

THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS IN LATVIA

BY
PETER Z. OLINS, Ph. D.

RIGA, 1928.

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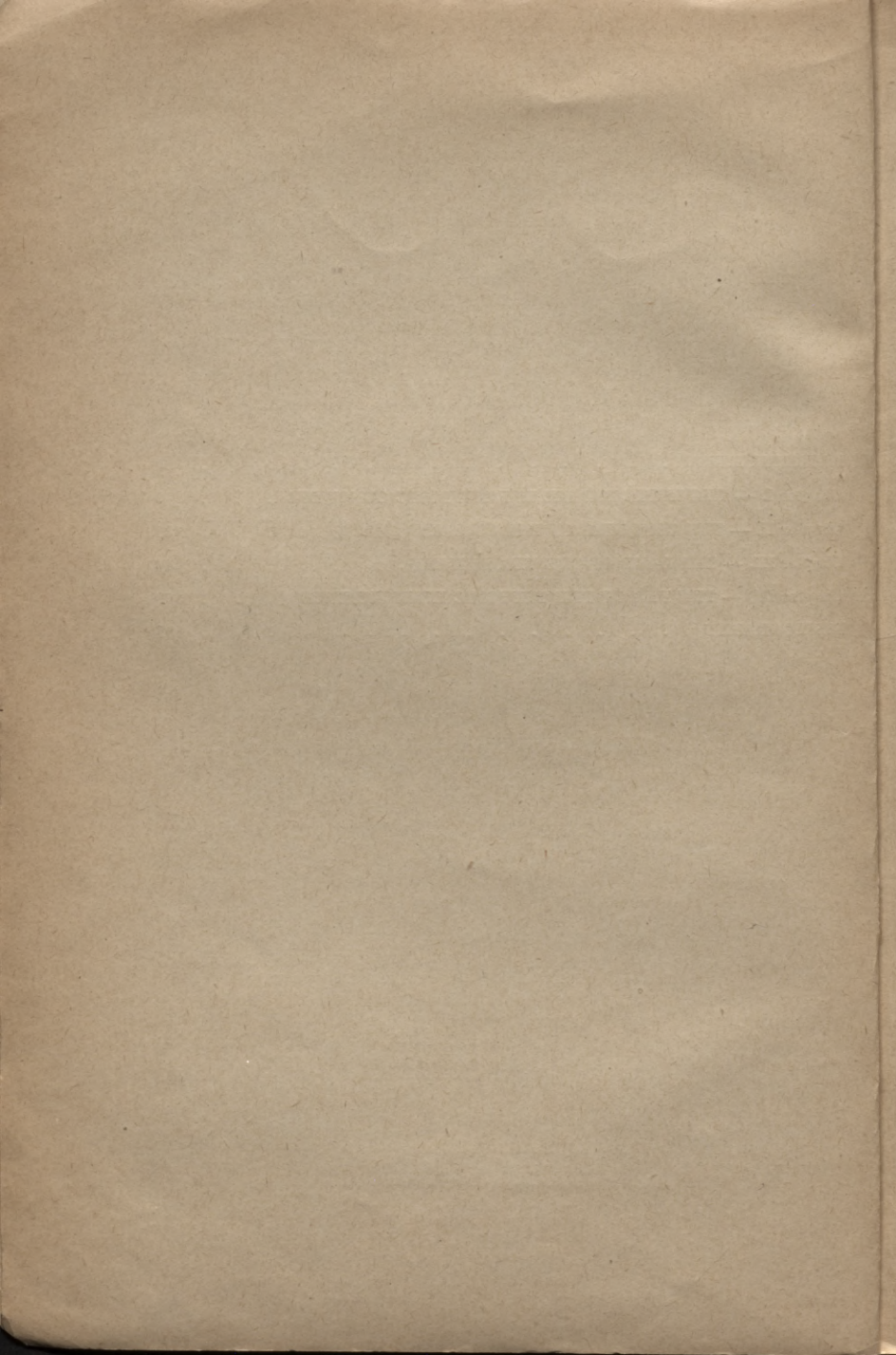
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Preliminaries. *(General)*

Every great historical movement has been associated with collateral currents set up by the people who had found it advantageous to put the selfish proceedings of their own under the shelter of the leading ideas of the time. Also the conquest of Latvia by the Teutonic Knights might be regarded as debased reecho of the great crusading drama. It would be impossible to trace in the Teutonic action in Latvia that sense of religious duty and spirit of chivalry which were displayed by the Christian Knights in the long struggle with the Islam. It was German adventurers, not always free from a shadow of a criminal past, that came to Latvia looking there for fortune and easy life. Assisted by German monks and merchants and directed by the Holy See, they started the conquest of the country and reduced the native population to slavery. As it was advantageous to show this enterprise as being in harmony with the predominant spirit of the time, the Knights called it "Conversion of the pagans to Christianity". The conquest of the country lasted during the whole course of the thirteenth century. When it was accomplished, the Knights and the ecclesiastics had to proceed with the political organization of the country and with the promotion of civilization within it. But the Germans proved unable to achieve either of these tasks. The principal event during the two centuries and half that followed was a perpetual civil war among various Teutonic parties and rulers. The moral decay went along with the political disorder. This internal weakness made the Teutons defenseless against the external difficulties which arose in the first half of the sixteenth century and put an end to the Teutonic independence in Latvia.

This general view held by the writer in regard to the nature and significance of the Teutonic rule in Latvia, has determined the scope and the direction of the present outline as well as the selection of facts important to the course of following events. The occurrences have been placed in a chronological order as far as they are concerned with the conquest of the country during the thirteenth century, for it was the sole period when the succession of events gradually led to some final result achieved by the Knights. The following centuries of the Teutonic rule presented no advance toward the formation of a political community, and therefore they are but of small interest to the political history. The unceasing civil war in which various Teutonic parties were busily engaged, did not give that period a character of a linear development, but rather that of a circular

movement. Owing to these circumstances the Teutonic history during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries might be regarded as a complex of episodes of mutual warfare the only significance of which consisted in their final result, i. e. in the loss of the Teutonic independence. In our narrative we have quoted the typical episodes of that civil war and we have made an attempt to define its most important tendencies, supporting our generalizations by the facts and events which took place at that period.

The emphasis has been laid in the present outline upon diplomatic policy and that international environment which had enabled the long duration of the Teutonic supremacy in Latvia. The Papacy, the Prussian branch of the Teutonic Order, German princes, and the Hansaetic League were those chief factors which actively supported the Teutonic Knights in Latvia. Together with the decline of their influence the Teutonic independence marched towards its end. A certain attention must be given to the political situation of the "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation" at that time as well as to Lithuania, Russia, Denmark, Sweden, and Poland. To note the political attitude observed by these powers is indispensable to a proper comprehension of the Teutonic rule in Latvia. As the Esthonians were doomed to fall equally with the Letts under the Teutonic oppression, and as both nations were ruled by the same masters, it is difficult to separate their past political history. Therefore, the principal events which took place in Esthonia during the period under consideration, have been also mentioned in the present outline. The course of events has been followed as far as 1561 when the Teutonic independence in Latvia finally collapsed.

The sources used by the writer in the present outline may be divided into two classes: (a) the documents of the time and the chronicles written by those who had witnessed the events, and (b) the writings and historical researches of later centuries.

The most valuable edition of the documents of the time has been prepared by Dr. F. G. von Bunge who published "Liv-, Est- und Curlaendisches Urkundenbuch nebst Regesten", 6 vols., Reval—Riga, 1853—1873. This work contains Papal letters and bulls, Imperial decrees, treaties of the Teutonic rulers with foreign powers or among themselves, the correspondence with the Hansaetic League, and all other documents which this editor has found as having reference to the Teutonic rule in Latvia and Esthonia. These documents comprise the period from the end of the twelfth century until 1423. The work started by F. G. von Bunge has been later carried on by other researchers and continued to 1505. As each volume of Bunge's edition has two parts, the "Regesten" and the "Urkundenbuch", having a separate numeration of pages, the references given in the footnotes of the present outline are indicated accordingly. The number of documents concerning the thirteenth century has been completed by Herman Hildebrand who published "Livonica, vornaehmlich aus dem 13. Jahrhundert, im Vaticanischen Archiv", Riga, 1887.

The earliest chronicle telling us of the Teutonic conquest was written by Henry, called the Lett. He was a German priest (1) who arrived at the beginning of the thirteenth century in Latvia and was engaged in converting the Letts and other inhabitants to Christianity. He had witnessed a great part of the events he described, and his narrative was continued until 1227. His chronicle was first edited by J. D. Gruber under the title "Origines Livoniae sacrae et civilis", etc., Francofurti et Lipsiae, Anno MDCCXL. The other chronicle of an author who had witnessed the events of the thirteenth century, was composed in rhymes, and has been called the "Reimchronik". The chronicler was probably in the military services of the Teutonic Order, or was himself a Teutonic Knight (2). The events were described until 1290. Both chronicles have been later included in the first volume of the "Scriptores Rerum Livonicarum", Riga und Leipzig, 1853. The indications given in the footnotes of this outline are referred to the numeration of pages of the said edition. Although these chronicles make probably no exception of the unreliable historiography of the Middle Ages (3), they are, however, together with the documents edited by F. G. von Bunge, the only sources we possess from the thirteenth century. The chronicles relative to later centuries have not been directly used in this outline, and are consulted only as far as the writer met with them in the historical literature of the modern time.

As an important document of the Lettish past we may also consider the rich Lettish folklore. The Latvian folklorist, Kr. Barons, has collected and published about 218,000 folksongs (variants included), called the "Latvju Dainas". Owing to the particular character of the Lettish history, these folksongs have preserved traces of great antiquity, and many communications of old chronicles about the Lettish past we are now able to understand only by calling in the assistance the Lettish folklore (4). "Comparatively a few folksongs", — says P. Smits, "have been composed in modern times, while some of them could have preserved the remnants of more than thousand years ago" (5).

As to the writings and historical researches of later centuries, they are for the most part made and published by German scholars and historians. They are all usually distinguished by an inclination to exonerate the Teutonic Knights and to look for their cultural and

1) His surname "The Lett" has misled some researchers who had supposed him to have been of Lettish origin. But the interests which he reveals as well as the way in which he reports of the native inhabitants, leave no doubt that he did not belong to them. There are also several indications in the chronicle, for example, the use of pronouns, which show that Henry had separated himself, as a German, from the nationality of the native inhabitants: "L e t t h i v e r o c u m d u o b u s e x e r c i t i b u s m e d i o t e m p o r e L e t t h o n i a m i n t r a v e r u n t, e t q u i b u s d a m o c c i s i s, q u n b u s d a m c a p t i s, a d n o s t r o s (i. e. the Germans) in Kukenoys redierunt . . ." Origines Livoniae, p. 130; etc. 2) L. Arbusov, Grundriss der Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Kurlands, Riga, 1908, p. 74. 3) "The medieval historian", says R. Flint, "was in the highest degree credulous, uncritical, and prejudiced. Ignorant of his ignorance, ignorant of what knowledge was, he readily accepted fictions as facts. . . Imbued with the spirit of his age, he looked at all events through an ecclesiastic and dogmatic medium which effectually precluded him from fairly estimating secular, and, still more, heathen life". (R. Flint, History of the Philosophy of History, New York, 1894, pp. 75—76.) 4) P. Smits, Etnografisko rakstu krājums (Lettish), Riga, 1912, vol. 1, p. 51. 5) Ibid., p. 62.

historical achievements in the Baltic. It is, perhaps, the typical tendency of the German scientific mentality which, regardless of its great learning and erudition, has showed itself sensible to the influence of emotional factors that have often caused an unscientific deviation from the clear and logical direction of impartial studies. Of these historians concerned with the Baltic past, as an exception we may regard Otto von Rutenberg. He has given himself a sort of Hannibal's oath to observe the truthfulness as the first duty of an historian, regardless of his patriotic and national feelings (1). This promise he has faithfully kept in his book "Geschichte der Ostseeprovinzen", Leipzig, 1859—1860, 2 vols., which is, to our judgment, the best writing on the subject. The very opposite tendency is inherent, for example in the large work of De Wal, "Histoire de l'Ordre Teutonique par un Chevalier de l'Ordre", Paris, 1784—1790, 8 vols. This history is, however, valuable on account of important sources which have been accessible to the authors. The same value possesses the learned and concise compendium of L. Arbusov, "Grundriss der Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Kurlands", Riga, 1908.

In French literature there is an interesting book published by Count de Bray under the title "Essai Critique sur l'Histoire de la Livonie", Dorpat, 1817, 3 vols. His work is the first attempt made by a non — German writer (2) to expose the historical events which took place in Latvia. Owing to the political oppression which prevailed in Latvia until the middle of the nineteenth century, the Lettish historiography is still in its initiatory stage of development. The way to it has been, however, paved by such Lettish researchers as J. Krodznieks, F. Rozins, A. Svabe, and others. No books, as far as we know, have been published on this subject in English language.

The complete list of all sources used and consulted by the writer has been attached to this outline. It contains mostly the volumes which have been found in the Library of Congress at Washington, D. C., and which the latter has kindly offered to our use.

1) Otto von Rutenberg, *Geschichte der Ostseeprovinzen*, Leipzig, 1860, vol. 2, p. IX. 2) The author was originally a French diplomat, but entered after the Revolution into the diplomatic services of the King of Bavaria, and represented during the period from 1806 until 1820 that sovereign at St. Petersburg. His wife possessed large estates in Latvia, and this had probably induced him to take an interest in the past history of that country. (*La Grande Encyclopédie, inventaire raisonné des sciences, de lettres et des arts*, Paris, 1889, vol. 7, p. 1039).

CHAPTER I.

The Letts before the Teutonic Conquest.

The earliest historical reports which directly and reliably tell of the Letts are rather of recent date if compared with those of other nations. They go only as far back as the beginning of the twelfth century when the Russian chronicler Nestor for the first time made known the names of the Lettish tribes and indicated the territories they occupied. Therefore those who would like to form an idea of the origin of the Lettish nation and of its old past, will find it necessary to apply to other sources and to consult the data furnished especially by archaeology, ethnography and philology. Of these sources the Lettish language is able to give the remotest insight into the Letts' prehistorical past, though the knowledge obtained in this way will be rather vague and conjectural. It will, therefore, answer our purpose if we allude to the most particular points of the Lettish language.

Comparative philology has noticed a close linguistic affinity among several groups of languages. One of them has been called the Indo-European family of languages, and embraces Indo-Iranian, Greek, Italian, German, Slavonic, Celtic, and other languages. It has been supposed that all these languages derive from one earlier language called primitive, or original Indo-European. It took, of course, many millenniums before the present ramification of the Indo-European languages was accomplished. "The faint likeness", said E. B. Tylor, "by which Welsh still shows its relationship to Greek and German may give some idea of the time that may have elapsed since all three were developed off from the original Aryan tongue, which itself probably ceased to exist long before the historical period began" (1).

The Indo-European family of languages comprises also the Baltic languages spoken at present by two living nations, the Letts and the Lithuanians. Both languages are much akin to each other. "From the linguistic point of view", says A. Meillet, "Lithuanian and Lettish are closely related and can be regarded as two dialects of the same language. But these two dialects had developed under different influences; Lithuanian has preserved its archaic aspect while Lettish has modernized itself" (2). Although their vocabularies show more resemblance with the Slavonic than with any other language of the Indo-European family, the philologists do not think it probable that

1) E. B. Tylor, *Anthropology*, New York, 1914, p. 11. 2) A. Meillet, *Les Langues dans l'Europe Nouvelle*, Paris, 1918, p. 39.

the Balts and the Slavs ever had in common a language other than the original Indo-European (1). "The Baltic group", says A. Meillet, "is geographically a neighbour of the Slavonic group and has a considerable resemblance with the Slavonic; but both languages, Lithuanian and Lettish, which it comprises at present, are quite distinct from the Slavonic languages" (2). Closer studies of the Baltic languages have revealed some particularities which show their very interesting relation to that original Indo-European language which has been lost, but which the philologists are trying to reconstruct. It is well known that the Sanskrit preserved in the sacred books of the Brahmans has more ancient structure and linguistic forms than the earliest Greek or Latin. Philologists have now noticed not only a strong resemblance of the Baltic languages to the Sanskrit, but have even found Baltic words which might be regarded as closer to the original Indo-European than those of the same meaning in Sanskrit. "What surprises in Lithuanian", says A. Meillet, "is its singular archaism. Though the most ancient Lithuanian texts are of the sixteenth century A. D., it appears that certain Lithuanian words are closer to the original form of Indo-European than the correspondent words in Sanskrit and Greek known more than 2000 years ago" (3). The Baltic languages have preserved a certain coloring of the far prehistorical past of Indo-Europeans, and it is why the philologists advise their students to listen to the country-dialects of the Baltic nations if they want to find "an echo of what the original language of the Indo-European might have been more than 3000 years ago" (4).

The foregoing shows that the Letts and the Lithuanians are the most direct descendants from those original ancestors who are supposed to have given birth to the vast family of Indo-European nations. In a long chain of historical events they present a peculiar link which in an interesting way connects our modern civilization with its far prehistorical origin. Considering the ancient character of their languages it might be supposed that the Letts and the Lithuanians had not much intermingled with other nations, and they were not dominated by the nomadic habits and instincts. Their geographical neighbors were for a long period the Slavs, which explains the resemblance of their languages with the Slavonic.

The question of the original home of the Letts is closely associated with that of the Indo-Europeans and their later dispersion. But this question has not so far been unanimously answered by the competent scholars. Not so long ago some German anthropologists, like Dr. M. Much, located the Indo-Europeans in Northwestern Europe with the Oder river as the eastern limit of their original settlements (5), while others, like H. Hirt, were more reserved in indicating exact geographical boundaries, and vaguely suggested "the low plain of Northern Europe" as their original home (6). But the arguments put forward by these scholars have not convinced other researchers. And

1) Dr. J. Endselin, *Lettische Grammatik*, Heidelberg, 1923, p. 8. 2) A. Meillet, *Les Langues*, etc., p. 39. 3) A. Meillet, *Les Langues*, etc., p. 37; 4) A. Meillet, *La Langue Lithuanienne et la Langue Lette*, *Les Annales des Nationalites*, 1913; 5) Dr. M. Much, *Die Heimat der Indogermanen*, Jena, 1904; 6) H. Hirt, *Die Indogermanen*, 2 vols., Strasburg, 1905.

it even seems that the German scholars in their reasoning were not quite free from certain patriotic tendencies. The German scientists like to identify the original Indo-Europeans while arbitrarily calling them Indo-Germans, with the early ancestors of their own and, probably inspired by the same patriotic motives, they are disposed to locate the original Indo-Europeans in the prehistorical settlements of the German tribes.

Recently S. Feist looked again in Central Asia for the original home of the Indo-Europeans (1), and A. Carnoy returned to the hypothesis of it having been in the vast plains of Southern Russia (2). A résumé of that scarce knowledge to which by this time the said researches have brought us, we find in the following words of A. Meillet: "It is not known where this language (i. e. original Indo-European) was spoken; it was located in Asia, then it was transported to all the regions of Europe, from the steppes of Volga to Carpathians, from Carpathians to Scandinavia, and from Scandinavia to Lithuania; and decisive reasons still fail to stay anywhere" (3).

Thus, it appears that the original home of the Lettish nation, together with that of the Indo-Europeans, are still questions at issue. Also the question when the Letts and other Baltic nations had reached the southeastern coast of the Baltic Sea, where they are living now, cannot be definitively answered at present when the archaeological and other studies of the Lettish antiquity are far from being accomplished. Nevertheless some hypotheses on this subject have already been formed. A. Bezzenberger who has been regarded as a great authority both in questions of Indo-European philology and archaeology, assumes that the Baltic nations already occupied for several thousand years the southeastern coast of the Baltic having arrived there soon after the ice-free land became suitable for cultivation. To somewhat similar conclusion, but with no precision as to the time of their arrival, there also comes P. Smits, presuming the Nieman river was a centre of an earlier home of the Baltic nations (4). At any rate, the early chronicles which tell of the Lettish tribes and their relations with neighboring nations, contain no indications that the Letts were newcomers in their country. They speak of them as of a settled population having a well established agriculture, castles and villages of their own. Also the ancient character of the Lettish language seems to indicate that the Letts had not participated in the general folk-wanderings which began in Europe at the end of the fourth century A. D. On account of these considerations it may be assumed that the Letts occupied already at that time approximately the same territories where they are living now.

