emperor's recent visit to Dresden met with warm and enthusiastic Saxon response

The Emperor, with the Prince Imperial and his sons,³⁸² arrived here on the 14th Instant from Silesia, on a visit to the King and Queen³⁸³ of Saxony. His Imperial Majesty was accompanied, or met in Dresden, by about twenty royal personages, and by a large military retinue, German and foreign.

The Imperial visit terminated yesterday, after six days of manoeuvres, inspections, banquets, civic shows, processions, musical ovations, dramatic and other entertainments. Dresden cannot quite equal the splendours of Italian festive surroundings, nor does Saxon popular enthusiasm come up to English standards of intensity. But some of the palatial and municipal displays of the last week were on a scale of great magnificence, and the reception of the Emperor William by all classes, was from first to last, of a nature to satisfy any sovereign, however exorbitant of popularity, testifying, on the part of the people of Saxony, to a profound attachment to the venerable head of the Empire. After such demonstrations it would be interesting to know the reasons, which inspired Prince Bismarck's publicly declared belief, that but for the Courts and Princes the new Germany would probably succumb to the rampant Particularism of the separate states.³⁸⁴

**FO 68/167: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 2,
Dresden, 5 January 1883**

[Received 9 January. For: The Queen / Prince of Wales; G[ranville]]

German reactions to Gambetta's death

Although the death of Gambetta³⁸⁵ could not call forth here the superlatives used in England, the comments which I have seen, or heard, have been inappropriate, and not unsympathetic, language.

³⁸²Friedrich Wilhelm and his sons Wilhelm, Heinrich, and Waldemar.

³⁸³Carola.

³⁸⁴Strachey is probably referring to Bismarck's speech in the *Reichstag* of 12 June 1882, in which he stated his belief that the German dynasties were the guardians of national unity.

³⁸⁵Gambetta died on 31 December 1882, aged 44.

In the similar case of Skobelev the Germans were unable to speak without hysterics of hatred and contempt more applicable to a Turcoman robber than to the General of a civilized power. But no injustice has been done to the French statesman, and if under the influence of his failure in office, and the growing belief that his patriotism was more largely tinged with personal motions than had been formerly supposed, the nimbus of his earlier career had somewhat faded, full recognition has been given to the ex-dictator's genius, to his gifts of eloquence and persuasion, and to the progressive element in his character which transformed the 'fou furieux'³⁸⁶ of their days into a chief supporter of French, and, indeed, of European, order.

Subjectivity in judgments is not a usual fault of this nation, and they have felt no ill will towards Gambetta for regarding them (as they have believed) with the hatred which it was natural for him to entertain. His death, however, has caused a certain sense of relief, the reflection being obvious, that although the idea of Revenge is universal in France (so the Germans think), it may lose something of its vitality after the removal of its chief prophet, by whom, moreover, the subterranean alliance of the Russian and French enemies of Germany was believed to have been principally promoted and sustained.

It was only as a moral force that Gambetta inspired the Germans with apprehensions for the future. They did not derive from the campaign on the Loire³⁸⁷ the conviction that he was a Carnot, or even an accomplished military amateur like Thiers. The resistance after Sedan³⁸⁸ did not impress them as possessing the stupendous character sometimes ascribed to it, or even as having been proportionate to the resources of such a country as France, nor are Gambetta's talents for organization thought to have equalled his zeal. And the opinion is universal, that by his personal interference from a distance with the details of operations which neither Frederic the Great nor Napoleon would have pretended to control unless present on the spot, he contributed largely to the annihilation of the armies which his own energies had raised.

³⁸⁶French: 'raving lunatic'. Adolphe Thiers used this expression when Gambetta, after the capitulation of Paris on 28 January 1871, advocated a continuation of the war against Germany.

³⁸⁷The *Armée de la Loire* was recruited on the orders of Gambetta – then minister of war – in October 1870. Its campaign lasted until mid January 1871.

³⁸⁸Battle of Sedan, 1 September 1870.