There are no trustworthy records of the Letts before the Christian era. Herodotus, "the father of history", had a very vague idea of countries situated between the Baltic and Black Seas. To Herodotus the Baltic countries still belonged to that legendary region about which the Thracians had told him that "it was so densely filled by swarms

1) S. Feist, *Kulturausbreitung und Herkunft der Indogermanen*, Berlin, 1913, p. 526; 2) A. Carnoy, *Les Indo-Européens*, Bruxelles, 1921, p. 76; 3) A. Meillet, *Linguistique hitorique et linguistique générale*, Paris, 1921, p. 324; 4) P. Smits, *Etnografisko rakstu krājums* (Lettish), Riga, 1912, p. 110.

of bees that it was impossible to penetrate". However, in the writings of Roman historians, Pliny and Tacitus, we find better information. Pliny as even able to indicate the exact distance between the Danube and the Baltic Sea being mistaken only by $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles (1). The Roman historians called the Baltic inhabitants Aestians (Aesti) and told of their customs, beliefs, character, and occupation. They mentioned also that the cereal culture was considerably better done by the Aestians than by the "idle" Germans (2). Many indications can be found in their records on amber which was much valued by the Greeks and the Romans, and in ancient time even outweighed gold and precious stones. Amber was collected by the Aestians (mostly in Prussia) and sold to the Romans. During long centuries the amber trade seems to have been the chief interest attracting the merchants and travellers of the Mediterranean to the shores of the Baltic. The ancient road of the famous amber trade was probably the same which was used by the Goths, Scandinavians, and other northern nations in their intercourse with the Mediterranean. It ran from the Black Sea over the Dniester, the San and the Vistula rivers to Prussia on the shores of the Baltic Sea (3). Under the same name of Aestians the inhabitants of the Baltic were known many centuries later, and were described by the Gothic chroniclers of the sixth century A. D., Jordanes and Cassiodorus, and by an English sailor Wulfstan who visited their country in the ninth century. The name of the Aestians was then applied to all inhabitants of the Baltic without their national differentiation, and the same ancient name has still survived as that of the Esthonian nation (4).

When during the general migration of nations the above mentioned amber road between the Baltic and the Black Seas was interrupted, the northern nations found another way of communication with the Mediterranean over the Dvina and the Dnieper rivers, i. e. through the territories of the present Latvian State. "This was the usual way of communication", says A. Svabe, "from the fifth until the ninth century, and only in the tenth century a water way was opened over the Gulf of Finland, Neva, Ladoga, Volhov and Dnieper. Consequently, during five centuries the northern merchants, warriors, and colonists went to Russia and Byzantium over the Dvina, the greatest river of Latvia" (5). Thus, the inhabitants of Latvia were already at that early time on the highway of nations and could have been influenced by their cultural achievements. It is, however, difficult to state more or less precisely how closely the inhabitants of Latvia were then associated with that movement. The considerable number of Arabian

¹ J. Krodznieks, *Latvijas vēsture* (Lettish), Riga, vol. 1, p. 17; ² The epithet "idle" is applied to the Germans by Tacitus who reported of them as follows: "Whenever they are not at war, they spend the time in hunting, or rather in doing nothing but eating and sleeping. The bravest and the most warlike of them do nothing at all; they leave the care of their house and their fields to their wives, to the old men, and to the weak; they themselves live in the most stupid fashion". (Ch. Seignobos, *History of Medieval and of Modern Civilization*, p. 5); ³ M. Rostovtsev, *The Origin of the Russian State on the Dnieper*, Annual Report of the American Historical Association, Washington, D. C., 1925, p. 167; ⁴ A. Bielenstein, *Die Grenzen des lettischen Volksstammes*, St. Petersburg, 1892, p. 350; ⁵ A. Svabe, *Latvju kulturas vēsture* (Lettish), vol. 1, part 2, p. 51.

and Roman coins found in Latvia are mostly of that later period which has been called the "Viking Age".

This period was inaugurated in the last part of the eighth century A. D. when the Norman ships first appeared in England (1). In the middle of the ninth century Russian chroniclers report of their raids in Russia where the Scandinavians found especially fertile ground for their activities. Russia had at that time many rich commercial cities, and carried on a large international trade which "reached Constantinople in the South, Central Asia, China, and India in the East, and the Baltic and the White Seas in the North" (2). But the Russians had no united government and were divided in numerous independent tribes, each of them having a very weak and primitive political organization. That State of Russia presented great attraction to the enterprising Scandinavians who came over sea and established themselves in Slavonic cities as their kings and rulers. The Scandinavians, or Varangians, as the Russians called them, laid the very foundation of the Russian Empire. They subdued Russian tribes, and gave Russia the first united government founding a dynasty from which many Russian princes still claim their descent. They gave her even the name Russia, the latter having been that of one Scandinavian clan called "Russ" to which, as the Nestor's chronicle says, the northern Russian tribes sent in the year 862 A. D. a deputation telling it: "Our land is great and fertile, but there is no order in it; come and reign and rule over us".

The Vikings were far from being only rough pirates. Encyclopaedia Britannica characterizes them as follows: "In shipbuilding they were ahead of the Christian nations; they were well armed; they showed a great capacity for government, and in times of peace for peaceful organization; Normandy was the best governed part of France in the eleventh century" (3). The Scandinavians carried on a large trade with Russia and through Russia with the Arabians and Byzantians. Their original commercial highway was the Baltic Sea, the Dvina river, the centre of the territories populated by the Lettish tribes, and then it divided into, two chief directions: the first went over the Dnieper river and the Black Sea to Byzantium, while the second led over the Volga river to the region between the Caspian and Asov Seas where the Scandinavians met the commercial caravans arriving from Central Asia, Persia, and Mesopotamia (4). The chief articles of Scandinavian trade were furs, honey, wax, amber, and slaves whom the Scandinavians captured in passing through Slavonic territories. They sold them to Arabians and Greeks of Byzantium against wine, silk, gold-tissues, costly dresses and spices (5). Gradually the Gotland Island took up the leading part of this trade and acted for several centuries as almost a sole intermediary between Russia and the commercial cities of Northern Europe. The large extent of that trade movement has been confirmed by the great number of Arabian, Byzantian, German, and other coins found in Scandinavia, especially

1) Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. XXVII; 2) M. Rostovtsev, Annual Report of the American Historical Association, Washington, D. C., 1925, p. 165. 3) Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol. XXVIII; 4) T.-J. Arne, Les Relations de la Suède et de l'Orient pendant l'Age des Vikings, le Mans, 1910, p. 2; 5) A. Svabe, Latvju, etc., (Lettish), vol. 1, part 2, p. 56.

in Gotland (1). These relations resulted in considerable expansion of Byzantine civilization and arts towards the north. "The Byzantine influence in Sweden", says T.-J. Arne, "can be proved by such a large number of small crucifixes and medallions that it may be admitted that Christianity has come to us partly from Byzantium" (2).

The Letts participated in the Scandinavian trade movement with their own export articles, as furs, amber, honey, and wax, and exchanged them against salt, cottons, arms, and precious metals. It has been confirmed by a considerable number of Arabian, Byzantine, Roman, Scandinavian, and other coins found in Latvia. But there are also left behind written relics which witness the relations of the Scandinavians with the inhabitants of Latvia during the Viking Age. The Normans had a custom of placing stones on or in the graves of their dead. These monuments were called rune-stones, and upon them were engraved in special runic letters more or less literary statements. The runic inscriptions were mostly used in Norway and Sweden, but several of them have been found also in Latvia. They tell us of the Normans who came to Latvia for commercial or warlike purposes or passed through it when they went to or returned from Byzantium (3). The Viking Age was a period of great importance in the history of the Lettish nation. During three centuries the Letts were in a brisk intercourse with the Scandinavians. It might be that the inhabitants of the Baltic even followed the Normans in their expeditions to Russia and Byzantium (4). The scope of their international relations was enlarged and the Letts were brought into stimulating contact with the civilization of the Mediterranean which through Byzantine intermediaries gradually spread over Eastern Europe.

Passing now over the Viking Age which is regarded as closed with the eleventh century, we find in the very beginning of the twelfth century an important document, the Nestor's chronicle (5), which for the first time directly and exactly reports of the inhabitants of the

¹⁾ T.-J. Arne, *Les Relations, etc.*, p. 2; ²⁾ *Ibid.*, p. 4; ³⁾ A. Svabe, *Latvju, etc.*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 54; L. Arbusov, *Grundriss der Geschichte, etc.*, p. 6; ⁴⁾ There were at that time men of the same fearless and enterprising spirit on both sides of the Baltic Sea. We have, for example, a report of audacious Baltic pirates who having captured the Oeland Island, adjacent to the shores of Sweden, had made it a basis of their operations, menaced for several years the traffic on the whole of the Baltic Sea. It was necessary to send the strong fleet of the Danish King in order to stop at last their bold actions (Otto von Rutenberg, *Geschichte der Ostseeeprovinzen*, vol. 1, p. 33). The Baltic nations continued for a long time to attack the Scandinavian shores regardless of the presence of the German crusaders in Latvia (*Origines Livoniae*, pp. 138, 302, etc.); ⁵⁾ The Nestor's chronicle has been preserved in several apographs. The oldest one was made in 1377 for the Russian Prince of Suzdal by a monk Lavrenty who called himself "a bad, unworthy, and very sinful slave of God". The Russian scholars have now stated that, that part of Lavrenty's apograph which is usually called Nestor's chronicle, was not entirely written by Nestor, a monk of Peshtsherska Lavra in Kiev (1056—1114), but was put together of many fragments of Russian chronicles and writings of the twelfth century (see B. Kluthshevsky, *Kurs Russkoi Istorii* (Russian), I, Moskva, 1904, p. 97; S. Platonov, *Lektsii po Russkoi Istorii*, Petersburg, 1900, p. 41). Nestor's chronicle contains the earliest historical narrative of Russia, and has been regarded as very important also from the historiographical point of view. R. Flint said that on account of it "Russia can claim the honor of having had the earliest vernacular history" (R. Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*, New York, 1894, p. 73).

Baltic and indicates their geographical location. As inhabitants of Latvia Nestor mentions the Letgalians, or the Letts, the Zemgalians, the Kuronians, and the Livs. If, according to the later chronicles, we add to these tribes also the Selonians, we will have all five principal tribes who at that time inhabited Latvia. The Letts, Zemgalians, and Selonians, together with the Lithuanians and the Old Prussians, composed the Baltic group of the Indo-European nations. They occupied the large zone along the shore of the Baltic Sea between the Dvina and the Vistula rivers. The Livs were situated along the Gulf of Riga and belonged, together with the Esthonians who inhabited the territories in the north of the Letts, to the Ugro-Finnish group of nations. On the Kuronians the researchers differ. A. Bielenstein thinks they were of Ugro-Finnish origin ⁽¹⁾, while J. Endzelin, having examined the relics of the Kuronian language, is disposed to regard them as having belonged to the Baltic group of nations ⁽²⁾.

Of these former inhabitants of the Baltic there have survived the Esthonians, the Letts, and the Lithuanians who compose at present the population of the three independent Republics. The Old Prussians were almost exterminated in cruel battles with the Teutonic Knights to whom they offered a desperate resistance during more than half a century. Also the Livs have almost disappeared. As they were located along the Gulf of Riga, they had first to oppose the Teutonic invaders in the beginning of the thirteenth century ⁽³⁾. The census taken by the Government of Latvia in 1920 showed that there are living at present only 831 Livs, these being situated along the Gulf of Riga in the Northern part of Courland. This assimilation of Livs could not, of course, be forced by the Letts, as all the natives of Latvia were equally oppressed under the Teutonic rule. A. Meillet explains this assimilation as follows: "The Letts who are an active and energetic nation, did not need any political domination in order to absorb the neighboring population of the Finnish tongue: the language of the Livs which was spoken in the north of the Lettish territories was replaced by Lettish to such an extent that many citizens who speak at present Lettish are descended from ancestors who were Livs" ⁽⁴⁾.

The Old Letts lived in roughly built woodhouses. Around the castles where lived the Lettish kings or chiefs, the people settled down looking there for protection of their lives and property when wars broke out. Thus little towns gradually sprung up, as it shows already the Lettish word for town, *pilsēta*, which means a place around the castle. The chief occupation of the Letts was agriculture. Of the domestic animals the most favored were horses, frequently mentioned with pride and love in the Lettish folksongs. Also bee-culture was much carried on, and honey and wax were the chief articles in their trade with other nations. All tools, implements, and instruments necessary in households each family usually prepared itself, while for working of iron, copper and silver special branches of industries were developed ⁽⁵⁾.

¹⁾ A. Bielenstein, *Die Grenzen des lettischen Volksstammes*, p. 28;
²⁾ Dr. J. Endzelin, *Lettische Grammatik*, Heidelberg, 1923, p. 6. ³⁾ Hence all the country was called Livonia, although the Livs called themselves Randalist (Strand-people). See A. Bielenstein, *Die Grenzen*, etc., p. 351; ⁴⁾ A. Meillet, *Les Langues dans l'Europe Nouvelle*, Paris, 1918, p. 38; ⁵⁾ J. Krodznieks, *Latvijas vēsture* (Lettish), vol. 1, p. 31.

The Old Lettish society was made up of families, each having its own property. When after the death of the pater familias some members separated and established households of their own, the property was divided. It proves that the Old Letts had already outlived the times of joint property. Kindred families formed a clan with an elder member at head who called meetings of other members and together with them decided all important questions concerning the clan ⁽¹⁾. The population divided itself into three social classes: nobility, freemen, and menials, the latter consisting mostly of slaves captured in war.

The Lettish clans were united in political communities, and when war broke out, they clubbed together around their chiefs ⁽²⁾. In this respect the Zemgalians and the Kuronians had almost succeeded in uniting all their clans under one authority. They were therefore able to offer better resistance to the Teutonic Knights than other Lettish tribes. Their chiefs were called in the chronicles kings (reges), and they were, as Viesturs, the Prince of Zemgalians, and Lameikins, the Prince of Kuronians, practically the rulers over all territories populated by their tribes. Also two principalities on the Dvina river, as Koknese (Kukenoys) and Yersika (Gercike), having been situated in the Lettish territories, were probably the Lettish political communities. The names of their princes, as Vetsakais (Vesceka) and Visvaldis (Vissevalde), seem to have been Lettish ⁽³⁾. But the process of State formation was still in its initiatory stage of development. It was interrupted and stopped by the Teutonic invasion. The lack of a united government and the loose political bonds between the different Lettish tribes, hostile to each other, were the principal causes why the Letts were overcome by the Teutonic Knights in the thirteenth century.

The mutual relations of the Baltic inhabitants were those of a perpetual war with each other. The Letts "had much to suffer", as the chronicler says, from the Livs and the Esthonians ⁽⁴⁾. The relations of the latter with the Zemgalians also were hostile ⁽⁵⁾, and the warlike and restless Lithuanians strong and obstinate in observing their old customs ⁽⁶⁾, attacked all of them and held under a constant terror all their neighbors, the Russian princes included ⁽⁷⁾. But the mutual warfare of the Baltic inhabitants ⁽⁸⁾ was not bent upon a submission of each

¹⁾ J. Krodznieks, *Latvijas vēsture* (Lettish), vol. 1, p. 31; ²⁾ *Ibid.*, p. 30; ³⁾ *Origines Livoniae*, pp. 112, 134; ⁴⁾ *Origines Livoniae*, p. 126; ⁵⁾ *Ibid.*, p. 102; ⁶⁾ How strong and severe were Lithuanian customs may be seen from the following case: in 1205 the Germans and the Zemgalians attacked a predatory party of Lithuanians returning from Estonia and killed a great many of them; when this news reached Lithuania, a German priest who was at that time in one of the Lithuanian villages, reported that because of it 50 Lithuanian wives hanged themselves to join their killed husbands in the future life. (*Origines Livoniae*, pp. 88—90); ⁷⁾ *Origines Livoniae*, p. 134; ⁸⁾ It hardly can be said that the Baltic inhabitants were in regard to their mutual hostilities an exceptional position if compared with other nations of Europe. The state of Medieval Europe was very similar to the *bellum omnium contra omnes*. "Faustrecht" — or 'fist law' — as the Germans have called it, says D. J. Hill, "became the brutal code of the time; and whoever had power used it for the accomplishment of his designs" (D. J. Hill, *A History of Diplomacy*, vol. 1, p. 200). The hostilities in the Baltic were, perhaps, even less numerous than in other countries of Medieval Europe. There it was considered in 1027 when the first attempt was made to establish the "Truce of God", as a great success if the hostilities could be suspended for only one day in the week: "No man should assail another on the Lord's day" (D. J. Hill, *A. History*, etc., vol. 1, p. 201).

other. This circumstance had delayed their political unification. Before the German invasion there were no political factors which could have greatly stimulated it. The only power which to a certain extent menaced their independence was Russia. The Nestor's chronicle tells us, for example, that in 1030 the Russian Grand Prince Yaroslav invaded Esthonia and founded there the city Yaroslav (1). But the Esthonians soon drove out the Russians from that place. In the same chronicle under the year 1040 we read a short remark that "Yaroslav goes upon Lithuania" (2). In 1107 the Russians made a vain attempt to attack the Zemgalians. The Nestor's chronicle reports of this events as follows: "In the same year the Zemgalians won Vseslavitsh (i. e. a Russian prince), all brotherhood and warriors, having killed 9,000" (3). The first attempts of Russian expansion were successfully resisted, and later the Russians could not think of a permanent conquest of the Baltic, being themselves in a state of a perpetual war with each other. Russia united by the Normans fell soon to pieces again. After the death of Grand Prince Yaroslav in 1054 until 1224, there were 64 principalities; 293 princes put forward succession-claims, and their disputes led to 83 civil wars (4).

If, speaking of the Lettish culture in the beginning of the thirteenth century, we adopt as the criterion the level of Mediterranean civilization, the Letts will then appear as less civilized if compared with the population of France, England or other countries which formerly composed the large Roman Empire. Owing to their geographical position the Letts could not at that time profit to an equal degree with those countries from the cultural achievements obtained by the Greeks and the Romans. Yet from a broader point of view it seems to be arbitrary to regard our own civilization as the only subject of the history of mankind (5) and to refuse disdainfully to consider as civilized a nation whose culture, though different from ours, shows nevertheless an elaborate taste in arts, an active intelligence, and powerful imagination. The civilization in general might become only many-sided and richer if each component part is of individual value. We must also consider that in the sinuous course of historical events the last period is not always the most important for the elaboration of the highest values of civilization. This view was obviously adopted by E. B. Tylor when he said: "The onward movement from barbarism has dropped behind it more than one quality of barbaric character which cultured modern men look back on with regret, and will even strive to regain by futile attempts to stop the course of history, and to restore the past in the midst of present" (6).

Old chronicles, archaeology, and folklore are three principal sources from which we may learn what was the Lettish intellectual culture at that time. The most valuable indications we find in the Lettish folklore containing a great number of folksongs, legends, myths, folktales, traditional sayings, and riddles. The Latvian folklorist Kr. Barons (1833 —

1) It was later called Dorpat, now the Esthonian city of Tartu; 2) *Lietopis po Lavrentievskomu spisku, Izdanie Archeografitsheskoi Komissii* (Russian), St. Petersburg, 1872, p. 150; 3) *Lietopis po Lavrentievskomu Spisku, Izdanie Archeografitsheskoi Komissii* (Russian), p. 271; 4) *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed., vol. XXIII; 5) Ernst Bernheim, *Lehrbuch der historischen Methode und der Geschichtsphilosophie*, Leipzig, 1903 p. 45; 6) E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, 1903, vol. 2, p. 29.

1923) has devoted his whole life and energy in gathering up this precious ethnographic material of the Lettish nation. His collection of the "Latvju Dainas" contains about 218,000 folksongs published in six comprehensive volumes. The competent scholars assert that no nation in the world is in possession of such a rich digest of genuine folksongs (1). The Lettish folksongs contain detailed information of Old Lettish occupations, their rites of individual and social life, traditional beliefs, their relations with the neighboring nations, etc. Owing to the isolated existence of the Letts under the Teutonic oppression, they have preserved recollections of their free past and national traditions, for these were the only means by which the Letts could to a certain degree appease at that time their thirst for better and more dignified life. According to the Lettish folklore and the chronicles of that time Old Letts had their epic poets who, like scalds or minstrels of other nations, sang the heroic deeds of their chiefs. With the Teutonic conquest and the loss of national independence this kind of poetry had in the course of time disappeared (2). Some Lettish legends prove a great sway of imagination (3). There is a certain group of folksongs which show what were the morals of the Old Letts. "They are", said G. L. Buttner, one of the earliest Lettish folklorists, "so human, genuine, and so purely Lettish that we cannot perceive in them any influence of Christianity; we are, therefore, obliged to attribute them entirely to moral feelings of their own" (4). From the Lettish folklore we also learn that many important problems of religious, moral, and philosophic character were formulated by the Old Letts and answered in a way which proves a penetrating mind and that commonsense of our ancestors which was not yet influenced by many sophistical deviations of later centuries. Considering a great variety of questions the Old Letts were interested in, it may be assumed that their intellectual life in the beginning of the thirteenth century could hardly be less rich (5) than that of the rude crusaders who in swarms arrived in Latvia, more eager for war and booty than for teaching the Letts the mild doctrine of Christ.

Like all Indo-European nations, the Letts early had an idea of God as a Supreme Dominator of universe. It may be seen from the Lettish word for God if compared with that of other ancient nations: Sanskrit — Devah, Latin — Deus, Old Prussian — Deivs, Lettish

1) P. Smits, Etnografisko rakstu krājums (Lettish), vol. 1, p. 53; 2) Kr. Barons, Latvju Dainas (Lettish), vol. 1, p. XXIII; 3) For example, the ancient legends of national heroes who ascend to heaven in order to ask from God and their late ancestors directions for fighting the power of darkness and many-headed dragons. This task they later successfully accomplished, but, before leaving heaven, they were permitted to attend a nuptial ceremony of God's daughters, and so they were able to tell their countrymen beautiful stories on the magnificent and picturesque life they saw. 4) Quoted according to J. Lautenbach, Kurzer Umriss der lettischen Volkspoesie, Riga, p. 5; 5) There are some scholars who resolutely declare that the Latin writings of Medieval Ages were considerably inferior to the legends and folksongs of some nations. "Nowhere in Latinized Christendom", says R. Flint, "did men write as well as the Scandinavian scald; spoke and sang... The wild Viking life, as it moved on through gloom and light, calm and storm, by land and on sea, in domestic hundred years, is portrayed with truth and power of a master akin in genius scenes, strange adventures, fierce battles, and cruel tragedies, for more than three to Homer, and Scott, and Carlyle". (R. Flint, History of the Philosophy of History, p. 73).

— Dievs, Lithuanian — Devas, Old Irish — Dia, Gallic — Dēvo-⁽¹⁾. Having passed through the primitive animism, the Letts had reached, before their acquaintance with Christianity, that higher stage of religious development when the primitive fear is replaced by the sense of right and justice⁽²⁾. Already in the tenth century the influence of Christianity began to increase continually both in Prussia and Latvia⁽³⁾. It penetrated into Prussia from Poland, while Latvia was acquainted through the Russian and Scandinavian intermediaries⁽⁴⁾. The Danes built as early as 1048 a Christian church in Courland. But considerably more Christianity had gained ground among the Letts neighboring Russia. When the Teutonic Knights arrived, they were almost christianized by the Russians, as it has been confirmed by the old chronicles⁽⁵⁾ and as it may be seen from the Lettish terms concerning the Christian rite which are mostly of Russian origin⁽⁶⁾. Those facts prove that in the beginning of the thirteenth century when the Teutonic Crusaders started to convert the natives of Latvia, there existed already a well prepared ground for a peaceful expansion of Christianity. Therefore, the resistance which the Teutonic Knights met with, can be only explained by their brutal methods of fire and sword. This could not fail to promote a natural estrangement from the Christian God in whose name the Teutons pretended to have acted. The chief cause of the Lettish resistance was, however, the Teutonic policy that aimed to deprive the natives of Latvia of their liberty and property.

The Lettish folklore and old chronicles to some extent permit us to form an idea of the characteristics of Old Lettish mentality. The Old Letts would appear to us as a nation endowed with a lively intelligence and an active mind eager to understand their surroundings and to explain their relations to system of universe. The same great problems of life and death which still attract and, probably, will ever attract the attention of human mind, had also much occupied the Old Letts. But these problems were not solved in a pessimistic way. The Old Letts believed not only in a continuation of life after death, but also in a possibility of an intercourse with and influence upon their ancestors. Even the Lettish word to designate death, *nāve*, has been supposed to be of the same origin as Greek *naūs* and Latin

¹⁾ A. Meillet, *Linguistique historique*, etc., p. 326; ²⁾ J. Lautenbach, *Kurzer Umriss der lettischen Volks poesie*, p. 4; ³⁾ A. Svabe, *Latvju kulturas vēsture* (Lettish), vol. 1, part. 2, p. 80; ⁴⁾ O. v. Rutenberg in his „Geschichte der Ostseeprovinzen“ reports of a Polish attack upon the Old Prussians in the beginning of the eleventh century A. D. The Polish King Boleslav destroyed the sacred grove of the Old Prussians and abolished their high-priesthood which exercised a great influence over all Baltic nations, and was their strongest bond of unity. Because the high-priesthood of Prussia was never restored in its former authority after that Polish attack, O. v. Rutenberg presumes that the action of King Boleslav was an event of great consequence to the independence of the Baltic nations (O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte der Ostseeprovinzen*, vol. 1, p. 32). They were deprived of that factor which could have induced them to organize a joint resistance to the Teutonic Knights. But a closer examination of records proves that the Polish blow was not so fatal. That the high-priesthood was not later restored in its former authority, was probably due more to the influence of Christianity in Prussia than to the purely physical interference of King Boleslav; ⁵⁾ Origines, *Livoniae*, p. 118; ⁶⁾ J. Krodznieks, *Latvijas vēsture* (Lettish), vol. 1, p. 23.

nāvis, which mean ship, or boat, and probably contained an early idea of the dead sailing over to another world and existence (1). Therefore, the Old Lettish view of life seems to have been rather bright, which might be confirmed by the knowledge we have of their social character. The Old Letts were joyful, sociable, cordial, and hospitable. They liked white dresses and bright colors and were very fond of songs. In this regard they contrasted considerably with their neighbors Esthonians who were more reserved and morose, and preferred dark-colored and black dresses. Melancholy and elegy in the Lettish folksongs have mostly their origin in the hardships of the Teutonic oppression. According to the folklore, the Old Letts were sincere and good-natured, and even the devil, the personification of all evil and perverse qualities, appeared to them to be a more silly and ignorant than wicked fellow. It is interesting that the Lettish folklore which shows a rich fancy and vivacious imagination, never was able to provide the evil Spirit with those demonic features which have been attributed to him by other nations. At the same time strongly marked individualistic tendencies were inherent in the Lettish mentality which, together with an impressionable emotionality, might have prevented them from mutual understanding in most important questions of common interest.

1) J. Krodznieks, *Latvijas vēsture* (Lettish), vol. 1, p. 53.

CHAPTER II.

The Conquest of the Country.

The vigorous development of the Italian cities in the twelfth century roused to a greater activity the German towns stimulating their emancipation from the vassalage of the feudal magnates. With the rise of their independence, they became more enterprising and attempted to secure the direct commercial routes to foreign countries. In the second part of the twelfth century the German merchants of Luebeck and Bremen began to ship the goods to Latvian shores, and thenceforth they became independent of the intermediary services of Gotland in their trade with Latvia and, through her territories, with Russia.

But Latvia, having been directly associated with the German trade, was soon doomed to become also a field of action for the German missionaries. This involved far-reaching consequences for the country and its population. One Augustinian monk of the Archbishopric of Bremen, called Meinhard, being already advanced in age, conceived the meritorious task of converting the natives of the Baltic into faithful sons of the Latin Church, and decided to employ to this end the remaining years of his life. He arrived about 1180 in Livonia ⁽¹⁾, or the country of the Livs situated along the Gulf of Riga ⁽²⁾. Meinhard applied at first to Volodimir, the Russian Prince of Polotsk, who claimed the sovereignty over the Livs, for permission to convert them to Christianity. The chronicler says that this permission was cordially granted. The following events proved that the Russian Prince was unable to foresee a great issue in the Meinhard's mission which he probably considered as a purely private matter of an old and venerable man. Besides, the easy way in which Volodimir gave up later his claims of sovereignty over the Livs and the Letts, seems to indicate that his sovereignty was not a matter of a well-established right and that these nations were at that time practically independent. It may hardly be assumed that Volodimir holding the Greek faith, would have so readily allowed an agent of the Roman Church to win the followers of a hostile creed in his own Principality of Polotsk or in the country of the Livs if the latter would have been an incorporated part of his Principality.

¹⁾ L. Arbusov, *Grundriss der Geschichte*, etc., p. 11; ²⁾ The extent of Livonia varied according to subsequent historical periods. At first so was called only the territory populated by the Livs. When the Germans enlarged their conquest, they applied the same name to all the country they possessed comprising Courland and Estonia. Under the rule of Russia Livonia, or Livland was one of her Baltic governments, and now the greater part of the latter forms a province of the Republic of Latvia.

Meinhard made Ikshkile (Ixcola) on the Dvina river his residence and started the missionary work among the Livs. His personality probably had many good and captivating qualities, and he soon succeeded in gaining the confidence of the people and in converting many of them to Christianity. Except the Christian doctrine the honorable missionary taught the Livs also the stratagems of war and how to build strong castles (1). And so they lived for several years in peace and good friendship. The reports which Meinhard sent to Hartwich, the Archbishop of Bremen, and which the latter transmitted to Rome, were probably very promising, for in 1188 Pope Clement III issued two following bulls: the first confirmed the foundation of a new bishopric at Ikshkile and subordinated it, "together with all goods, spiritual as well as temporal", to the Archbishop of Bremen (2); the second confirmed the nomination of Meinhard, a "religious and distinguished man", the Bishop of Ikshkile (3).

These bulls were pregnant with disastrous results both for the country and Meinhard. The Popes, having become aware of a new opportunity to extend their influence and eager to secure it, directed toward Latvia a stream of crusaders who subdued her inhabitants and held them through long centuries under a rule of contemptuous oppression. But also to Meinhard the Papal bulls were a source of much grief and delusion. His promotion to the rank of bishop imposed upon him new obligations to persuade the Livs to recognize him and the Archbishop of Bremen as their masters and to collect the tithes the Church usually required. The Livs conceiving that Meinhard took care not only of their souls, but also of their liberty and property, revolted, entirely changed their former attitude, and tried to expel him and other German priests from the country. When this news reached Rome, the Pope decided to suppress the revolt and to enforce Christianity by the arms of crusaders. But Meinhard did not survive their arrival and, deeply afflicted by that turn of events, died in 1196.

The chronicler of the time was hardly correct when he said that Meinhard "came to Livonia simply for Christ's cause and only to preach it" (4). His life and energy were chiefly devoted ad majorem gloriam of the Latin Church. Meinhard was entirely a man of his time with all its characteristics of thought and action. When the Livs revolted against the exigencies of the Church, he found no other means to calm their protest than that which was so popular in his time, i. e. the force of crusaders. As a faithful son of the Church he imperturbably held the views proclaimed by Gregory VII that "the important affairs of every church should be submitted to the Pope; the Roman Church never has made, and never will make, mistakes" (5). His mind never conceived the legitimacy of opposing the violent methods of the Roman Church as inconsistent with the true spirit of Christian doctrine. Had he been aware of it and had he remained simply a humble and devoted pioneer of Christianity, not eager to promote his own career and to excite the greedy appetite of Rome, he

1) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 52; 2) *Bunge, Urkundenbuch*, p. 10; 3) *Bunge, Urkundenbuch*, p. 11. (vol. 1.); 4) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 50; 5) *D. J. Hill, A. History of Diplomacy*, vol. 1, p. 217.

could have brought not only more satisfaction to himself, but it also might have changed the history of the country. For, except the Archbishop of Bremen, there were at that time no other authorities in Germany interested in actuating a prompt conquest of Livonia. After the death of Emperor Henry VI in 1197 both Philip II and Otto IV claimed the Imperial crown, and their competition made the Imperial power of Germany for a period of long subsequent years indifferent to all other political questions. Also the Hansaetic League which had many important commercial interests in the Baltic, began to exercise its power only in the second part of the thirteenth century. Therefore, the German occupation having been postponed for two or three decades, other historical factors might have initiated a better era for Latvia than she had had under the Teutonic rule.

Berthold, a Cistercian superior, who was appointed Bishop of Ikshkile after the death of Meinhard, long hesitated to accept this position as if apprehending his fatal end. He failed to reconcile the German priests with the Livs and soon returned to Germany. Provided with a Papal bull promising the remission of sins to all volunteers who would like to ease their conscience by fighting against the pagan Livs (1), he organized an army and brought for the first time the Teutonic crusaders to Livonia. It is significant to quote the chronicler's report of the brief negotiations which took place between the Bishop and the Livs before that first battle with the Teutonic Crusaders. When both forces were ready to fight, the Livs "sent a messenger", says the chronicler, "to the Bishop asking why an army has been brought over. The Bishop answered, because they again and again returned from the faith to paganism, like dogs to a vomit. The Livs said further: "This reproach we will decline to accept. After thou hast sent back the army, thou mayest return with thine men in peace to thine bishopric. Those who accept the faith thou mayest compel to keep it; the others thou shalt induce to accept it by words, but not by rods" (2). This answer of the pagan Livs as well as its style seem to have contained more of Christian spirit than the cynical words of a Christian bishop. Nevertheless the battle began where Berthold lost his life, but the Livs were defeated. The enraged crusaders, says the chronicler, "laid waste the cornfields of the Livs by horse and by ship, by fire and by sword" (3). When after these exploits the crusaders went back to Germany, a great embitterment became manifest not only against every German who remained in Livonia, but also against the Christian religion which had been imposed in such a way. At the very moment when the crusaders were sailing away, "the perfidious Livs", reports the chronicler, "plunged into water of the Dvina river saying: 'Here by the river water we now remove the baptismal water and Christianity itself and, throwing off the received faith, we send it after the withdrawing Saxons'" (4). Then they killed many German priests, and sentenced to death every ecclesiastic who would not leave their country before the appointed time (5).

In 1199 Archbishop Hartwich of Bremen appointed Bishop of Livonia his nephew Albert who was before a member of the chapter

1) Origines Livoniae, p. 62; 2) Origines Livoniae, p. 64; 3) Ibid.; 4) Origines Livoniae, p. 66; 5) Ibid.

of the Cathedral Church in Bremen. He was a man of strong will, cautious and sly, and was not unfamiliar with the complicated machinery of political and diplomatic game. Endowed with great capacity for organization and deprived of any sentimental feelings, he showed a great persistence in pursuing his chief ambition which consisted in establishing under his spiritual and temporal leadership an independent State on the shores of the Baltic.

Before Albert went to Livonia he made large preliminary preparations. He visited at first Gotland and secured its assistance. Gotland had good reasons to help him not only on account of trade prospects with Livonia and Russia, but also because it expected from Albert protection of its rich and attractive island against the raids of the Baltic tribes. How persevering and harassing were these raids on Gotland and the Scandinavian shore, may be illustrated by the fact that they were long continued, regardless of the presence of Albert and his crusaders in Livonia ⁽¹⁾. From Gotland he went to the Court of the Danish King Canute VI and to the Archbishop of Lund, and gave them many promises which he probably knew he would not keep. At the end of 1199 Albert was in Magdeburg to raise an interest of Philip II for his mission in the Baltic. But he attained neither then nor later any considerable assistance from the German King. Innocent III soon pronounced Philip II "unworthy of the Empire and absolved all who had taken oath of fealty to him as King" ⁽²⁾. This revived the old struggle for the Imperial crown between the Welf and the Hohenstaufen. When in 1220 Frederic II became Emperor, he continued to pursue the dreams of his predecessors for the restauration of world monarchy of Romans. He was entirely engaged in the traditional struggle with the Papacy, in combatting his feudal magnates and in reorganizing his possessions in Italy. Those circumstances explain that indifference of the German Crown for the colonization of Latvia which has been later regretted by German writers and historians. "The Empire as such," says L. Arbusov, "showed no understanding for the prospects opened in this northeastern part of the world to increase the Empire's power and to employ there its national energy which endeavored to enlarge the field of its action" ⁽³⁾.

An efficient support was lent Albert by the Archbishop of Bremen, his uncle, but chiefly he was assisted by the Popes. The Archbishop to whom Albert was subordinated, was naturally anxious to maintain his authority over the Bishopric of Livonia. To the Popes it was an equally important task to convert the pagans of Livonia, or to win over to the Roman Church those of her inhabitants who were of the Byzantine creed. The thirteenth century and especially its first decades when Albert was engaged in conquering Livonia, was a period of the greatest might and influence that the Papacy ever reached. The excommunication and the Papal interdicts were at a time when the religious sentiment rose to fanaticism and the secular life was entirely disintegrated, dangerous weapons in the hands of the Popes, and they

¹⁾ *Origines Livoniae*, pp. 138, 302; ²⁾ D. J. Hill, *A. History of Diplomacy*, vol. 1, p. 326; ³⁾ L. Arbusov, *Grundriss der Geschichte*, etc., p. 14.

knew how to use them by acting upon the faith, hopes, and fears of the people. The Emperors and the Kings received their crowns from the hands of the Pope and invoked his protection and mediation. In 1204 the crusaders captured Constantinople and the Popes dreamed of the final extermination of the "Greek heresy" which had so long divided Christendom. The mighty Popes also considered it important to extend their power over the Baltic. In order to provide Albert with an army of occupation, Innocent III invited all the faithful of Saxony and Westphalia to protect the Christian Church against the pagans of Livonia promising a remission of their sins. Those who were pledged to go to Jerusalem, were permitted to change their vows and to enlist themselves for Livonia (1). This assistance was continued later to remove many difficulties in which Albert was involved. When, for example, the Archbishop of Bremen and the Danish King Valdemar II hampered Albert's action in Livonia by prohibiting the crusaders to proceed there, the Popes forbade them to do so and threatened in case of disobedience to impose upon them strong ecclesiastic censures (2).

After having made all preparations Albert with an army of crusaders sailed in the spring of 1200 for Livonia. The local resistance offered by the Livs was easily overcome. To avoid mistakes caused by carelessness he prudently resolved to delay any further offensive until a firm footing was gained. Therefore, there was not much fighting during the first five years of his stay in Livonia. Meanwhile Albert had lost no time. Considering Ikshkile as being situated too far from the sea, he founded in 1201 the city of Riga and made it his permanent residence and a basis for his further operations. He populated it mostly by Germans (3) who were granted the same privileges the free citizens of Gotland enjoyed (4). He secured a bull from Innocent III providing the port of Riga with exclusively favorable commercial rights (5). The next task was to create a standing army in Livonia, for the crusaders usually came over only for the summer and, having fulfilled their vows and become free of all sins, they hastened to return home (6). The knightly Orders of Palestine easily suggested the idea of establishing a similar organization in Latvia. Thus in 1202 the Order of the Brethren of Christ's Militia (Fratres Militiae Christi) was founded, and Vinno was appointed first Master. Innocent III gave it the Statutes of the Templars and subordinated the Order to Bishop Albert (7). The Knights wore loose white mantles marked by the emblems of a red cross and sword, and hence they were called the Knights of the Sword.

At the same time Albert was trying to put the Livs to a diplomatic test, and the results proved very satisfactory. He succeeded in splitting the Livs and approached one of their influential chiefs, called Kaupo (8). The latter was taken to Germany and then to Rome where the almighty Innocent III friendly kissed the pagan chief and made him a present of 100 gold coins (9). When Kaupo, deeply impressed by all he saw, returned to Livonia, he became Albert's most devoted

1) Bunge, Urkundenbuch, vol. 1, pp. 13—15, 18—20; 2) Bunge, Urkundenbuch, vol. 1, pp. 46—47, 49—50, 51, 110; 3) Origines Livoniae, p. 76; 4) Bunge, Urkundenbuch, vol. 1, pp. 81—82; 5) Origines Livoniae, p. 74; 6) Ibid., p. 120; 7) Origines Livoniae, p. 76; 8) Ibid., p. 82; 9) Ibid.

adherent. He led his warriors against other Livs (1), helped Albert to entirely subdue his countrymen and, having faithfully followed for about twelve years all German military expeditions, died fighting against the Esthonians (2).

The same methods by which Albert subdued the Livs, were used by him with much success later and became an established part of his policy of conquest. The Livs and the Letts never failed to join the Germans in their bloody raids into Esthonia, and when some districts of the latter were conquered, the Esthonians, too, participated in plundering and subduing the rest of their country (3). Even Viesturs, the powerful chief of Zemgalians, who during 30 years protected his country against the German invasion, greatly contributed to the final success of the Germans by aiding with his considerable army to oppress the revolt of the Livs (4) and by making joint attacks upon the Lithuanians (5). The fratricidal character of the Livonian wars was a decisive cause of the German success. The Germans could have hardly been able to overcome by the force of their own an unanimous resistance of the Baltic inhabitants if such had been offered.

This conclusion may be supported by the indications found in the chronicles about the German military strength operating in Livonia. Albert returned to Germany on the average every second year making altogether fourteen journeys (6), and visited there "all villages, streets, and churches" (7) calling for new crusaders. Nevertheless, his renewed appeals as well as those of the Popes were little reechoed. More than a century had already passed since Urban II proclaimed the first crusade, many experiments had been made and proved futile, and the crusading spirit was dying out. Therefore the military force that Albert assiduously poured into Livonia was probably the maximum which he could obtain from Germany at that time. And this maximum was not large. Not more than 450 Knights stayed in Latvia every year (8). Sometimes the garrisons of the castles of great strategical importance had not more than 20 men to repel the attacking enemy (9). In the great military expeditions in which all the available force was used, not more than 3,000 Germans took part, and an equal number of the Letts and the Livs (10). According to the chronicler the year 1219 was especially favorable for recruiting the crusaders, for at that time, together with Albert, there came also the Duke of Saxony and some other distinguished Knights. It was then decided to make a great campaign against the Zemgalians. Their combined army consisted only of 4,000 Germans, and 4,000 warriors were as usually provided by the Letts and the Livs. For six days they fought around the castle of the Zemgalians, and only by using all the technical instruments of the medieval military art succeeded at last in destroying it (11). How powerless were the Germans when an unanimous resistance was offered, may be seen from the case of the Oesel Island. Almost encircling the Gulf of Riga and highly disturbing the German ships sailing to and from Livonia, this island ought to have been occupied,

1) Ibid., p. 103; 2) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 210; 3) Ibid., pp. 201—204, 231—236; 4) Ibid., p. 102; 5) Ibid., pp. 86, 122; 6) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss der Geschichte*, etc., p. 14; 7) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 110; 8) A. Svabe, *Latvju kulturas vēsture* (Lettish), vol. 1, part 2, p. 162; 9) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 104; 10) Ibid., p. 182; 11) *Origines Livoniae*, pp. 236—238.

if considered from the strategical point of view, at the very beginning of the German campaign in Livonia. But Albert was unable to take it, and the audacious inhabitants of this island continued for a long period of 27 years to attack the Livonian territories and to disturb the German traffic on the Baltic Sea (1). Only in 1227, by raising an army of 20,000 men which consisted of the united troops of the Germans, the Letts, Livs, and Esthonians, Albert did succeed in conquering the Oesel Island in destroying its strongholds (2). That number of warriors was the maximum Albert ever put in the field. The comparatively small number of the German Knights in Livonia and the fatal rôle played in Livonian wars by the natives of the Baltic indicates that the German final success was more due to their political and diplomatic combinations than to the military force of their own.