**FO 68/167: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 17,
Dresden, 25 April 1883**

[Received 28 April by post. For: The Queen; G[ranville]]

Approval of English dynamite bill in Saxony

English political ideals and methods are now so out of fashion in Germany, that expressions of sympathy with our domestic legislation are rarely, if ever, heard. An exception has, however, happened in the case of the Dynamite Bill, which has been received by the press, the public, and, especially, by the official world, with the most emphatic approval.³⁸⁹

I have heard the remark that there are parts of Saxony (meaning the mining districts) where everyone has dynamite in his pockets. It is, at any rate, true, that peculiar facilities exist for obtaining and storing this explosive: hence the hope is general, that Her Majesty's Government will be able to stamp out the Irish dynamite party with a completeness calculated to serve as a warning to any promoters of Social-Democracy who might be disposed to attempt to terrorize society and authority here.

**FO 68/167: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 18,
Dresden, 23 May 1883**

[Received 28 May by post. For: The Queen / Prince of Wales; G[ranville]]

Criticism in Saxony regarding imperial rescript; comments on emperor's constitutional rights

The late Imperial Rescript to the Reichstag, which communicated the Emperor's personal views and wishes with regard to the Budget, and the Workmens Insurance Bills, has met with considerable criticism here.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁹The Explosive Substances Act of 9 April 1883 was passed through parliament in one day in response to a spate of bombing by Irish-American conspirators. It restricted the possession and use of dynamite.

³⁹⁰In his address of 14 April – presented by the Prussian minister of finance, Adolf von Scholz – the emperor called upon the *Reichstag* to vote for the insurance bill and additional social measures. In order to allow sufficient time for the legislation to pass the emperor advocated – in accordance with 'allied' governments – that the budget for the fiscal year 1884–1885 should be approved in the current summer session.

The German people and parliament will always receive with every outward mark of respect these emanations from the venerable head of the Empire, who is the object of a pious attachment almost more resembling a religious cult than the sentiment of ordinary loyalty. But the constituencies are not to be turned from their opinions, and representatives will not break their party allegiance, in deference to the argument 'car tel est nôtre plaisir'.³⁹¹ There was no likelihood that the Rescript would affect so much as a solitary parliamentary vote; and the remark has been general, that it was hard to understand how Prince Bismarck or the Emperor William could entertain any illusions on this head.

But the message has also been criticized on Constitutional grounds. The Constitution of Germany distinctly withholds [*sic*] from the Emperor all initiative in legislation. He cannot, as Emperor, propose measures to the Reichstag, or even to the Bundesrath, and he enjoys no Veto. Bills approved by the Bundesrath are presented by the Emperor to the Reichstag on behalf of the Confederated Governments. On this point the Constitution is quite free from ambiguity: its' plain words have no place whatever for a private Imperial policy separate from the measures approved by the Confederate States through their organ, the Bundesrath.

Another fundamental German constitutional fact is, that there is here no such thing as a general Imperial sovereignty. When therefore the Finance-Secretary in the Reichskanzleramt spoke of the Emperor as possessing Sovereign power in the Reich,³⁹² a jar was given to sensitive Saxon nerves. But during a short visit just paid by the King of Saxony to Berlin, the official Prussian journal took occasion to correct this error, and explained that in Germany the Sovereign power was vested, not in the Emperor but in the separate States.³⁹³ The coincidence of the article with the King's visit has been construed by some, as indicating a desire to make a species of apology intended to allay any susceptibilities which may have been aroused by the scarcely constitutional style of the Imperial Message.

³⁹¹French: 'because such is our pleasure'; closing formula of royal acts in France.

³⁹²Strachey is referring to Scholz's speech in the *Reichstag* on 5 May 1883.

³⁹³The King of Saxony visited Berlin from 16 to 18 May 1883; the article in question was published in the *Provinzial-Correspondenz* on 17 May.

**FO 68/167: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 28,
Dresden, 19 September 1883**

[Received 22 September by post. For: The Queen; G[ranville]]

Discussion of acrimonious exchange between The Times and Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung over Franco-German press relations; no general offence caused

The replies of the 'Times' to the Nordd. Allgem. Zeitung have been reproduced here.³⁹⁴ Some years ago they would have caused much bitter feeling, but intelligent Germans are now aware that the 'Times' is not the organ of the British Government, or of the British nation, who are not responsible for private emanations from the mind of an editor or a rhetorician, or from a mercantile coterie.

The 'Anzeiger',³⁹⁵ with a German newspaper's usual capacity for seeing inner meanings, explains that the 'Times' is, in this instance, the mouthpiece of "English politicians" anxious to involve Germany in troubles with France and Austria. But the 'Nachrichten'³⁹⁶ observes that the case does not call for profound speculation on authorship and motives: the 'Times' is not the English people, and it is far outstripped in circulation by other English journals: its' language about Germany is ignorant, frivolous, nonsense, which is beneath discussion, especially as it may be inspired by Herr von Blowitz, who overflows with the hatred and malice towards this Empire natural in a bitter Hanoverian partizan.

The result of the controversy, if any, has been to bring Printing House Square into increased contempt here, and this public will continue to prefer to be guided by Prince Bismarck, and not by the 'Times', in respect to the right way of dealing with France. The Reichskanzler's policy meets with much contradiction amongst his countrymen, but there is one function of government which he administers to their entire satisfaction – the conduct of Foreign Affairs.

³⁹⁴ Strachey is referring to articles which appeared in *The Times* on 10 and 17 September in response to anti-British polemics. These included the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, which, on 15 September 1882, accused *The Times* of 'inciting the French against Germany' by 'distortion of facts'.

³⁹⁵ *Dresdner Anzeiger*, 18 September 1883.

³⁹⁶ *Dresdner Nachrichten*, 18 September 1883.

**FO 68/167: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 35,
Dresden, 12 November 1883**

[Received 15 November. For: The Queen; T.V.L. [Thomas Villiers Lister]]

Reflections on 400th anniversary celebrations of Luther's birth in Saxony and their potential political implications

The 400th anniversary of Luther's birth has been celebrated all over Saxony by a succession of civic and religious ceremonies, instituted by the local municipal, parochial, or academic bodies. The provincial participation appears to have been unprecedented both as to numbers and enthusiasm. Dresden, which is not the most impulsive of cities, seemed to have taken a new departure in spontaneous popular rejoicing, the processions, the street decorations, the illuminations, the enthusiasm of crowds, far surpassing all similar displays of recent years.

It is, perhaps, almost superfluous to observe that the Kingdom in its present delimitation is not the Saxony of Wittenberg and the Wartburg, and that the reigning house belongs not to Luther's friends and protectors, the dispossessed Ernestine Princes, but to those of the Albertine line. However this failure in exact historic identity does not hinder the Saxons from looking on Luther as in a special sense their countryman, and on Saxony as the cradle of the Reformation. Hence the eagerness of all classes here to honour the memory of a man who is something more to them than the greatest of Germans.

The most notable features of the celebration here were an official service, with confession and communion, in the principal church, attended by the Ministers of State, the Municipality &c: a torch-light procession of 12,000 persons, with an appropriate musical act, to inaugurate a provisional Luther statue: an assemblage with an oration and a choral performance, to which the Prussian Minister³⁹⁷ and myself were invited as the representatives of the Protestant powers.

The Royal family could not, of course, participate in such proceedings,³⁹⁸ but it is due to them and to the functionaries with whom they are in intimate contact to mention, that the leading Court Officials, such as the Hofmarschall,³⁹⁹ and the Hausmarschall,⁴⁰⁰ as

³⁹⁷Carl Graf von Dönhoff.

³⁹⁸The Albertine line of the House of Wettin became Catholic in 1697 when Prince Elector August converted in order to become King of Poland.

³⁹⁹Hans von Könneritz.