The internal dissensions in which the different tribes of the Baltic were engaged, required no great diplomatic skill from Albert. He had only to stir up the existing hatred and to play off one tribe against another, which task he successfully accomplished. He invited at first the Zemgalians "to take revenge upon the Livs" (3) then the Germans, the Livs, and the Letts went together "to take revenge upon the Esthonians" (4), then Albert "remembered all damages caused by the Prince of Yersica to the Livs and the Letts", and they went to take revenge upon him (5), and then they all together moved against the Oesel Island. To enfeeble the nations of the Baltic and to promote their mutual enmity, all means were good to Albert. When the Lithuanians asked him for a permission to pass through his territories in order to make an attack upon the Esthonians, the Christian Bishop readily gave his permission for this new bloodshed (6). At the same time Albert prudently abstained from oppressing too much the nations upon whose cooperation he was dependent. The Letts and the Livs were invited to participate in German military expeditions as allies, and their rights to an equal share of booty never were contested (7).

About 1207 the Livs were baptized and their resistance broken (8). Then Albert moved eastward into the country of the Letts (9). The Lettish chiefs offered to the Germans no resistance at all and, according to the chronicler, they were even glad to accept the German priests (10). Having been already baptized by the Russians, the Letts saw no objection in Christianity itself and readily submitted themselves to be rebaptized by the Germans. At the same time Albert was clever enough to give to the baptism an aspect of political advantage for the Letts. He approached them not as a conqueror, but as an ally against the Esthonians and the Lithuanians and as a peacemaker between them and the Livs (11). The Letts deluded by the Germans became their most faithful allies. Albert well understood the great importance of the Lettish friendship and, by preventing encroachments upon their liberty and property, favored them more than the other tribes of the

1) *Ibid.*, pp. 248—250, 256, 302; 2) *Origines Livoniae*, pp. 304—308; 3) *Ibid.*, p. 102; 4) *Ibid.*, p. 146; 5) *Ibid.*, p. 134; 6) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 176; 7) *Ibid.*, p. 146; 8) *Ibid.*, pp. 106—110; 9) In this chapter we use the name Letts in its tribic sense, meaning only one of the Lettish tribes different from the others, as Zemgalians and Selonians, while in the first chapter, as well as later, the name Letts includes the whole Lettish nation; 10) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 126; 11) *Ibid.*

Baltic. How sensible were the Letts to their rights and how little they were injured up to the year 1212, was proved by the incident which happened at that time between them and the Knights of the Sword. There arose a conflict about fields and bee-trees, and as the Letts could not obtain a prompt justice, they immediately rose in arms and made a conspiracy with the Livs in order to drive out of the country the Knights and all other Germans (1). In the fighting which followed Albert barely escaped from being made a prisoner. A popular Lettish chief Rusins, who had faithfully followed the Germans in Esthonian wars, now turned against them, and died fighting for his countrymen's cause (2). This local revolt had, however, no success and the peace was soon restored.

Albert's further offensive was directed eastward along the Dvina river to overcome the Christian principalities of Koknese and Yersika, and northward against the Esthonians. Of course, the war against the Christians was not quite consistent with the supposed conversion of pagans, but Albert always easily overlooked this circumstance when urged by some other reasons. At first, there were considerations of strategical and political nature. The operating force of Germans was still not strong enough to venture an expedition against the Zemgalians and the Kuronians, and Albert naturally chose the direction where less resistance was expected. It was even desirable to maintain for some time the independence of the said Lettish tribes in Courland which could be used as a kind of buffer-states preventing an immediate contact with the redoubtable Lithuanians until Albert would feel able to face them. But there were also important economic reasons which pushed Albert eastward. The Dvina river was the usual commercial route leading to Polotsk and Smolensk, while another route of merchants proceeding from the mouth of Dvina to Pskov and Novgorod, went through the territories populated by the Letts and the Esthonians (3). Albert well realized the great importance of the said commercial routes and tried to have them under his control.

With the assistance of the Livs and the Letts the Christian principalities on Dvina were soon overcome. In 1208 Vetsakais himself destroyed his castle of Koknese and went to Russia (4). Visvaldis of Yersika was obliged in 1209 to cede his principality as a "lawful donation" to Albert and was then permitted to hold it in fief from the Church of Riga (5). It is of interest to note what attitude in regard to these proceedings of the Germans was observed by Volodimir, the Russian Prince of Polotsk, who has been supposed to have been a liege-lord of Koknese and Yersika. There are no indications in the chronicles of the time that Volodimir had tried to defend his sovereign rights to these principalities. Also in the treaties Volodimir concluded with Albert in 1210 and 1212 his claims of sovereignty were put forward only as far they concerned the Livs (6). These circumstances seem to confirm the assumption expressed above that both Koknese and Yersika were practically two independent principalities of Lettish origin.

¹) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 168; ²) *Ibid.*, p. 172; ³) A. Svabe, *Latvju kulturas vēsture* (Lettish), vol. 1, part. 2, pp. 74, 75; ⁴) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 120; ⁵) *Ibid.*, pp. 134—136; Bunge, *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 1, pp. 20—21; ⁶) *Origines Livoniae*, pp. 146, 169.

At the same time Albert opened a long period of bloody wars with the Esthonians in which the Germans were always followed by the Letts and the Livs. Albert never failed to remind them of "all injuries suffered from the Esthonians" and invited "to take revenge". When he succeeded in subjugating some Esthonian tribes, he was skilful and cruel enough to stir them up to assist him in defeating the rest of Esthonians (1). During twenty years the Esthonians defended their country and liberty with a desperate bravery and an admirable pertinacity. Even when subdued they revolted again and again and declared they would continue the struggle until "a boy of one year old or of a cubit's length was left in the country" (2). The chronicler of the time who had himself followed numerous raids into Esthonia, has left us descriptions of those cruel deeds which show a strange mixture of murder, robbery, and religiosity. "When we arrived there", says the chronicler in connection with one pillaging incursion into Esthonia, "we spread troops over all roads, villages, and districts of that country; we set on fire and destroyed everything, we killed all what was of masculine sex, captured women and children and took away much cattle and horses . . . and returned to Livonia with great rejoicing" (3). We meet in the chronicle with such expressions of joy about booty that it is hardly possible to see sometimes any difference between the Christian Knights and the highway robbers: ". . . we divided among us the whole booty and returned joyfully to Livonia, just as the victors exult when they divide booty" (4). Almost all descriptions of those bloody expeditions are usually terminated by expressions of thanks to God for successful manslaughter. Thus, for example, referring to some other raid where the Germans and the deluded Letts and Livs tried to surpass each other in murder and cruelty, the chronicler tells as follows: ". . . They killed a countless number of people, massacred also women and children and wished to spare nobody in the fields and villages. And all roads and places were colored by the blood of pagans, and they were persecuted in all districts . . . At last on the fourth day they met at one place with all their booty, drove together horses and much cattle, took with them women, children, and girls and, carrying away much booty, they returned with great rejoicing to Livonia and praised the Lord for the revenge taken upon the heathens. And the pagans were perplexed and made great weeping and howling. For Esthonia lamented her children and could not become consoled, as they were lost in this life as well as in the future life" (5).

Although the author of the chronicle "Origines Livoniae", being himself a German priest, is strongly disposed in favor of the German action in Latvia, he is nevertheless entirely unable to quote the facts which could show us that Albert and his Knights were inspired by such fundamental principles of chivalry, as a protection of the helpless and the innocent, a refined feeling of honor, a passion of self-devotion or a sacrifice of personal interests for the sake of a noble cause (6).

1) Origines Livoniae, p. 234; 2) Ibid., p. 270; 3) Ibid., p. 202; 4) Origines Livoniae, p. 226: "... divisio spoliis cunctis inter nos, cum gaudio reversi sumus in Livoniam, sicut exultant victores, quando dividunt spolia"; 5) Origines Livoniae, pp. 182—184; 6) D. J. Hill, A. History of Diplomacy, vol. 1, p. 377.

Reading numerous stories of fraud, robbery, and murder by which are filled the pages of the "Origines Livoniae", we are induced to think that the principles of the Germans fighting in Latvia were the very opposite to those of chivalry. "The spirit of the Teutonic chivalry," says Count de Bray, "cold and without gallantry, had no other principal springs of action than ambition and cupidity" (1). The lack of noble spirit in Albert's army seems to have been rather natural if we consider the general conditions of that time. The enthusiasm of Europe for crusading expeditions was already extinct. And as there was in Latvia no Holy Sepulchre to rescue from the hands of infidels, the better part of knighthood who wished to relieve their embarrassed consciences went to Palestine. Therefore, the people who answered Albert's appeals for fighting the "pagans" in Livonia, were mostly adventurers of dubious reputation inspired by nothing but prospects for booty and licentious life. "The living together of such a large number of mostly young men", says O. v. Rutenberg referring to the Knights of the Sword, "who came here as adventurers and fortunehunters and who did not feel obligated to this country by any recollection of childhood, by any family ties and whose object in life was nothing but fighting and murder, necessarily generated wild and unrestrained morals and worked up to the highest excess all the passions of human breast" (2).

For a long time Albert made no attempt to subjugate the Lettish tribe of Zemgalians living south of the Dvina river. He was not only in friendly relations with Viesturs, the Prince of Zemgalians, but they might even be regarded as allies. The Lithuanians were their common enemy, and Viesturs when invited helped Albert to overcome the Livs. But twenty years later Viesturs had to regret his lack of political foresight in choosing his friends. In 1219 Viesturs found the Zemgalians divided. Owing probably to the diplomatic activities of Albert, the Zemgalians of Mezotne manifested their wish to enter into closer relations with the Germans and admitted a German garrison stationed in their castle (3). When aware of these events, Viesturs waged a war against the Germans, forced them to leave Zemgalia and restored the disturbed unity of Zemgalia (4). In 1220 Albert with a combined force of the Germans, Letts, and Livs made an expedition to punish the Zemgalians, but succeeded only in burning down the castle of Mezotne (5). He returned then to Livonia and abstained from engaging in further hostilities with Viesturs. A new war between the Germans and the Zemgalians broke out only in 1227 and was provoked by a joint attack of the Zemgalians and the Kuronians upon the German abbey situated at the mouth of Dvina (6). This challenge was answered by a predatory incursion of the Knights of the Sword into Zemgalia (7). In the following year Viesturs made a similar incursion into the districts occupied by the Knights. This is the last time we meet in the old chronicles the name of this brave and patriotic Lettish chief

¹) Comte de Bray, *Essai critique sur l'Histoire de la Livonie*, Dorpat, 1817, vol. 1, p. 249: „L'esprit de la chevalerie teutonique, froid et sans gallanterie, n'avait pour principaux ressorts que l'ambition et la cupidité“; ²) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, p. 70; ³) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 232; ⁴) *Ibid.*, pp. 232—234; ⁵) *Ibid.*, pp. 238—240; ⁶) *Scriptores Rerum Livonicarum*, vol. 1, p. 741; ⁷) *Reimchronik*, pp. 551—552.

who, notwithstanding the political mistakes he made, successfully protected during his long life the Zemgalians against the German occupation.

Also the Kuronians who lived in the western parts of Courland maintained their independence during all the time Albert was in Livonia. From the Kuronians came those bold pirates who used to attack Gotland, Denmark, and Sweden, as well as the German ships sailing to Riga (1). In 1210 they put the Germans in such a critical position that the whole enterprise of Albert in Livonia was not far from its total collapse. They conceived a large plan to dislodge the Germans from Riga and to drive them out of the country. It was understood that the Kuronians would be assisted in this action also by the Livs, Esthonians, Lithuanians, Zemgalians, and even Russians (2). This plan was the first attempt to oppose the Germans with an organized resistance in which all inhabitants of the Baltic were invited to take part. It showed not only a clear idea that the Germans were an enemy menacing the independence of them all, but also a perception of the proper methods of how to become rid of an uninvited master.

The plan of the Kuronians failed because of a lack of concerted action and because the other nations did not fulfil their obligations. The Lithuanians and the Esthonians were unable to help at the decisive moment having been engaged in fighting with the German Knights in other places, while the Livs and the Zemgalians preferred to abide the issue of the Kuronian attack upon Riga. It is also possible that Viesturs was not willing at that time to break off his friendly relations with Albert. Though having been left alone, the Kuronians valiantly attacked Riga. All German citizens, monks, and women were called upon to help the fighting men. But the Germans, more skilled in military art, succeeded in repelling their assaults, and the auxiliary German force and Kaupo with his Livs who hastily came to rescue, forced the Kuronians to raise the siege of Riga (3).

Volodimir, the Russian Prince of Polotsk, who claimed the sovereignty over the Livs did very little to protect them against the Germans. He easily gave up his claims when a considerable military force was requested to defend them. Altogether he made but two futile attempts to fight the Germans. In 1203 he attacked the castle of Ikshkile, but soon raised the siege of it when some money was offered (4). Later, in 1206, he tried for the second time to make war upon the Germans following the renewed request of the Livs who assured him that the Germans "neither want peace nor keep it" (5). How little prepared he was for this campaign, may be seen from the fact that during eleven days he could not take one German castle (Holm), the garrison of which consisted of not more than twenty Germans, the rest of it having been the Livs whom the Germans held under suspicion of treason (6). This was the last military action against the Germans that Volodimir ever made. And as Albert for his part carefully abstained to attack the Principality of Volodimir being highly interested in keeping peace with Polotsk and in reopening the traffic over the Dvina river (7), they both manifested an inclination to settle the disputable questions by means of negotiations.

1) *Origines Livoniae*, pp. 80, 139; 2) *Ibid.*, p. 140; 3) *Ibid.*, pp. 140—142; 4) *Ibid.*, p. 82; 5) *Ibid.*, p. 94; 6) *Ibid.*, p. 104; 7) *Ibid.*, p. 146.

In 1210 they concluded to this end a "perpetual peace" whereby it was stipulated that the Livs or instead of them Bishop Albert would annually pay Volodimir the due tributes. Thus the sovereignty of Volodimir over Livonia was recognized and agreed to by Albert. But the latter neither intended to recognize the sovereignty of Volodimir nor paid him the annual tributes. Therefore, two years later Volodimir requested Albert to meet him at Yersika and to answer for the tributary Livs.

They both came there with their warriors. Albert was also accompanied by the chiefs of the Livs and the Letts (¹). The principal point of those negotiations was that of the sovereignty of Livonia. Albert argued the right of population to decide for itself whose sovereignty they want to accept, and pointed out that the Livs "had at all times requested him to deliver them entirely from the Russian yoke" (²). Volodimir was not convinced by this argument for he remembered very well that it was Albert and his Knights that the Livs had requested him to expel from their country. He therefore ordered his warriors to prepare for an immediate battle with the Germans, while Albert gave a similar order to the Knights of the Sword. When both armies were drawn up in battle array, Volodimir nevertheless hesitated to start fighting and preferred to reopen negotiations which resulted in a complete satisfaction of all German demands. Impressed by this military demonstration or, as the chronicler says, "apprised possibly by an intimation of God", Volodimir agreed to make a new "perpetual peace" whereby he ceded all Livonia to the Germans, reopened the Dvina river to the German merchants and made with Albert an alliance against the Lithuanians and "other pagans" (³).

Much more hostile than the Russians of Polotsk were these of two great commercial cities of Northern Russia, Pskov and Novgorod. They saw in the German domination over the Baltic a political danger for themselves and were, moreover, not willing to leave in German hands the important commercial outlets to the Baltic Sea. This inimical disposition was still increased by the antagonism of the Greek and Roman Churches into which both combatants were divided. The Russians of Pskov and Novgorod raised great armies, and, joined sometimes by the Lithuanians, penetrated far into Livonia burning down the German churches (⁴) and destroying the settlements of the Germans as well as those of the Letts and the Livs who faithfully helped the Germans to repel the enemy. The Estonians usually fought on the side of the Russians who assisted their frequent revolts against the Germans. In order to secure the Russian friendship Albert tried once to resort to a matrimonial policy, and married his brother with the daughter of the Russian Prince of Pskov. But this policy turned out to be of no avail. The Russians of Pskov deeply resented this marriage and expatriated this Prince with his family (⁵). Later he was allowed to resume his position under the condition to change entirely his friendly policy toward the Germans. So that Prince did, and set out on campaign against Albert and even made his son-in-law a prisoner of war (⁶).

¹) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 166; ²) *Ibid.*, p. 168; ³) *Ibid.*, p. 168; ⁴) *Ibid.*, pp. 220, 260; ⁵) *Ibid.*, p. 164; ⁶) *Ibid.*, pp. 202—206.

Threatened by the persevering aggression of the Russians of Pskov and Novgorod and beset with frequent revolts of the Esthonians, Albert applied in 1218 for help to the Danish King Valdemar II (1). But this démarche of his was attended with consequences which highly surprised him and led to great complications with Denmark. The Danish King went to Esthonia, fought and baptized the Esthonians, made Reval the Danish residence there and declared Esthonia to be a province of his own (2). In order to force Albert to comply with his request, Valdemar II prevented the crusaders from going to Livonia (3) and even tried to make Albert a prisoner when he came to Luebeck (4). Albert then hurried over to Rome to entreat the aid of Pope Honorius III. The latter hardly could satisfy Albert's demand for the Pope had already promised to Valdemar II to recognize his sovereignty over all districts of Esthonia which he would be able to conquer (5). Unsatisfied in Rome, Albert went to Emperor Frederic II and asked his protection against the Danes and the Russians. Though Albert emphasized the fact that Livonia had always considered herself as a part of the German Empire, Frederic II showed no interest in it being, as the chronicler says, "preoccupied by various important affairs of Staate" (6). Therefore the Emperor gave him no assistance but advice to keep peace with the Danes and Russians. Albert then resolved to induce by trickery the Danish King to remove the difficulties imposed upon him and his Knights in Livonia. He went to Valdemar II and told him that he would recognize now not only the Danish sovereignty over Esthonia, but would also cede to the Danish Crown all Livonia, provided however his prelates, the Knights, and citizens of Riga, together with the Letts and the Livs, would give their consent to that cession (7). Having returned to Livonia Albert did, of course, his best to prevent them from giving such a consent, and when a Danish representative arrived at Riga to take over its administration, he was rudely treated and driven away.

In 1221 the relations between the Germans and the Danes became highly strained. The German merchants who came to Esthonia were arrested and sent as prisoners to Reval. They were released only when the Germans threatened with an immediate declaration of war (8). In the following year Valdemar II made a new campaign against the Oesel Island, and Albert and his Knights hastened to meet the King there. This meeting at a battlefield when both the Danes and the Germans had before them an enemy in common, was a very favorable opportunity to arrive at a compromise. The Danish King renounced there his claims to Livonia (9). But the Danes retained Northern Esthonia and with a short interruption remained there 128 years until King Valdemar IV sold in 1347 this province to the Teutonic Order (10).

Denmark was not the sole Scandinavian country interested in extending its dominion over the Baltic. In 1220 the King of Sweden landed a large army at the western shores of Esthonia adjacent to the Oesel Island (11). The Swedes occupied several districts of the country,

¹⁾ Ibid., p. 218; ²⁾ Ibid., pp. 228, 232, 242; ³⁾ Bunge, Urkundenbuch, vol. 1, p. 51; ⁴⁾ Origines Livoniae, p. 250; ⁵⁾ Bunge, Regesten, vol. 3, p. 2; Ibid., Urkundenbuch, vol. 3, p. 4; ⁶⁾ Origines Livoniae, p. 252; ⁷⁾ Ibid.; ⁸⁾ Ibid., p. 262; ⁹⁾ Ibid., p. 266; ¹⁰⁾ Bunge, Urkundenbuch, vol. 2, p. 430; ¹¹⁾ Origines Livoniae, p. 248.

baptized inhabitants, built churches and paid no attention to the Germans who objected on the ground that they had already conquered the country and baptized its people (1). However the Swedish dominion was of short duration. There came the indomitable people of Oesel who attacked the Swedish castle of Leal and killed nearly every man left by the King to protect his new colony (2). When this news reached Riga, there was, as the German chronicler assures, "a mourning and a sighing for many days". That this manifestation of sympathy was not quite sincere is proved when the same chronicler only a few pages further on states that the extermination of the Swedes was a just punishment for their invasion into Livonia protected by the Holy Virgin Mary under whose high patronage Albert and his Knights assumed to have been (3).