⁴⁰⁰Hermann Ludwig Graf Vitzthum von Eckstädt.

well as the Kings personal Adjutant-General,⁴⁰¹ came forward to do honour to Luther.

As regards the connection of these transactions with the politics of the day I would remark, that although Saxony has not been in the “Kulturkampf”, the prolongation of that conflict has aroused something of the old antagonism to Romish pretensions, and I do not doubt that here, as over whole of Germany, the events of the last two days will have given a certain stimulus to Protestant sentiment. Under the influence of the excitement of the moment, some sanguine Conservatives are talking of a religious revival; but I do not see how the face of the notorious predominance of Agnosticism, and more positive forms of disbelief, the German mind can be expected to move in that direction.

FO 68/167: George Strachey to Earl Granville, No 37, Dresden, 6 December 1883

[Received 11 December by post. For: The Queen / X; Ch.W.D. [Charles Wentworth Dilke]; G[ranville]]

Debate in Saxon Landtag on law relating to miners' friendly societies; unlikely eulogy by Liebknecht on positive nature of British social reform

At the meeting of the Chambers, which have just opened for the Biennial Session, the Government introduced a Bill for the Reform of the law on the Miner's friendly Societies.⁴⁰²

In a preliminary debate, which chiefly turned on local and technical details, the Bill was somewhat roughly handled by the two great orators of the Landtag, the Social-Democrats Liebknecht and Bebel.

Complaining of the suspicions with which his party was regarded, and of the disinclination to treat the workman as “a man and a brother”, as exemplified in the proposal to maintain the obligatory miner's books (*livrets*),⁴⁰³ Liebknecht diverged from his subject in a marked manner to eulogize our treatment of Social questions. He said: – ‘look at England – there are no Social-Democrats there! The people whose names appear as agitators are not Socialists at all. And why? Because it is the Government, and the ruling classes, who have taken the initiative in reforms. The English social legislation goes

⁴⁰¹Oswald von Carlowitz.

⁴⁰²The Saxon *Landtag* was opened on 15 November 1883. The debate in the second chamber concerning reform of the Saxon Mining Act of 1868 and, in particular, the miner's welfare and insurance fund (*Knappschaftskasse*), took place on 26 November.

⁴⁰³*Livret d'ouvrier* or employment record book.

further than the German, which is a mere set of bureaucratic poor-law regulations, and, moreover, is still mostly on paper. In Germany the police are always throwing obstacles in the workman's path: in England this is never the case. The English workman does not look on the state and its organs as enemies, as the German artizan does: the policeman is not a spy, but a helper who aids him against misfortune. In this way the English Government has broken off the point of the workman's movement: if this had not been done in Germany the Governments were to blame.⁷

Although this comparison is evidently strained, being, in particular, unjust to the attempts now being made here to solve social questions, it rests on the fact that Germany suffers from the class antagonisms, the comparative absence of which amongst ourselves has given us, as Macaulay said, the most aristocratic democracy and the most democratic aristocracy in the world.⁴⁹⁴ But such language sounds strange from Liebknecht, who, with his followers, have [*sic*] constantly spoken of us as a people amongst whom the tyranny of capital and class rules unrestrained. The leading idea of German Social-Democracy is, that the fabric of Society must be subverted, not repaired, and Liebknecht can hardly be sincere in promising the palliatives applied to institutions on which he invokes destruction, root and branch.

Liebknecht's eulogy of our system was answered by Herr von Nostitz-Wallwitz who, in his usual biting style, scorned the idea of going for lights in government and progress to a country from which Germany had, in many respects, nothing to learn, especially in these days of reform by dynamite.⁴⁹⁵ His Excellency is, of course, aware, that dynamite is not a domestic British development, but his argument told well as an oratorical point, and he has a genuine conviction that the German political and social evolution is proceeding on sounder lines than ours.

⁴⁹⁴'Thus our democracy was from an early period the most aristocratic, and our aristocracy the most democratic.' *The History of England from the Accession of James II*, Vol. I (1848).

⁴⁹⁵For the Fenian dynamite campaign, see p. 386.