It is of interest to mention how many times the inhabitants of the Baltic were baptized and rebaptized. At first the sacrament of baptism was administered to a great many of them by the Russians. Then came the Germans who baptized the rest of them and rebaptized, according to the rite of the Latin Church, those who were already baptized by the Russians. Then the Russians angry of apostates (4) tried to convert them again to the Byzantine creed (5). Then arrived the Danes and the Swedes and they rebaptized in their dominions all who were already baptized by the Germans. And as the latter did not like the Danish and Swedish baptism, they sent their priests to rebaptize the population again (6). The Danes, for their part, had the same dislike for the German baptism and hanged sometimes the people who had accepted it (7). Sometimes the German and the Danish priests met in the same villages and on the same errand and started to quarrel as to who had first, the Germans or the Danes, "planted this vineyard of the Lord" (8). Having been witness of these proceeding the population became dazed and terrified, and met the priests with the question: "We all are already baptized; what more do you expect us to do?" (9).

The reason this rivalry in baptizing was carried on with such zeal by the Danes, Swedes, and Germans, though they all belonged to the same Latin Church, has been well stated by the chronicler himself when he explains the speedy methods of Danish baptism. "They tried", says the chronicler, "to anticipate in this way the priests of Riga and thus wished to take possession of all the country for the benefit of the Danish Kings (10). The act of baptizing the population was then considered as legal title for possession of the country. Although everybody knew the Popes as well as the Germans or Danes, that the baptism was, of course, only the indispensable pretext to conceal and justify the true motive of those "zealous Christians" which consisted in depriving the Letts and the Esthonians of their land possessions, it was however necessary to feign just the opposite. Like so many nowadays, who are afraid to shock the public opinion by telling the plain truth and prefer to conceal the real motives by appealing to high ideals of mankind, just so there was a kind of religious public opinion in the Middle Ages which forced even the mighty Popes and Princes of that time to disguise their ambition and struggle for power in a self-devoted passion for converting

1) Ibid., pp. 248—250; 2) Ibid., p. 250; 3) Ibid., p. 258; 4) Ibid., p. 202; 5) Ibid., p. 138; 6) Ibid., p. 246; 7) Ibid.; 8) Ibid.; 9) Ibid., p. 252; 10) Ibid., p. 246.

the pagans. For the same reason the Germans and the Danes displayed such zeal for the Christian cause in Livonia and tried to outdo each other in baptizing and rebaptizing the population acting according to the reverse principle of Augsburg: "Cujus religio (or, more exactly — *cujus baptisatio*), ejus regio".

The Popes always took a great interest in German proceedings in Livonia. There has been found in the archives of Vatican a register of 204 bulls issued by the Popes in regard to Livonia for the period extending from 1198 to 1304. This number of bulls does not include the less important decrees and letters which the Papal Chancery used to dispatch unregistered (1). The Popes were concerned not only with ecclesiastic affairs of Livonia, but devoted their attention also to purely temporal ones. They accorded special commercial privileges to the port of Riga (2), prohibited when necessary the German commerce with Russia (3), settled numerous conflicts which arose between Albert and the Knights of the Sword as to the division of the country, and conveyed the rights of sovereignty over the provinces conquered or to be conquered (4). When in 1225 a war broke out between the Danes and the Germans quarreling for possession of Northern Esthonia, the legate William of Modena reconciled them, but gave the province in dispute to neither of the pretenders and, dispossessing both of them, declared it to be a dominion of the Pope himself (5). The Popes probably intended to become supreme temporal chiefs of Livonia and exercise over it the same power Innocent III had over Sicily, Portugal or Aragon. "Rome", says the chronicler, "makes laws, but Riga sprinkles water on the pagans" (6).

The Papal policy towards Albert, the Knights of the Sword, and the Danes was that of balance of power. One ruler having an unlimited power in Livonia could endanger or even eliminate the Papal influence there. Therefore Innocent III and his successors tried to bridle them all and opposed a predominance of one over another. At the same time the Popes tried to win the sympathy of the population for the Latin Church. They advised Bishops and Knights to treat the people well and addressed letters to the new converts of Livonia telling them that the oppression was not consistent with Christian dignity and that they were not to obey anyone but Christ and the Roman Church (7). In 1225 Honorius III sent his Chancellor William of Modena as legate to Livonia who coming into close contact with the population, tried to settle their claims and exhorted the Germans "not to lay upon the shoulders of new converts insupportably heavy burdens but only the soft and pleasant yoke of the Lord" (8). It was in Rome that Albert met the chief obstacles which prevented him from accomplishing his purpose of becoming the sole ruler of Livonia. The Popes assisted Albert only so far as it was consistent with their policy. In 1213 Innocent III declared the Bishopric of Riga independent from Bremen as well as from any other arch-

1) H. Hildebrand, *Livonica, vornaehmlich aus dem 13. Jahrhundert*, im *Vaticani-schen Archiv*, p. 13; 2) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 74; 3) Bunge, *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 3, p. 20; 4) *Ibid.*, p. 4; 5) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 298; 6) *Ibid.*, p. 196; "Roma dictat iura: Riga vero rigat gentes"; 7) Bunge, *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 1, pp. 76—77, 116; 8) *Origines Livoniae*, p. 294: "...nec Teutonici gravaminis aliquod iugum importabile neophytorum humeris imponerent, sed iugum Domini leve ac suave".

bishopric (1), but he did not convey the title of archbishop to Albert himself. Albert was not even allowed to establish new bishoprics in some of the provinces he had conquered, but this authority was conveyed to the Archbishop of Lund (2). The same policy was followed by Honorius III and Gregory IX who refused to appoint Albert Archbishop of Livonia (3). So Albert died in January 1229 being rather far from having performed the ambitious plans he cherished when he sailed thirty years ago for the first time to Livonia.

The Knights of the Sword were the only German force which stayed permanently in Livonia and carried out the conquest of the country. Realizing the importance of the military services they rendered, the Knights boldly put forward their claims as to the possession of the conquered lands. When Bishop Albert to whom the Knights were subordinated, was reluctant to satisfy them, they applied to the Pope or to the Emperor and tried to obtain there a recognition and confirmation of their claims. Sometimes they did not hesitate to get into relations with the Danish King, an enemy of Albert, in order to secure for themselves a greater part of Livonia (4). Controversies which arose after the death of Albert between the Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Riga and the Archbishop of Bremen regarding the right to appoint a Bishop of Riga, only increased the Knights' influence in Livonia.

To strengthen still more their position against the authority of the bishops, the Knights of the Sword approached about 1229 the Teutonic Order with a view of making an alliance with the latter (5). Besides, there was another important reason which urged the Livonian Knights to carry into execution the said alliance. The number of the Knights of the Sword was small, their Order was not popular in Europe, and they could not obtain any considerable reinforcement from Germany (6), while the Teutonic Order owing to the exceptional personality of its Grand Master Hermann v. Salza, enjoyed at that time an excellent reputation and was overcharged by the favors conferred upon it both by the Pope and the Emperor. However, the negotiations conducted for several years between both Orders resulted in no final agreement. The prudent Salza was not anxious to press the matter (7), and the Knights of the Sword were not willing to give up unconditionally their independence being little pleased with the prospects of becoming merely an incorporated part of the Teutonic Order. Meanwhile an event took place which made a union of both Orders indispensable. In 1236 a joint force of Lithuanians and Zemgalians attacked at Saule the German army and entirely defeated it. In this battle the Master of the Order, together with all Knights who had accompanied him, lost their lives (8). The very existence of the Germans in Livonia was now menaced, and therefore the Knights who remained as well as the Livonian Bishops, entreated Hermann von Salza and the Pope to expedite a union of both Orders (9). In 1237 that union was achieved and the Order of the Sword ceased to exist. The Knights who had survived the defeat at Saule were embodied in the

1) Bunge, Urkundenbuch, vol. 1, p. 34; 2) Ibid., pp. 36, 37; 3) Ibid., pp. 52—53; H. Hildebrand, Livonica, etc., p. 32; 4) Origines Livoniae, pp. 248, 260; 5) Reimchronik, p. 554; Scriptores Rerum Livonicarum, vol. 1, p. 742; 6) De Wal, Histoire de l'Ordre Teutonique, Paris, 1784, vol. 1, p. 290; 7) Ibid. 8) Reimchronik, p. 556; 9) De Wal, Histoire, etc., vol. 1, p. 293.

Teutonic Order, and they uncheerfully exchanged their emblem of the red sword for that of the black cross which marked the white mantles of the Teutonic Knights (1).

The Teutonic Order was established in Palestine at the end of the twelfth century. The rise of that Order was chiefly due to its prominent Grand Master Hermann von Salza who has been considered the greatest diplomatist of his time (2). He succeeded in gaining the confidence of the Pope as well as of the Emperor. Both parties often chose him as arbitrator in the numerous disputes which arose between them in connection with their traditional struggle for supremacy (3). Hermann von Salza performed his delicate task with great ability. Although the Pope and the Emperor were not always pleased with the results of his arbitration, yet they remained satisfied with the arbitrator himself. Hermann von Salza continued to be a confident friend and adviser of the Pope as well as of the Emperor and was generously rewarded by both.

Having been appointed in 1210 as Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Hermann von Salza soon realized that the Christian enterprise in Palestine was a failure and looked, therefore, for another place where his Knights could be employed (4). Following an invitation of the King of Hungary he transferred in 1211 a part of the Order to Transylvania to protect the frontiers of Hungary (5). This change was not successful, for controversies arose between the King of Hungary and the Knights and made the existence of the latter most unpleasant. In 1226 the Duke of Mazovia, hardly pressed by the Prussians, invited the Teutonic Order to come to Prussia and to convert that country to Christianity (6). Hermann von Salza saw fully all the advantages of this proposition. Prussia, being adjacent to Germany, promised a much better outlook for a permanent stay there than Palestine or Transylvania. Nevertheless, he hesitated a long time about sending his Knights into this country because of the unfortunate experience in Hungary. Only in 1230 when a final agreement with the Duke of Mazovia was reached and a high protection of the Emperor and the Holy See secured, Hermann von Salza established his Knights in Prussia and appointed Hermann Balke a first Provincial Master of the Order there (7).

The same Hermann Balke was chosen by Salza seven years later, when the union with the defeated Order of the Sword was established, as Provincial Master of the Teutonic Order in Livonia (8). The Teutonic Knights at first made peace with the Danes. Northern Esthonia so long in dispute was now finally given up to the Danes (9). By this cession a new ally was gained, and henceforth the Danes, the former enemies of the Germans, assisted the Knights in fighting the Kuronians, the Zemgalians, the Lithuanians, and the Russians (10). Then the Germans turned against the Russians and succeeded in capturing the city of Pskov (11). But shortly after this they were driven out of this place by Alexander Nevsky, the Russian Prince of Novgorod, who in 1242 so thoroughly defeated the Germans that they desisted from their purpose of resuming

¹) Ibid., p. 295; Reimchronik, p. 557; ²) D. J. Hill, A. History of Diplomacy, vol. 1, p. 341; ³) De Wal, Histoire, etc., vol. 1, p. 158; ⁴) Ibid., p. 193; ⁵) Ibid., p. 111; ⁶) Ibid., p. 217; ⁷) Ibid., pp. 222—223; ⁸) Ibid., p. 298; ⁹) Reimchronik, pp. 557—558; ¹⁰) Ibid., pp. 563, 629, 683, etc.; ¹¹) Ibid., p. 559.

further offensive in that direction. For the half century which followed the Livonian Order was entirely engaged in fighting the Kuronians, the Zemgalians, and the Lithuanians. By this offensive the Germans hoped to remove the barrier which separated Livonia from Prussia and to unite both provinces. Had they accomplished this plan, the Teutonic Order would have possessed a large country between the Gulf of Finland and the Vistula river and, having Germany as its hinterland, would have probably succeeded in colonizing and germanizing that country entirely. Following the fratricidal policy of Bishop Albert the Teutonic Knights induced the inhabitants of the Baltic to fight each other, and the Esthonians, the Letts, and the Livs participated almost in all German campaigns against the Kuronians, the Zemgalians, and the Lithuanians (1).

Shortly after the death of Albert the Kuronians made several treaties with the Germans by which they declared themselves ready to accept Christianity and to recognize the Papal sovereignty over their territories (2). It seems that they were moved more by political considerations than by an inclination of friendship or sympathy for the Germans. Impressed by the recent conquest of the Oesel Island and by the unfortunate issue of the Esthonian wars, the Kuronians tried to prevent by treaties an offensive upon their country which, as they had good reason to believe, would not fail to come. This assumption may be confirmed by the later course of events in Courland. When the Lithuanians and the Zemgalians defeated the Knights of the Sword in 1236, the Kuronians began to approach the Lithuanians, their old enemies (3), and expelled the Germans from the country (4). About 1242 the Teutonic Knights began to occupy Courland by military force (5). As it was done in the previous wars with the Esthonians, Riga was the base where great campaigns were prepared against the Kuronians. At the same time several castles were built in Courland from which the Knights set out for murdering and plundering expeditions upon the population (6). More than 25 years the Kuronians resisted the German invasion. Their resistance was broken in 1267 when a treaty of peace was made by which the mutual rights and obligations were stipulated. The Provincial Master of the Order declared that he had "forgotten all the damages caused by the Kuronians to the Order during the war" and that "neither party need think of further revenge" (7).

Extending their dominion over Courland the Germans came into direct contact with the Lithuanians, an encounter which Albert had so carefully avoided. Shortly after the battle at Saule which led to the extinction of the Order of the Sword in Livonia, the Lithuanian Duke Mindaugas succeeded in uniting the greater part of that nation under his rule. The process of political formation of the Lithuanians was greatly stimulated by the invasion of the Germans in Latvia and Prussia. While in those countries a fighting went on, Lithuania, being in the midst of both and realizing that sooner or later she would

1) Reimchronik, pp. 555, 566, 574, 594, 606, etc.; 2) Bunge, Urkundenbuch, vol. 1, pp. 134—138; 3) Reimchronik, p. 568; 4) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 1, p. 129; 5) Reimchronik, p. 563; Scriptorum Rerum Livonicarum, vol. 1, p. 746; 6) Scriptorum Rerum Livonicarum, vol. 1, p. 748; 7) Bunge, Urkundenbuch, vol. 2, pp. 508—509.

have to face the same enemy, was in an advantageous position to build up a united Government.

The policy of Mindaugas towards the Germans was very changeful. Having for some time as well fought the Germans as every true Lithuanian did, he sent all at once his messengers to the Provincial Master of the Teutonic Order in Livonia and expressed a desire to meet him (1). The meeting took place in Lithuania, and the result was that Mindaugas accepted Christianity, was crowned in 1253 by a representative of the Pope as King of Lithuania (2) and became for eight years a zealous Christian. He accorded to the German merchants and citizens of Riga great commercial privileges in his country (3), established a bishopric in Lithuania (4), and bestowed upon the Livonian Order, "as gratitude for his conversion to Christianity", many provinces and large countries (5). But Mindaugas went still further. There is among the *Acta Borussica* a document of June 1260 by which Mindaugas bequeathed "our whole kingdom together with all adjacent countries" to the Teutonic Order in Livonia in case when he would die without legitimate heirs (6).

But the rejoicing of the Roman Church over its great success in Lithuania was not long. A few weeks after Mindaugas had signed his famous testament the Germans met with the disaster which exposed to a great danger their dominion both in Livonia and Prussia. A Lithuanian tribe called Samogitians who were not subject to Mindaugas (7), though the latter in his "liberality" had ceded them also to the Germans (8), defeated entirely a united army of the Danish and Teutonic Knights in the battle at Durbe on July 13, 1260, where the Master of the Order and almost all his Knights were killed (9). This great success of the Lithuanians was attended by an unanimous uprising of the Prussians, the Kuronians, and the people of the Oesel Island (the Zemgalians had revolted before the battle at Durbe). The Teutonic Order lost at least the territories it had conquered in Livonia and Prussia during the last two decades. The defeat of the Order at Durbe had probably induced Mindaugas to change his Christian policy. Besides, the people of Lithuania did not seem to have understood the policy of their Duke. A great indignation became manifest especially in Samogitia. Being between Prussia and Livonia, which barrier the

1) Reimchronnik, p. 582; 2) Ibid., p. 583; 3) Bunge, *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 1, pp. 312—313; 4) Ibid., pp. 337—338; 5) Ibid., pp. 333—334, 371—372, 382, 436—437, etc.; 6) De Wal, *Histoire*, etc., vol. 2, p. 46. — It is of interest to note that the territories of which Mindaugas had made a present to the Teutonic Knights, mostly did not belong to him, as for example, the country of Selonians, provinces of Courland, or the whole country of Samogitians (Bunge, *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 1, pp. 371—372, 382; De Wal, *Histoire*, etc., vol. 2, p. 38; K. A. Jusaitis, *The History of the Lithuanian Nation*, 1919, p. 13). On account of these circumstances the historian of the Teutonic Order expressed his doubts as to the sincerity of Mindaugas when he accepted Christianity and ceded large territories to the Order (De Wal, *Histoire*, etc., vol. 2, p. 42). Leaving open the question as to the personal inclinations of Mindaugas toward Christianity, it is however possible that Mindaugas as a politician might have been quite sincere in his endeavors to convert Lithuania into a Christian State. By this he would have deprived the Knights of a pretext to attack him as a "pagan" King. It might have been that Christianity was to him only a political instrument, for it also was nothing else to the Teutonic Knights and the Christian Bishops; 7) K. A. Jusaitis, *The History of the Lithuanian Nation*, p. 13; 8) Bunge, *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 1, p. 382; 9) Reimchronnik, p. 618.

Teutonic Knights were eager to grind down (1), the Samogitians were more menaced by the Germans than other Lithuanian tribes. Therefore they were the most inflexible enemies of the Germans and proved by their unceasing attacks that they had well deserved the name "indomitable", as this vigorous nation has been called by the Teutons (2).

After the battle at Durbe the Samogitians sent their envoys to Mindaugas who, according to the chronicler, told him as follows: "Thou art beset with great foolishness. Had the Christian hand suppressed the Samogitians, thy glory and all thy country would have been swept away, and thou and thy children wouldst have become at last bondmen. Why art thou so blind? . . ." (3). In 1261 Mindaugas changed his attitude, threw off Christianity, cruelly treated the Germans and expelled them from Lithuania (4). In order to drive them out of the Baltic entirely he made a great invasion into Livonia proceeding as far as Wenden where he expected to meet his ally, the Russian Prince of Novgorod, and to provoke the revolt of the Letts and the Livs (5). Had Mindaugas succeeded in accomplishing these plans, Latvia would have probably become a part of Lithuania. Just at that time when the Germans had suffered the great defeat at Durbe and when the Prussians, the Zemgalians, and the Kuronians were in open revolt, there was a great historical possibility to unite Latvia, Lithuania, and Prussia and to build up a strong national State which might have affected much more favorably the destinies of those nations. But the Russian offensive was postponed for some time, the Letts and the Livs did not revolt, and Mindaugas, disappointed in his hopes, angrily turned toward the south. At the head of an army of 30,000 men he made a terrible attack upon the Polish duchy of Mazovia, burnt down its capital Ploczko, and invaded Prussia putting to death the Knights and the Christians and destroying their cities and villages (6).

The uprising of the Prussians which followed the battle at Durbe was the last and the most tragical period of the struggle this nation had fought out with the Germans. The latter tried to prevent the revolt by an act of vile atrocity. They invited "Judas-like", as the chronicler says, fifty Prussian nobles to a feast, treated them in a most hospitable way, then suddenly left their guests, closed all outlets of the castle, set it on fire and burned all Prussians alive (7). This villainy had quite the opposite result which the Germans expected. It only prompted the revenge and made it the more merciless. On the eve of St. Matthew's day in 1261 all Prussia rose in arms. Led by their chiefs the Prussians massacred the Germans, killed the priests and laid in ashes churches and Christian settlements (8). The Knights were shut up in their castles and citadels where they were menaced both by starvation and Prussians who besieged and attacked their strongholds (9). To relieve the Teutonic Order many German Princes, as the King of Bohemia, the Duke of Brunswick, the Landgrave of

1) De Wal, Histoire, etc., vol. 2, p. 22; 2) Ibid., p. 36; 3) Reimchronik, p. 631; 4) Ibid.; Scriptores Rerum Livonicarum, vol. 1, p. 764; 5) Reimchronik, p. 632; 6) De Wal, Histoire, etc., vol. 2, p. 51; 7) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 1, p. 181; 8) Ibid., p. 182; 9) De Wal, Histoire, etc., vol. 2, p. 52.

Thuringia, and the Margrave of Brandenburg took up arms (1), Nevertheless the Prussians valiantly fought them all, and after eight years of an uninterrupted war the German cause in Prussia seemed to have been lost (2). The situation changed in favor of the Germans only in 1273 when Rudolph of Habsburg was elected King of Germany. This King, having been connected with the Teutonic Order by many recollections of previous years when he was himself in Prussia and fought there together with the Knights, now did his utmost to encourage the German Princes to help the Order in distress (3). At the same time Pope Gregory X was never tired of appealing for new crusaders and of pouring their armies into Prussia (4). At last, in 1283, the resistance of the Prussians was broken (5), a resistance which was overcome only by the common efforts of the whole German Empire. Prussia was conquered after a "cruel war", says the historian of the Teutonic Order, "which had exhausted the Empire as much as the whole of Europe was exhausted by assisting the crusades in the Holy Land" (6).

It hardly can be said that the Prussians were subjugated by the Teutonic Order. The conquest of Prussia was rather a brutal extermination of a nation which during fifty two years fought with rare bravery and with an admirable love for their country, liberty, and culture. There were provinces where every man was put to the sword, for the proud Prussians neither surrendered nor asked for mercy (7). There were provinces where the whole population having lost all hope of resisting the enemy, left their homes and went to Lithuania (8). After long years of devastation a densely populated country, what was once Prussia, became but desert and ruins. The well cultivated fields became overgrown with forests (9). "Since that time", says the chronicler, "the country of the Prussians rests in peace" (10). This cemetery peace was later disturbed by German colonists who came to Prussia and repopulated the country. Those Prussians who still remained were assimilated by the Germans, and their language ceased to be spoken in the seventeenth century.

Of all the inhabitants of the Baltic who were predestined to fall under the German rule, Zemgalia was the last to lose her independence. Threatened by the German invasion, the Zemgalians forgot their old enmity against the Lithuanians, and it was their joint force which defeated the Germans at the battle of Saule in 1236. It took about twelve years after this defeat before the Germans were able to renew their incursions into Zemgalia. Having suffered much from the German raids, the Zemgalians declared themselves ready to pay tributes and admitted German priests and magistrates into their country (11). A peace treaty was made and it lasted until 1259 when the Zemgalians told the German magistrates to leave their country. A free passage was accorded to the magistrates as well as to their movable property. It was emphasized that, although the Zemgalians could not tolerate any more German magistrates in their country, they had no desire to

1) *Ibid.*, pp. 52, 96, 100; 2) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, p. 211; 3) *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 207; 4) *Ibid.*, p. 211; 5) De Wal, *Histoire*, etc., vol. 2, p. 185; 6) *Ibid.*, p. 186; 7) *Ibid.*, p. 80; 8) *Ibid.*, p. 185; 9) *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 81; 10) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, p. 212; 11) *Reimchronik*, pp. 581—582.

provoke a new war with the Teutonic Order (1). There are in the Reimchronik no indications why the Zemgalians had denounced the peace treaty. It might be supposed that their indignation was roused by the brutal conduct of the Teutonic Knights whose moral level was particularly low just at that time. Already in 1243 Pope Innocent IV issued a bull by which incendiaries and other evil-doers were released from excommunication if they would assume a cross for fighting the pagans in Prussia and Livonia (2). When in 1254 Alexandre IV became Pope, he did his utmost to increase the fighting force in those countries by inviting German criminals to join the Teutonic Order. In 1256 he renewed the said bull of Innocent IV and, besides, issued another bull by which all criminals could escape from their just punishment if they would put themselves under the shelter of the white mantles of the Teutonic Order (3). Because of those corrupting Papal bulls "the Order was rapidly converted", says Otto von Rutenberg, "into a convict-colony where the vagabonds and criminals of the whole of Germany took refuge" (4).

When the German magistrates arrived at Riga and told how they were requested to leave Zemgalia, the Germans made preparations for a new war. No attention was, of course, paid to the pacific presentations of the Zemgalians. In the same winter a great German army, assisted by the Danes, the Esthonians, the Kuronians, the Letts, and the Livs, entered into Zemgalia. They besieged the castle of Terveta, the old residence of the Zemgalian chief Viesturs (5). For many years the fortune of war was in favor of the Zemgalians. In 1260 the Germans lost the great battle at Durbe which put them into a most embarrassing position. But in the course of time the Germans gradually recovered from that defeat. They renewed their raids into Zemgalia marked as usually by great destruction, and established there several castles, among them that of Mitau (Jelgava), erected in 1265.

A violent fighting went on for fourteen years until in 1272 a new peace was made (6). The Zemgalians were at that time the only nation in Livonia not yet subdued by the Germans and consequently they were the only ones able to resist the Teutonic Order in Livonia. Nevertheless, they were still strong enough to secure the peace terms which were somewhat reconcilable with their dignity. They maintained their castles as well as the administration and their own chiefs. But some time later the peace was broken again. The documents of the time tell us that new war was provoked by the hardship of the Teutonic oppression and by an outrage committed upon Nameitis, the King of Zemgalia (7). The Germans tried to anticipate the uprising by an atrocity similar to that they committed in Prussia. According to the documents of the time they invited the Zemgalian nobles to a collation and then beastly murdered them all (8). In 1279 all Zemgalia rose in arms again under the leadership of King Nameitis. He

1) Reimchronik, pp. 611—612; 2) Bunge, Urkundenbuch, vol. 1, pp. 228—229; 3) Ibid., pp. 381—382; O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 1, p. 156; 4) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 1, p. 157; 5) Reimchronik, pp. 613—615; 6) Reimchronik, p. 659; 7) Bunge, Regesten, vol. 2, p. 31; Scriptores Rerum Livonicarum, vol. 1, pp. 775; 8) Bunge, Regesten, vol. 2, pp. 25, 32.

expelled the Germans from Zemgalia, won back the castles and made an attack upon the Teutonic Knights in the provinces situated along the Dvina river (1). The Germans organized a resistance and succeeded in repelling the Zemgalian attack (2). In 1281 the Germans again besieged the castle of Terveta. Though at this time the Zemgalian stronghold was not taken, yet the Zemgalians delegated Nameitis to negotiate peace with the Germans (3). A peace was then concluded and Nameitis promised to keep it. It seems however that Nameitis had been induced to make this arrangement more by a request of his countrymen than by an inclination of his own. For shortly after he left Zemgalia forever and went to Lithuania. The last information the Reimchronik tells of him is that Nameitis had in the next autumn led an army of the Lithuanian King against the Teutonic Knights in Prussia (4).

Nevertheless, Zemgalia was not foredoomed to have peace. The war activities were resumed by the Germans. To exonerate themselves from the blame of having broken a peace, the Germans claimed that the treaty of peace was violated by Nameitis who fought against the Teutonic Order in Prussia (5). This allusion was, of course, merely a pretext when all other reasons were failing. Nameitis, having entered into the Lithuanian services, was no longer a King of Zemgalia and never did return to his country. A war which followed was the last struggle of the Letish nation for its independence in which they were closely assisted by the Samogitians (6). As the Germans proved unable to take the castle of Terveta, the principal stronghold of the Zemgalians, they erected at close proximity to it a strong castle of their own called Heiligenberg, or the Holy Mountain. This castle which played such an important role in breaking down the final resistance of the Zemgalians, was provided with a large garrison, and its destination was to make frequent sallies upon the Zemgalians and to dislodge them from the castle of Terveta. The Zemgalians, together with the Samogitians, made desperate attempts to take the Holy Mountain, but were repelled every time. Then the Zemgalians burned down their castle of Terveta and withdrew to other castles. At the same time the Zemgalians made great incursions into Livonia defeating the Germans at Riga and Ikshkile. In 1287 they won a battle in which the German army was destroyed, and the Master of the Order and his Knights killed (7). But the Prussians were already overcome and the Kuronians subdued, and, therefore, it was not so

1) Reimchronik, pp. 669, 679; 2) To assist the Germans against the Zemgalian army led by Nameitis there came also a hundred men of local inhabitants from Wenden. They displayed a red flag cut across with the white. The Reimchronik assures that Wenden was situated in the land of the Letts and that it wore the Lettish colors. We know, however, that Wenden (Cesis) was founded by a tribe called the Wends. The latter formerly inhabited the southern shores of the Baltic Sea. About the twelfth century a part of them tried to settle down at the mouth of the Windau river whence they were driven away by the Kuronians. They then went to the Gulf of Riga, but were expelled again by the Livs (L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., p. 4). At last they settled down at the present district of Wenden where they were later assimilated by the Letts. The national colors of the Wends were very like those described by the Reimchronik (Scriptores Rerum Livonicarum, vol. 1, p. 776). Similar colors are now adopted for the national flag of Latvia; 3) Reimchronik, p. 686; 4) Ibid., p. 687; 5) Ibid., 6) Ibid., pp. 692—694, 712; 7) Ibid., p. 704.

difficult now for the Germans to recover after that last defeat, as it had been after the battle at Durbe or that at Saule. The Grand Master of the Teutonic Order gathered his Knights from various places and sent them to Latvia to renew the war with the Zemgalians (1).

Within two years after the said defeat the German army penetrated again into Zemgalia and besieged the Zemgalian castles. As all attempts to take them proved vain (2), the Germans resorted to an infamous system of a complete devastation and depopulation of the country. This unscrupulous plan was carried out chiefly by the castle Heiligenberg, or the Holy Mountain, as it was situated in the midst of the Zemgalian territories (3). The garrison of this castle which was increased accordingly was directed to make incessant attacks upon the Zemgalian settlements and to ravage every place with fire and sword. The Zemgalian villages and homes were laid in ashes, the inhabitants killed or made prisoners, and the castle and other property taken away (4). When the Germans saw the Zemgalians ploughing or sowing their fields, they killed the men and drove away the horses (5). When the corn became ripe, it was trampled under foot or burned down (6). Every Zemgalian who happened to be in the proximity of the castle, was killed or taken a prisoner (7). These horrible crimes committed deliberately and in cold blood upon the country people and laboring men of Zemgalia, confirm in a most expressive way the statement made above that the Teutonic Knights fighting in Latvia at that time were but German criminals disguised in the white mantles of the Teutonic Order. The hardened conscience of those criminals was made still more torpid by the Popes who, like Innocent IV or Alexander IV converted, as O. v. Rutenberg says, "the defenders of the faith in Livonia and Prussia into Christian-pious tigers" (8).

This devastation of the country led to great indigence and desperation among the Zemgalians. Reduced to starvation they were deprived of all means of offering any further resistance. Therefore, in 1290 they burned down their castles themselves and, following the example of their King Nameitis, about 100,000 people went to Lithuania (9), leaving behind the native country entirely devastated. Those remaining surrendered and became the German bondmen. It is of interest to mention that the Germans having performed these exploits, demolished their own famous castle of the Holy Mountain (10). This step of theirs was highly unreasonable when considered from a military point of view, for the Holy Mountain had proved to be their best stronghold and it would have been of great use to them in the future to repel the Lithuanians and the enraged Zemgalians whose attacks were easy to foresee. It seems, therefore, that the reason which moved the Germans to destroy that castle has been rather of moral and psychological nature. It might be that the Germans, as coarse as they were, shuddered, nevertheless, at the unholiness of that Holy Mountain the garrison of which had committed so many crimes of murder and vile atrocity upon thousands of Zemgalian men, women and children.

1) Reimchronik, p. 707; De Wal, Histoire, etc., vol. 2, p. 214; 2) Reimchronik, pp. 710—711, 714—715; 3) Ibid., p. 716; 4) Ibid., p. 716; 5) Ibid.; 6) Ibid.; 7) Ibid., p. 717; 8) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 1, p. 146; 9) Reimchronik, pp. 718—721; Bunge, Regesten, vol. 2, p. 25; 10) Reimchronik, p. 724.

Such was the tragical end of the long struggle the Lettish nation had fought for its country and liberty. Since the time when Meinhard first arrived in Latvia, there elapsed more than a hundred years before the Lettish resistance was finally broken. The fratricidal character of those wars when the Letts and the Livs fought against the Etshonians, or the Letts assisted the Germans in overcoming the Zemgalians who were but another part of the Lettish nation, makes their past history still more fatal and unfortunate. With the last glow from the burning Zemgalian castles the nation's liberty was extinguished and for six subsequent centuries the Letts had no political history. Their provinces became a part of the Land of the Holy Virgin Mary where new masters, strange to their mentality and hostile to their culture, disposed of their life and property.

CHAPTER III.

The Land of the Virgin Mary.

With the conquest of Zemgalia the last resistance offered by the Letts was broken, and a large territory was secured for the formation of a German State on the shores of the Baltic. It comprised the provinces which form at present the territories of the Republics of Esthonia and Latvia, with the exception of the northern districts of Esthonia which were under Danish rule. The Germans had succeeded in depriving the Baltic inhabitants of their political rights and liberties, and they were now confronted by the important task of forming the conquered provinces into a politically organized community and of consolidating the new State by building up a united Government capable of restoring the internal prosperity of the devastated country and of pursuing a reasonable foreign policy with the neighboring powers. But this task the Germans were entirely unable to accomplish. The Teutonic Knights, monks, Bishops, and merchants who came to Livonia, had brought with them the German feudal instincts of mutual distrust and discord. And as the greediness for booty, fortune, power, and sensual pleasures were the chief motives that had induced them to come over to Livonia, they became doubly suspicious and jealous of each other when the dissection of the country began. The internal frictions between the Knights and the bishops became manifest almost as early as the Order of the Sword was called into existence. But during the thirteenth century the mutual hatred was to a certain extent restricted by a common danger caused by the hostile attitude of the local inhabitants not yet subdued. When the resistance of the latter was overcome, an open domestic war did not fail to break out. For the two centuries and a half which followed the German civil war and the intrigues of various Teutonic rulers formed the principal event of Livonian history, until the armies of Ivan the Terrible of Russia put an end to that virtueless and narrow-minded historical phantom which had been called the Livonian State, or the Land of the Virgin Mary.

In the beginning of the fourteenth century Livonia was divided into six principal powers: the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order, the Archbishopric of Riga, the Bishoprics of Dorpat, Oesel, and Courland (Piltene), and the Danish provinces of Northern Esthonia together with the city of Reval. Of the territories occupied by the Germans two thirds of Livonia and one third of Courland belonged to the bishops while the rest of the country was under the rule of the Teutonic Knights (1). To those principal powers we have to add the

1) Bunge, Regesten, vol. 2, p. 15.

Livonian cities which, like Riga and Reval, became at the end of the thirteenth century strong and flourishing and claimed the same rights and privileges that the free cities in Germany enjoyed. In 1282 Riga became a member of the Hansaetic League and stood in commerce next after Luebeck and Wisby (1). In 1294 Philip IV of France granted considerable commercial privileges to the citizens and merchants of Riga (2). Afterwards the Hansaetic League was joined by Dorpat, Reval, and later by other Livonian cities, as Wenden, Wolmar, Lemsal, Windau, Koknese, Goldingen, Roop, Pernau, and Fellin (3).

All these various powers situated in the Land of the Virgin Mary had one feature in common; a passionate desire to become independent of each other. The Knights fought against the Archbishop and the Bishops. The latter fought sometimes against the Knights and sometimes in alliance with them against the Archbishop if such coalition suited their tendencies of independence. The vassals of the bishops followed the example of their liege-lords and did exactly the same committing felonies when an occasion presented to increase their property or independence. At the same time the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order being recruited mostly from the Westphalians (4) tried to free itself from subordination to the Grand Master of the Order in Prussia whose Knights were for the most part Rhinelanders.

In that process of decentralization the new masters of the Baltic succeeded so well that the Land of the Virgin Mary can hardly be called a State or a Confederacy of States. Essential to a State is some sort of Government recognized as valid by its members living in a common region and capable to enforce its rules. No such institution ever existed in Livonia. Although there were three persons in authority who claimed the sovereignty of Livonia, yet they were very far from being able to exercise it. Their influence counted only when they possessed the real power and the proper means to make it valid on every occasion. At first the Archbishop of Riga may be regarded as such a claimant. He had inherited the position of Bishop Albert, and thought he had also inherited his great authority over the country and the Knights whom Albert had established in Livonia. His point of view was to a certain degree supported by the Popes. When after the defeat at Saule in 1236 the Knights of the Sword merged into the Teutonic Order, Pope Gregory IX put the Livonian branch of that Order under the jurisdiction of the Livonian Bishops (5). The Archbishop regarded the Knights, therefore, as his vassals (6), and this interpretation of feudal relations was later confirmed by the Holy See (7). Nevertheless, the Knights did not hesitate to capture the castles of the Archbishop, to appropriate the archiepiscopal lands and property, to destroy the churches, to make alliances with the vassals of the Archbishop and to throw him, when necessary, into prison (8). During the long struggle which followed the Archbishops of Riga did

1) Dietrich Schaefer, *Die Hansestaedte und Koenig Waldemar von Daenemark*, Jena, 1879, p. 56; 2) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 1, p. 162; 3) E. Daenell, *Die Blutezeit der Deutschen Hanse*, Berlin, 1905, vol. 2, p. 303; 4) A. Svabe, *Latvju kulturas vesture* (Lettish), vol. 1, part. 2, p. 163; 5) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 1, p. 42; 6) *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 12; 7) *Ibid.*, pp. 154—157; 8) *Ibid.*, pp. 10—13, 24—26, 28—32.

not succeed in making their claims of sovereignty valid for a long time.

The other claimant of the Livonian sovereignty was the Pope. Based upon an old theory that he who confers the Imperial crown is greater than he who receives ⁽¹⁾, the Popes considered themselves as supreme bearers both of spiritual and temporal power of the world. During the thirteenth century when the Papacy reached the pinnacle of its might and glory, the Popes distinctly set forward their claims of sovereignty over Livonia. But at the very beginning of the fourteenth century the Papacy had to encounter the "Babylonian Captivity" at Avignon, which event, together with the following period of the Great Schism, considerably affected the high prestige of the Roman Pontiffs. The approaching Renaissance and the rise of national monarchies in Europe prevented the Papacy forever from recovering its former power and influence over the Christian world. Under these changed conditions the Popes could neither assert their claims of sovereignty in Livonia nor protect effectively the prelates there. Being aware of this and even anticipating disgrace for the Papacy, the Knights scorned the bishops when they threatened them with Papal intervention. So on September 14, 1305, the Archbishop of Riga wrote to the Pope: "The followers of the Archbishop, especially those who are acting at the Roman Curia against them (i. e. against the Teutonic Knights), they (the Knights) so persecute by the sword that it is scarcely possible to find someone who dares to bring the cases of Riga's and other churches to Rome; furthermore, they use to say when they kill someone: "The Pope will help thou!" ⁽²⁾. In the same letter the Archbishop wrote: "The members of the Order are the most bitter enemies of Riga's and the Roman churches, for Christianity is to a great extent eradicated by their proceedings in the province of Riga, and if the Papal Chair does not give prompt assistance, Christianity will be as completely exterminated in Livonia as it has been at Akka and Tripolis" ⁽³⁾. If we admit that in his report the Archbishop of Riga exaggerated to a certain extent the accusations against the Knights, nevertheless the passages quoted above throw a very expressive light upon the internal disunion of Livonia. A violent contention of her two greatest potentates, the Archbishop and the Teutonic Order, went on, and the authority of the Pope was not strong enough to stop it.

The third potentate who asserted his sovereign rights to Livonia was the German Emperor, or the "King of the Romans". The Emperor acted upon the ground of the medieval theory that the "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation" had inherited the rights of the Roman Empire to the possession of the whole world ⁽⁴⁾. Therefore the Emperor thought that he was entitled to distribute the rights to any part of the world, regardless of the fact that the land given might be already possessed by some other ruler or nation. So, for example, in 1228 the "King of the Romans" gave into "eternal possession" of the Order of the Sword Northern Esthonia as a "redemption of the souls

¹⁾ D. J. Hill, *A. History of Diplomacy*, vol. 1, p. 115; ²⁾ Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, p. 12; ³⁾ *Ibid.*, pp. 12—13; ⁴⁾ L. v. aRnke, *Weltgeschichte*, part. 8, p. 458.

of his august ancestors from purgatory" (1), although that province was then claimed by the King of Denmark. It was but ten years later that these "eternal rights" lost their effect, for the German Knights were forced to give up again that part of Esthonia to the Danes (2). In 1245 Emperor Frederic II presented to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order Courland, Lithuania, and Zemgalia as a "property belonging to the Empire" (3), although none of those countries were at that time conquered by the Germans, and Lithuania had never also later been conquered by them. It appears that the sovereign rights claimed by the German Emperors to Livonia as well as the cession of these rights to the Order and the bishops, were nothing but a fiction based upon illusory political doctrines of the Middle Ages (4). The influence exercised by the Imperial Crown on Livonian affairs, whatever its pretensions were in theory, was of no essential consequences in practice. The Emperors never supported by force their sovereign claims to Livonia and they also were unable to do so. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, while France, England, and Spain were resolutely engaged in destroying their great feudatories, Germany was still under the intricate rule of the feudal magnates who only represented the real power of that country. To maintain that power the German magnates, together with the Pope, established a system of influencing the Electoral College of the Empire to favor the election of a candidate of relative feebleness (5). On account of these considerations Rudolf of Habsburg was elected in 1273 "King of the Romans", and for two following centuries the German magnates faithfully followed the political tradition which bestowed the crown of the Empire upon a weak sovereign.

The lack of any Government in Livonia constituted that distinction by which she politically differed from other feudal countries as well as from Prussia. The Grand Master of the Teutonic Order was practically the absolute ruler of Prussia. The power of the Prussian bishops and clergy was limited, they having been appointed of the members of the same Teutonic Order (6). Therefore, in the fourteenth century when the Teutonic Order reached the culminating point of its prosperity and influence, there was no civil war in Prussia between the Knights and the prelates. The Archbishop of Riga to whom the Popes conveyed the spiritual authority in Prussia in order to counterbalance the power of the Grand Master (7), was, of course, still less influential in Prussia than he was in Livonia.

At the same time the political decentralization of Livonia had gone so far that the brutal force became supreme law, and the fait accompli was the only valid sanction for every action. The bishops having vassals of their own and requiring, when necessary, their military assistance, were temporal as well as spiritual chiefs in their dioceses. Therefore they often supported the proclamations of

1) Bunge, *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 2, pp. 118—120; 2) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 1, p. 45; 3) *Ibid.*, pp. 53—54; 4) The Imperial decrees possessed, however, a certain diplomatic value serving as a sort of instruments in numerous controversies and negotiations between the various powers in Livonia or being used by them as a pretext to attack each other; 5) D. J. Hill, *A. History of Diplomacy*, vol. 1, pp. 351—352; 6) L. v. Ranke, *Weltgeschichte*, part 8, p. 467; 7) A. Svabe, *Latvju, etc.*, (Lettish), vol. 1, part. 2, p. 113.

excommunication to which the Knights were not very sensible by a more effective argument of the sword. Perceiving that there was in Livonia no other source of right than that of "might before right" (*Macht vor Recht*), the Knights, the bishops, and their vassals entered into various combinations of force with each other to satisfy their aptitude for power and opulence. Perhaps in no other feudal country the *bellum omnium contra omnes* was carried out so perseveringly as in Livonia. Although the Germans conquered Livonia on account of the political disunion of her native inhabitants, yet the regime which superceded it, was politically even more divided than the rule of Viesturs, Visvaldis, Rusins, and other Lettish chiefs.

Under these circumstances the Knights, whose military force was prevalent in Livonia, decided to assert their supremacy over the bishops and the city of Riga. The controversies between them which had begun as early as the Knights were established in Livonia, were, however, held in certain bounds during the thirteenth century when the conquest of the country was not achieved. But at the end of the century we find the Livonian powers involved in internecine war. When there is a long cherished wish to fight, the slightest pretext is usually sufficient to draw the sword. In 1297 the citizens of Riga intended to build a bridge near the castle of the Knights. Although this bridge was not made with hostile purposes, it having been planned in connection with the water flow regulation of the Dvina river, yet the Knights objected to its construction and destroyed it. They used this pretext to declare many important privileges of Riga cancelled and to threaten with the requisition of all goods carried by the merchants of Riga in transit through the territories occupied by the Order (1).

As all negotiations proved futile, a war broke out, and during the eighteen months which followed nine battles were fought (2). The Archbishop of Riga and other Livonian Bishops, excepting that of Courland, made an alliance with Riga and fought against the Knights. Nevertheless the latter succeeded in capturing the archiepiscopal castles and in making him prisoner. When the castles of the Bishop of Oesel were also taken, the Bishop of Dorpat withdrew from the alliance (3), and Riga was left alone. Being since 1282 a member of the Hansaetic League, Riga applied for assistance to Luebeck (4), but no help was given to it by that leading Hansaetic city. As the assistance promised by the Danish King (5) also failed to come, and as no effective intervention was made by the Pope, Riga resorted to an alliance with the Lithuanians. Riga was not the first to have induced the Lithuanians to play a new rôle in the Livonian politics. The Archbishop of Riga had already appealed to the Lithuanians for assistance against the Knights (6). In the summer of 1298 the Lithuanian army entered Livonia and, assisted by the citizens of Riga, defeated the Knights in a battle where the Provincial Master was killed and his army destroyed. This victory was not, however, attended by any lasting success for the cause of Riga, and

1) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 1, p. 167; 2) Comte de Bray, *Essai critique sur l'Histoire de la Livonie*, Dorpat, 1817, vol. 1, pp. 183—184; 3) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 49; 4) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 1, pp. 167—168; 5) *Ibid*, p. 170. 6) Comte de Bray, *Essai critique*, etc., vol. 1, p. 183; O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, p. 262.

that of the Archbishop. A few weeks later the Knights received a considerable assistance from the Prussian branch of the Teutonic Order, and now it was the turn of Riga and the Lithuanians to suffer a defeat imposed by the Knights (1). A truce was then concluded by the belligerent parties. Upon the insistence of Boniface VIII the Archbishop of Riga was released from prison and went to Italy where he shortly afterwards died (2).

The Knights did not remain long in peace with Riga and the Archbishop. In February 1304 they made at Dorpat an "everlasting alliance" (3) with the Bishops of Dorpat and Oesel and the vassals of the Danish King in Esthonia (4). Although this alliance was formerly made for the protection of Christianity in Livonia, it was practically turned against the Archbishop and the city of Riga. Those who would not join that alliance where the political leadership and supremacy of the Knights was evident, were declared open enemies whose adherence to the alliance could be forced by arms (5). As the Bishopric of Courland had become since 1263 a dominion dependent from the Knights (6), the latter had now achieved the complete isolation of the Archbishop and the city of Riga. To overcome the resistance of Riga the Knights bought in 1305 a cloister and abbey situated at the mouth of the Dvina river (7) and converted them into a military post. By this purchase the harbor of Riga was cut off from the Baltic Sea, and the Knights were able to control the oversea commerce of Riga. Seeing its prosperity menaced, Riga tried at first to cancel that purchase. When it proved futile, Riga made a new

1) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 49; 2) As the unfortunate Archbishop of Riga who claimed the sovereign rights over Livonia, was kept by the Knights for eight months in prison suffering their brutal insults and being put some days on a severe diet of bread and water (Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 1, p. 177; *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 29), and as it was already at that time an established practice of the Knights to put into prison an Archbishop who was not willing to comply with their requests (*Ibid.*, pp. 28—29), it is easy to understand why no prelate readily accepted the honors and duties of the Archbishop of Riga. In December 1300 Boniface VIII entrusted Isarnus, his former chaplain, with the Archbishopric of Riga (Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 1, p. 134). But Isarnus made haste to leave Livonia and obtained in the spring of 1302 a permission of the Pope to exchange his position at Riga with the Archbishop of Lund. The latter vigorously protested against the said exchange imposed upon him and refused to go to Riga (Comte de Bray, *Essai Critique*, etc., vol. 1, p. 189). When at last Frederic, a Franciscan monk, was appointed Archbishop of Riga (Bunge, *Regesten*, etc., vol. 2, p. 5), he stayed but a short while at Riga and preferred to make a Papal court at Avignon his permanent residence. That example was then followed by several of his successors at the Archbishopric of Riga (L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 51); 3) The moment of "eternity" with which we meet so often in the medieval treaties and documents, is perhaps one of the most striking features of confused spiritual and secular conceptions typical to that time. The treaties were declared "everlasting" though they lasted usually but for a short while. Solemn promises to keep the peace "forever" and to observe the obligations assumed were easily broken on every favorable occasion, or were legally revoked by the Popes and the bishops. The lands were ceded "for ever" and the various rights and privileges were granted "in secula seculorum", although their validity was determined by nothing but a force which promptly replaced the "eternal" status of yesterday by a new "eternal" arrangement of to-day. Regardless of that versatility of things, the medieval rulers obstinately continued to regard themselves as a sort of eternal agents entitled to act in the name and for the sake of eternity; 4) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, p. 3; 5) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, p. 4; 6) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, p. 242; 7) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, pp. 8—9.

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alliance with the Lithuanians and the Russians of Pskov and Novgorod ⁽¹⁾.

While the fighting between Riga and the Knights went on, Archbishop Frederic, encouraged probably by the proceedings of Philip IV against the Templars, initiated in the Papal court a long suit against the Teutonic Knights. The principal accusations were: (a) the Knights had destroyed churches ⁽²⁾, (b) had deprived the prelates of their possessions and had brutally insulted the clergy, (c) had assumed and followed the pagan rites ⁽³⁾, (d) had exterminated the Christian population of Zemgalia ⁽⁴⁾, (e) had killed at the capture of Danzig more than 10,000 people not even sparing the children ⁽⁵⁾, (f) had captured and killed the messengers sent by the Archbishop of Riga to the Pope ⁽⁶⁾, etc. In the summer of 1312 the Pope sent his nuncio Moliano to Riga to examine witnesses about the 230 accusations which had been formulated against the Knights ⁽⁷⁾. At the end of that year the examination was performed ⁽⁸⁾. Clement V hesitated, however, to give his final decision in the matter influenced by rich presents which the Knights sent to him and the Cardinals at Avignon ⁽⁹⁾. When John XXII became Pope, he renewed once more the process and issued in 1318 a sharp bull against the Teutonic Knights ordering the Grand Master and other high officials of the Order to appear at Avignon and to answer before him for all accusations made against them ⁽¹⁰⁾. But the Knights continued to assist their cause by the argumenta pecuniaria which turned out to be so effective at Avignon that only a year later John XXII declared the Archbishop of Riga unable to prove his claims and accusations ⁽¹¹⁾. "The Pope", says O. v. Rutenberg in connection with this process, "who called himself a representative of Divine love and justice, proceeded not only with a heartless cruelty against the heretics and pagans, but was also accessible, together with the whole College of purpled Cardinals, to the meanest corruptibility and venality" ⁽¹²⁾.

Meanwhile the war between the city of Riga and the Knights was continued. In the struggle which began in 1297 neither of the belligerents could obtain for more than three decades any decisive success. The Lithuanians were the only faithful ally of Riga, but even they could not always extend their help when it was urgently required. In March of 1330 Riga surrendered at last to the Knights, having been reduced to hunger by a long siege of six months. The city was ordered to write a "letter of expiation" ("Suehnebrief"), whereby the obligations to its new master were stipulated ⁽¹³⁾. When the subjection of Riga was accomplished, Emperor Louis IV, making use of the pretentious but meaningless tradition of the "Kings of Romans" to confirm the faits accomplis, issued in 1332 a decree by which the

¹⁾ O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, pp. 276, 289; ²⁾ Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, p. 24; ³⁾ Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, p. 25; ⁴⁾ *Ibid.*; ⁵⁾ *Ibid.*; ⁶⁾ *Ibid.*, p. 12; ⁷⁾ *Ibid.*, p. 28; ⁸⁾ The results of that examination had been exposed in an enormous roll of parchment which is at present in the archives of Königsberg. Although the beginning of that document as well as its end have been mutilated, it is still 51 Riga's ells long and 1½ ells wide (Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, p. 32); ⁹⁾ O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, p. 301; ¹⁰⁾ Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, pp. 43—44; ¹¹⁾ *Ibid.*, p. 48; ¹²⁾ O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, p. 302; ¹³⁾ Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, pp. 83—84.

city of Riga and its citizens were completely submitted under the authority and jurisdiction of the Teutonic Order (1). The long struggle with the Knights and their subsequent rule at Riga had so deeply affected the commerce of that city that during the fourteenth century Riga gave up to the city of Reval the leading rôle in the Livonian commerce with Russia (2).

It is rather surprising that no assistance to Riga, during its long struggle with the Knights, was given by the Hansaetic League of which Riga was a member. Although Riga had repeatedly entreated the Hansaetic towns for help, the Mayor of Riga reported at a meeting of the Municipal Council on March 18, 1330, when the surrender of the city of Riga was decided: "We never received from them any consolation either by word or by deed" (3). There are two reasons which might, in our opinion, explain that passive attitude of the Hansaetic League. First, the traditional commercial policy of Riga and other Livonian cities which intended to prohibit a direct commercial intercourse between the Hansaetic towns and Russia (4). The exchange of goods going to and from Russia had to be made in the Livonian cities which regarded themselves as staple-towns for such goods. The said commercial policy was the chief cause for the great prosperity attained by the Livonian cities (5). But it was resented by the Hansaetic League, and it might have provoked its estrangement toward Riga and other Livonian cities.

The second reason might be found in the circumstances connected with the commerce which was carried out by the Teutonic Order itself. Since the second part of the thirteenth century the Teutonic Order in Prussia assumed commercial functions and established a special staff of officials who dealt exclusively with commerce (6). About the middle of the fourteenth century that commerce was developed to such an extent that the Knights set themselves up in the Flanders, France, and Great Britain as serious competitors of commerce carried on in that part of Europe by the Hansaetic towns against which the latter vigorously protested (7). The Knights in Livonia followed the example of their comrades in Prussia by engaging themselves in the profitable business of commerce. In 1299 the city of Riga wrote to Pope Boniface VIII as follows: "They (the Knights) having excluded the citizens and other Christians make agreements for commercial purposes with the pagans and invite them to come with their goods to certain places occupied by the Order where commercial transactions which are detrimental to the whole country, are made. Whereas they are Knights and wish to be treated as such, they deal in every trade unbecoming to knighthood, and even in its meanest kinds, like market-men; they are selling fruit, cabbage, radish, onion, and other such commodities . . ." (8). The competition between the Knights and the city of Riga in the Livonian commerce was one of the principal causes which led to the long war between them. But the commercial interests of the Order might have also constituted the reason for the

1) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, p. 88; 2) E. Daenell, *Die Blutezeit der Deutschen Hanse*, vol. 1, p. 101; 3) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, p. 22; 4) E. Daenell, *Die Blutezeit*, etc., vol. 2, p. 240; 5) Comte de Bray, *Essai critique*, etc., vol. 2, p. 124; 6) E. Daenell, *Die Blutezeit*, etc., vol. 1, p. 176; 7) *Ibid.*, p. 177; 8) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 1, p. 180.

Hansaetic cities to find in certain periods it more advantageous for their trade with Russia to deal with the Knights who possessed the military force and political influence, than with its member-cities in Livonia. To secure the favorable neutrality of the Hansaetic League the Knights opened negotiations with Luebeck since the beginning of their struggle with Riga (1). Several important commercial privileges were granted to the Hansaetic towns, and this was probably the price for which the Hansaetic League abandoned Riga to its own destiny.

Although the struggle for supremacy in Livonia resulted by 1330 in the victory of the Knights, yet this success was very far from having established their final mastery over that country. The alliances made by the Knights were often broken, the powers of Livonia entered into new combinations of force, and the civil war went on for another two centuries. The Archbishops of Riga resumed their claims against the Teutonic Order requesting the Papal intervention, and the Livonian controversies even came before the Council of Constance. The Bishops continued to change their political sympathies siding now and then with the Archbishop of Riga or with the Knights. Also the city of Riga was not willing to suffer for a long time the humiliation of 1330, and its citizens found occasion again to cross the sword with the Knights. We will not follow chronologically the long course of that civil war marked by cruelties, crimes, and intrigues. All the principal factors as well as the methods applied in the war, had become manifest in the period of struggle up to 1330, and, *mutatis mutandis*, they also appeared in two following centuries.

In 1343 the revolt of the Esthonians broke out (2). This event put the Germans into possession of Northern Esthonia which belonged up to that date to the Danes. The revolt was provoked by the most arbitrary tyranny which the conquerors imposed upon the native inhabitants of the Baltic. The Danish and German nobles in Esthonia received their fiefs from the Danish King with rights and privileges that made them unlimited sovereigns in their possessions. Among those privileges was, for example, "the right to the neck and the hand" which meant that the vassals could cut off the neck or the hand of any peasant living on their lands (3) if it suited their convenience. The vassals did not hesitate to make large use of that unlimited power. "The tyranny of the Knights and the vassals", says one chronicler, "went so far that they disgraced the wives and the daughters of the Esthonians and the inhabitants of Oesel, took away their property and treated them as slaves" (4). Another chronicler referring to the situation of the Esthonian peasant at that time says that "our dogs are better treated than the people were" (5). To become rid of that tyranny a general uprising of the Esthonians took place in the night of St. George, April 23, and during one night more than 1,800 Danish and German nobles were killed (6). An army of 10,000

1) *Ibid.*, pp. 171—172, 175; 2) According to one letter which Boniface VIII wrote in March 1299 to the Esthonians to revolt against the Danish and Teutonic oppression had already taken place at that time (Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 1, p. 174); 3) A. Švabe, *Latvju, etc.*, (Lettish), vol. 1, part 2, p. 191; 4) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, pp. 355—356; 5) *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 355—356; 6) *Ibid.*, 356.

Esthonians besieged Reval and at the same time entered into negotiations with the Swedish authorities inviting them to extend the Swedish sovereignty over Esthonia (1). The Esthonian uprising was followed by the revolts on the Oesel Island and in Zemgalia (2). The suppression of the revolution was undertaken by the Teutonic Order. The Swedes were persuaded not to give assistance to the Esthonians (3). The Grand Master dispatched to Livonia a strong auxiliary corps, and within two years the Esthonian revolutionary movement was stopped. "The leaders and the instigators of the revolt", says the chronicler, "were put to death by exquisite torments (exquisitis tormentis), the others were brought back to the old slavery" (4). These deeds accomplished, the Knights opened negotiations with the Danes for the acquisition or Northern Esthonia pointing out the valuable services they rendered in suppressing the Esthonian revolt. The negotiations proved successful, and in August 1346, King Valdemar IV of Denmark sold Northern Esthonia to the Teutonic Order for 19,000 Marks of pure silver (5). By this purchase the Germans became masters of all Livonian territories, and the Land of the Virgin Mary reached the limit of its largest territorial extension.

Up to the last part of the fifteenth century Livonia was confronted with no great external difficulties. This explains why her various rulers, strange as they were to any sound idea of statesmanship and plunged into internal dissensions, could, nevertheless, drag on their independent existence for two centuries and a half. Russia was still under the yoke of the Tatars, and the Principalities of Novgorod and Pskov, evolving gradually into purely commercial communities, were not bent upon the military expeditions. It seems that the independent Livonia was even politically desirable to these Russian principalities as a certain counterbalance against the vigorous expansion of Lithuania during the fourteenth century (6). With the death of Valdemar II in 1240 Denmark also ceased to exercise her political influence upon Livonian affairs. The dynastic claims and internal disturbances prevented that State from playing any considerable rôle in foreign policy until 1340 when Valdemar IV became King of Denmark. But this sovereign gave up Esthonia to the Teutonic Knights and showed no intention to continue the eastern policy of Valdemar II. He manifested his friendship to the Grand Master of the Order by participating twice in the Teutonic campaigns against the Lithuanians (7). It was probably done with a view to secure the neutrality of the Teutonic Order in the great struggle Denmark had to fight out with the Hansaetic League. Denmark did not resume her former policy of eastern expansion even after the Union of Kalmar in 1397 when her hegemony over the whole Scandinavia was practically established. Also during the period under consideration no essential pressure had been exercised upon Livonia by Sweden, for the political growth of that country began only with the dynasty of Gustavus Vasa in the first part of the sixteenth century.

1) *Ibid.*; 2) *Ibid.*, pp. 356—357; 3) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 57; 4) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, p. 358; 5) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, p. 123; 6) *Ibid.*, pp. 53—54; 7) Dietrich Schaefer, *Die Hansestaedte*, etc., p. 141.

An important rôle was played in the Livonian history by the Wendish cities, as Luebeck, Rostock, Stralsund, Stettin, etc. which carried out a large trade with Livonia and Russia. Their influence became especially apparent since the second part of the thirteenth century when the cities formed a union which developed into a powerful association called the "Hansaetic League". It seems, however, that the significance of that League in the conquest of Livonia as well as in her history in general has been greatly overestimated by some scholars who, like F. Barthold, assert that "the Baltic colonization was done by the Hansaetic League: only by its assistance the Teutonic Knights could have performed their task" (1). The greatest part of Livonia was already conquered by Bishop Albert at a time when Luebeck and other Wendish cities were still under the dominion of Valdemar II of Denmark. This Kings followed a most active eastern policy and did everything possible to prevent the Wendish cities from lending any assistance to the German penetration into Livonia (2). It was only in 1231 that Luebeck acquired for the first time a staple — house ("der Kaufhof") at Riga and made it a basis for its trade with Livonia and Russia (3). We have already mentioned above that there was not always a good understanding not only, between the Teutonic Order and the Hansaetic League, but also between the latter and its member cities in Livonia. The League could not acquiesce in the action of the Teutonic Order depriving the Livonian and Prussian cities of their liberties and privileges. But it was to a certain extent tolerated by the League, for the Knights possessed the force and influence which could protect its trade with Russia, Lithuania, and Poland. The League had much closer relations with the Prussian branch of the Teutonic Order than with that of Livonia (4). But there it was rather the League which looked for the protection of its trade by the Grand Master (5). As both parties carried on commerce on their own account, in the second part of the fourteenth century they had already become discordant with each other and the Hansaetic League even tried to forbid the Order's trade with Novgorod (6).

The same differencies arose in many political questions as, for instance, in the case of Gotland. About 1390 the Germans of Mecklenburg had formed a powerful League of pirates called the "Victuals' Brethren" ("Vitalienbrueder") (7) who for many years almost stopped the commercial traffic on the Baltic Sea. In 1397 these pirates under the leadership of Eric, a son of the former Swedish King, conquered Gotland and the city of Wisby, from which they were expelled in the following year by the Teutonic Order (8). The latter had now an opportunity to hold that important island and to establish, in close cooperation with the Wendish cities, the German predominance on the Baltic Sea. The Grand Master of the Order preferred, however, to follow a friendly policy toward Denmark, an enemy of the Hansaetic League. He sold that island in 1408 to Queen Margaret (9)

1) F. Barthold, *Die Geschichte der Deutschen Hanse*, Leipzig, 1909, vol. 1, p. 12, quoted according to A. Svabe, *Latvju kulturas vēsture* (Lettish), vol. 1, part 2, p. 66; 2) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 1, pp. 12, 13, 25, etc.; 3) E. Daenell, *Die Bluetezeit*, etc., vol. 1, p. 8; 4) *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 310—311; 5) *Ibid.*; 6) *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 177; 7) *Ibid.*, pp. 111—120; 8) *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 135—136; 9) *Ibid.*, p. 148.

and concluded a treaty of "perpetual" alliance with the members of the Union of Kalmar (1). By these acts the Teutonic Order had assisted the Union of Kalmar which had considerably shaken the political ascendancy of the Hansaetic League (2).

The only power which had greatly menaced the Teutonic Order, was Lithuania which became under the brilliant leadership of Gediminas, Algirdas, Kestutis, and Vitautas the most powerful State of Eastern Europe. Had Lithuania followed a consistent national policy, she would have been able at that time to put an end to the German dominion in Livonia and Prussia and to form together with her kinsfolks, the Letts and the Prussians, a strong national unity. But the Lithuanian Grand Dukes were not bent upon the permanent conquest of the countries occupied by the Teutonic Knights. Instead of it two grave political errors were committed which resulted in the most unfortunate consequences for Lithuania as well as for her kindred nations in Livonia and Prussia: Lithuania lost her independence, the Prussians became completely germanized, and the Letts had to pass long centuries under the oppressive rule of other nations. The first error of the Lithuanian policy consisted in its eastern expansion. Instead of extending their dominion along the Baltic Sea, the Lithuanian Grand Dukes moved into the territories populated by the Russians. Having become rulers of large Russian areas, the Lithuanian nobles and warriors met with the same destiny as the Scandinavians in the ninth and tenth centuries. They adopted the Russian language and habits and became indifferent to the native country.

In the historic Lithuania the boundaries of which reached as far eastward as the Oka and Vorskla rivers and touched the Black Sea between the Dnieper and Dniester rivers, the original ethnographic Lithuania took a comparatively small place. The country was called Lithuania on account of the Lithuanian origin of Grand Dukes who had put together this enormous State. Russian, or more exactly, White Russian idiom became the official language of the State and was used by the Government in its correspondence. Even the famous Code of Lithuanian laws, the "Lithuanian Statute", was composed in the White Russian language (3). The national development and consolidation of Lithuania was in no way favorably affected by the political confusion with Russia. Besides, the acquisition of the Russian lands involved Lithuania in long wars with the Grand Principality of Moscow. As soon as Russia became practically free of the Tatar rule, Ivan III Vasilievitch began war with Lithuania for the acquisition of Russian territories, and this policy was most actively followed by his successors (4).

1) De Wal, *Histoire etc.*, vol. 4, pp. 160—161; 2) *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed., vol. 8; 3) Owing to these circumstances three nations are at present setting forth their historical claims to Vilna. The Lithuanians, because this city was founded by Grand Duke Gediminas who made it a capital of the Lithuanian State. The White Russians, because Vilna also was the capital of the historic Lithuania which was a White Russian State par excellence. The Poles, because they claimed such rights since the marriage of Grand Duke Jagello with the Polish Queen Hedwig; 4) S. F. Platonov, *Lektsii po russkoi istorii* (Russian), St. Petersburg, 1904, pp. 130—131.

The second political error committed by Lithuania was her union with Poland. The interests in common that both States had, originated in their wars against the Teutonic Order. The Poles having formerly invited the Teutonic Knights to fight the "pagan" Prussians, became in the course of time afraid and jealous of the rising power and influence of the Teutonic Order. An open war between them broke out when the Knights in 1311 expelled the Poles from Danzig and other cities of Central Prussia depriving Poland of the necessary outlet to the Baltic Sea (1). These circumstances caused the Poles to forget their former "Christian" policy and they now sought an alliance with the pagan Lithuanians against the Teutonic Order. Having always been most skilful in arranging matrimonial alliances, the Poles availed themselves of an opportunity of uniting their kingdom and Lithuania by a marriage of Queen Hedwig to the Lithuanian Grand Duke Jagello. This event took place in 1386, and a Lithuanian Grand Duke gave Poland a royal dynasty which lasted for two centuries and made this country great and powerful (2). But the benefit of this alliance was altogether on the side of the Polish gentry, or *szlachta*. Being practically the only real power which ruled the Polish Kingdom, the *szlachta* gradually achieved a complete submission of Lithuania under the Polish Crown. This final act was accomplished by Sigismund Augustus, the last Polish King of the Jagellonian dynasty, who in 1569 by the Union of Lublin incorporated Lithuania into the Polish Kingdom, thus putting the last touch to the anti-Lithuanian policy of Jagello and breaking down that formation of the Lithuanian State which his ancestor Grand Duke Gediminas had so gloriously begun.

For the reasons mentioned above Livonia was not among the chief objects the Lithuanian policy was trying to attain. The Lithuanian incursions into Livonia or their participation in Livonian civil wars were not made in pursuance of a deliberate plan of conquest, and they were on the whole undertaken occasionally. The Lithuanian attention was also much diverted from Livonia by the Prussian branch of the Teutonic Order. In 1291 Akka was taken by the Saracens, and the Christians were finally expelled from Palestine and Syria. The only "pagan" country which still remained accessible to the crusading Knights, was at that time Lithuania. As Prussia was the most convenient gateway leading to Lithuania, the Teutonic Knights were prompt to make the best of this advantageous position of gatekeepers. Lithuania was doomed to become the scene where the last act of the crusading drama took place. All that was left over in the fourteenth century of the medieval crusading spirit in Germany, Denmark, England, and France (3) flocked together in Prussia, and from here these adventurers led by the Teutonic Knights made unceasing attacks upon the Lithuanians. Nevertheless, the latter not only successfully stood on the defensive, but often took the military initiative in their own

1) De Wal, *Histoire*, etc., vol. 2, p. 507; 2) *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th. ed., vol. 8; 3) De Wal, *Histoire*, etc., vol. 3, pp. 43—35, 349, 380; G. Weber, *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte*, Leipzig, 1885, vol. 9, p. 27.

hands by making alarming invasions into Prussia (1). Regardless of the German offensive Lithuania continued to develop into a powerful State.

The "paganism" of the Lithuanians was, however, of a most peculiar nature. It is fully justifiable to put this expression in quotation marks when applied to the Letts in the beginning or to the Lithuanians at the end of the thirteenth century. Both nations had at that time outlived their old religion, having been acquainted through the Russian channels with Christianity before the German monks began their baptismal mission. The Lithuanians of the fourteenth century were to a very great extent pagans against their own will. It was in the interest of the Teutonic Order that they were pagans, for a struggle against the pagans was its chief mission. It justified its existence, gained the assistance of the catholic Europe and left the Order undisturbed to pursue its secular policy. Seeing these political advantages the Teutonic Order acted according to the maxim which we may express, paraphrasing the well-known saying of Voltaire, as follows: if there are no pagans in Lithuania they must be called into existence. The Teutonic Knights did their best, therefore, to prevent the Lithuanians from becoming Christians.

In May 1323 Grand Duke Gediminas wrote to Pope John XXII that he and his State were ready to accept Christianity, as his predecessor Mindaugas had done it. Explaining the reaction against Christianity as caused by the "injustice and treacherous action" of the Teutonic Knights, Gediminas wrote further: "He, Gediminas, is not fighting against the Christians to root out the Catholic creed, but is only defending himself from wrongs and injuries, like the Christian Kings and Princes do it" (2). At the same time Gediminas addressed similar letters to the religious Orders in Germany and to the Hansaetic League inviting the latter to favor the immigration of merchants, agriculturists, and tradesmen into Lithuania (3). To confirm the sincerity of his intention Gediminas invited the representatives of the Archbishop of Riga, the Livonian Bishops, the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order, and the Danish vassals of Northern Esthonia to come to Vilna in order to make a general treaty of peace. On October 2, 1323, the treaty was signed at Vilna by which a "stable and firm" peace was established and proper means provided for a peaceful

1) The heroic spirit and contempt of danger displayed by the Lithuanians during their struggle with the Medieval Europe comes forth particularly in one case quoted by the German historians. There came in 1336 a large number of crusading German Princes and nobles to Prussia for whom the Grand Master was anxious to arrange a "hunting party" into Lithuania. The German troops besieged the Lithuanian castle Pilene where about 4,000 Lithuanians with their wives and children had taken refuge. As all attempts to take the castle defended, by a Lithuanian chief called Margers, proved futile, the Germans set fire to the castle by kindling its wooden walls. The Lithuanians not being able to hold the burning castle any longer and refusing the humiliation of being at the mercy of the brutal enemy, killed their own wives and children and then put themselves to the sword. When the Germans renewed the attack upon the defenseless castle and ascertained what had happened, "the strong German army", says the chronicler, "was so much struck with horror by this greatness of the pagan mind that it did not venture to proceed farther and, with many injuries and without any booty, returned in low spirits to Prussia" (O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, pp. 348—350); 2) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, pp. 54—55; 3) *Ibid.*, pp. 55—56.

settlement of controversies that might later arise between the contractant parties (1).

This treaty, as soon as it became known in Prussia, greatly irritated the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order. A Christian Lithuania threatened to deprive him and his Knights of their vocation. Only three weeks later after the signing of the said treaty the Bishops of Prussia who were, as it was stated above, members of the same Teutonic Order and acted under the instructions of the Grand Master, wrote to the Livonian Knights and Bishops as follows: "The peace that they have concluded with the King of Lithuania, is work of the devil, and it will rush into perdition not only them (i. e. the Livonians), but also Prussia, for these cunning and false sons of Satan (i. e. the Lithuanians) would destroy first Prussia with her adjacent countries and then Livonia" (2). The Prussian Bishops requested, therefore, that the said treaty should be denounced without delay and any alliance with Lithuania should be avoided in the future (3).

The Livonian Knights obeyed the Grand Master and violated the treaty accordingly. The messengers sent by Gediminas were captured and brutally murdered (4). The Livonian Bishops who were willing to keep the treaty, were forced by arms to break the obligations assumed at Vilna (5). To make Christianity as repulsive as possible the Knights oppressed the new converted inhabitants, hindered their religious instruction, treated them as slaves, and sold them like animals or negotiable goods (6). Nothing was neglected by the Knights to destroy the true Christian spirit, to keep paganism alive, and to provoke new hostilities with Lithuania. To stop that paganism of the Christian Knights and to resume the negotiations with Gediminas, Pope John XXII sent to Livonia his Nuncios (7). They addressed from Riga in October 1324 a letter to the Teutonic Order in Prussia stating that the treaty of Vilna was binding for Prussia. The Grand Master was ordered, under the threat of punishment by excommunication, to strictly respect the treaty (8). But the Papal intervention proved futile, and the Knights pressed forward the cause of war and paganism. In connection with this conduct of the Knights the Archbishop of Riga excommunicated on April 4, 1325, the whole Teutonic Order together with its vassals and adherents (9).

When at last the Nuncios arrived at Vilna they found Gediminas most furious and indignant at the violation of the treaty. He refused to enter into any negotiations with the Germans. Worked up by the treacherous conduct of the Knights, Gediminas angrily retorted to the Papal messengers when they alluded to his letter to Pope John XXII: "I do not know your Pope nor do I wish to know him. I will remain in the faith which I have inherited from my fathers" (10). Shortly after Gediminas made two wrathful incursions into Livonia and Prussia to punish the perfidy of the Knights (11).

1) *Ibid.*, Urkundenbuch, vol. 2, pp. 150—152; 2) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, p. 59; 3) *Ibid.*; 4) *Ibid.*, p. 66; 5) *Ibid.*, p. 67; 6) *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 66; 7) *Ibid.*, p. 63; 8) *Ibid.*, pp. 64—65; 9) *Ibid.*, pp. 66—67; 10) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, p. 320; 11) *Ibid.*

The abrupt manner in which Gediminas dismissed the Papal messengers has roused a question as to the authenticity of the letters written by Gediminas in May 1323 to the Pope, the religious Orders, and the Hansaetic League. The historians, like J. Voigt, who are inclined to exonerate the conduct of the Knights, have tried to prove that Gediminas never wrote such letters, nor had he any intention of becoming a Christian, and that these documents were nothing but a falsification made by Archbishop Frederic of Riga with a view to embarrass the Teutonic Order (1). A somewhat similar opinion has been later expressed by L. Arbusov (2), while others, like O. v. Rutenberg, do not doubt the genuine character of the said letters. O. v. Rutenberg even reproaches J. Voigt of an intentional misrepresentation of the facts when he says that this historian "has tried with all acumen and knowledge of the sources to make a historic truth of a gross lie of the Order" (3). F. G. v. Bunge, the editor of the Livonian documents, finds that there are grounds justifying to a certain extent both opinions (4).

Seeing a close political and logical relation between the letters of Gediminas and the subsequent treaty of Vilna, we are inclined to share the opinion of O. v. Rutenberg as well as that of the Livonian prelates of the fourteenth century who considered these documents genuine. Leaving the question of the authenticity of these letters open, we think, however, that the most important point in this controversy of the historians is the conclusion made by J. Voigt that Gediminas was an obstinate pagan and that he never had an inclination to make Lithuania a Christian State. This conclusion seems to be in contradiction with the facts we know of his life as well as with his policy and the situation of Lithuania in general. Whatever might be the authenticity of the letters of Gediminas, we have the unquestionable treaty of Vilna, which document proves the intention of Gediminas to approach in a peaceful way the Christian civilization. By making alliances with the Archbishop of Riga and the King of Poland Gediminas was in close contact with the Christian rulers who might have considerably influenced his mind in favor of Christianity. That he personally was not an enemy of Christianity, may be seen from the marriage of his daughter to the son of the Polish King. On this occasion he released 24,000 Christian Poles made prisoners during previous wars (5). The large Russian territories Gediminas conquered were populated by Christians, and there are no indications that Gediminas had persecuted them because they were Christians. Both sons of Gediminas, Algirdas and Kestutis, were Christians, and Algirdas even passed the last four years of his life in a cloister (6).

Except these personal inclinations which Gediminas and his dynasty had for Christianity, there are important considerations of a purely political nature which imposed a Christian policy upon the Lithuanian statesmen. By becoming Christian, Lithuania would have removed that blame of paganism upon which ground she was attacked by the crusading princes of Medieval Europe. Just as the Teutonic

1) *Ibid.*, p. 321; 2) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss, etc.*, p. 53; 3) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte, etc.*, vol. 1, p. 321; 4) Bunge, *Regesten*, vol. 2, p. 55, footnote; 5) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte, etc.*, vol. 1, p. 326; 6) *Ibid.*, p. 406.

Knights had a motive to make Lithuania pagan, so the Lithuanians had good reasons to become Christians. The idea that the international position of Lithuania requires her transformation into a Christian State, had already been well conceived by Grand Duke Mindaugas in the middle of the thirteenth century. The same tendency was then consistently followed by the successive Grand Dukes of Lithuania, as far as the internal and external situation permitted it.

The chief political object the Teutonic Order pursued while fighting the Lithuanians was the acquisition of Samogitia which separated both branches of the Order in Prussia and Livonia. Although the Knights succeeded in occupying several districts of that province as early as the end of the thirteenth century (1), still it was never firmly and finally attached to the Order (2). The younger son of Gediminas, Kestutis, who has been rightly regarded as the greatest national hero of Lithuania, gallantly defended this country during half a century against the Teutonic Order. His undaunted courage, his bold and dashing incursions into Prussia, his spirited and romantic escapes from the Teutonic castles when taken prisoner, were greatly admired by the Teutonic Knights themselves (3). Grand Duke Vitautas, the son of Kestutis, vigorously continued the action of his father by protecting Samogitia against the Teutonic aspirations. Owing chiefly to these two Lithuanian Princes, Kestutis and Vitautas, the important barrier between Prussia and Livonia was maintained, and the German colonization in Livonia and Lithuania was prevented from achieving the same results of denationalizing the native population that had been reached in Prussia.

It was also the question of Samogitia that led to the historic battle at Tannenberg on July 15, 1410 (4). The combined forces of Vitautas and Jagello (5) cut to pieces the Teutonic army of 83,000 men comprising troops raised in Livonia, Holland, Switzerland, and in various parts of Germany (6). By this defeat the might of the Teutonic Order in Prussia was crushed forever (7). That the Prussian branch of the Teutonic Order continued its existence for another century, was chiefly due to the intricate relations between Lithuania and Poland brought about by the anti-Lithuanian policy of Jagello. Had the latter not jeopardized the Lithuanian independence by his ascension to the Polish throne, the friendly and unsuspecting cooperation of Lithuania and Poland would have been strong enough to take further advantage of their victory at Tannenberg and to proceed with an immediate division of the lands occupied by the Teutonic Order in Prussia. But, Samogitia having been defended, the same Vitautas who defeated the Teutonic Order, was now anxious to maintain its existence. Pursuing his aim to make Lithuania free again of her political subordination

1) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 1, p. 267; 2) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 90; 3) De Wal, *Histoire*, etc., vol. 3, pp. 356, 360; 4) *Ibid.*, vol. 4, pp. 311—312; 5) After his transformation into the Catholic King of Poland Jagello was called Vladislaus II.; 6) De Wal, *Histoire*, etc., vol. 4, pp. 315—316; 7) The hero of that great day was Vitautas who led into the battle the joint Lithuanian and Polish armies, while King Jagello found it preferable to stay behind the battle-line with the baggage-cars of his army (De Wal, *Histoire*, etc., vol. 4, pp. 325, 328, 331).

to Poland, Vitautas preferred to have a buffer-State in order to be able, when necessary, to outbalance Poland (1).

When Lithuania finally became in the last part of the fourteenth century a Christian country, all ground justifying the existence of the Teutonic Order as a community of militant monks, was removed. Under these circumstances the only sound course to follow would have been that which Martin Luther recommended later to Albrecht, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order: "He has to make away with the foolish and preposterous Statute of the Order, to take a wife and to transform Prussia into a secular duchy" (2). But so strong was the power of the medieval catholic traditions that such a "heresy" was out of the question during the period of one century and a half which passed after the last "pagan" of the Baltic was baptized. Formally the Statute of the Order was maintained though informally every point of it was violated (3). If the spread of Christianity morally disarmed the Teutonic Order, the battle of Tannenberg deprived it of the military fame which it had enjoyed in the fourteenth century. The European princes became indifferent to the defeated Order, and the period of internal plots and treacheries which took place in Prussia after the defeat at Tannenberg, made its reputation still worse. The Knights were now disregarded even by the German princes who contemptuously called them "malitious traitors and false scoundrels" (4).

The arrogance of the Teutonic administration hated by all classes of Prussia (5), was paid back in the same coin after the battle of Tannenberg. In 1397 the Prussian vassals had formed an alliance, called the "Lizard League" ("Eidechsenbund"), in order to protect themselves against the despotism of the Teutonic Order. In 1440 the lizard, as O. v. Rutenberg says, became a crocodile, and a powerful "Prussian League" was constituted by which the Prussian cities and the gentry united their forces for a common struggle against the Order (6). The Prussian League attracted by the almost unlimited power which the gentry, or szlachta, possessed in Poland, entered into negotiations with that country and proposed to it the sovereignty of Prussia (7). That process of dissolution of the Teutonic régime resulted on October 19, 1466, in the treaty of Thorn according to which Marienburg, the capital of the Teutonic Order, and all territories situated westward of the Vistula river were ceded to Poland. The Grand Master was allowed to hold in fief from the Polish King the eastern part of Prussia. It was stipulated that

1) K. A. Jusaitis, *The History of the Lithuanian Nation*, pp. 20—21; 2) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 2, p. 326; 3) The Teutonic Knights were supposed to strictly observe the monastic discipline and to keep the three essential vows: obedience, poverty, and chastity. Of these vows only obedience was to a certain extent observed until the beginning of the fifteenth century, while the two others were practically broken during the whole existence of the Teutonic Order. How could they observe the vow of poverty, if it was for booty and fortune that they had come to the Baltic? According to the documents and the chronicles of the time, the same negative conclusion has to be made in regard to the vow of chastity. "While the Knights were dining or drinking", says one chronicler, "they talked of nothing but fair ladies and good horses" (G. Weber, *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte*, vol. 9, pp. 33—35; 4) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 2, p. 37; 5) G. Weber, *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte*, vol. 9, p. 41; 6) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 2, pp. 108—109; 7) *Ibid.*, pp. 159, 176.

thenceforth the Grand Master would have but two superiors: the King of Poland as his liege-lord and the Pope as far as the ecclesiastic questions are concerned (1). By this act at Thorn there were cancelled all the "eternal and perpetual" rights and privileges which two illusory monarchs of the world, the Pope and the Emperor, had on various occasions conferred to the Teutonic Order.

The events which took place in Prussia after the battle at Tannenberg had several important consequences for the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order. One of the results was independence from the Grand Master in Prussia which the Livonian Knights had ever been striving for. Since the incorporation of the defeated Knights of the Sword into the Teutonic Order in 1237, it was the right of the Grand Master to choose and appoint the Provincial Master of the Livonian branch. Three years after the defeat at Tannenberg the Livonian Knights were accorded the right to select by themselves two candidates for the post of Provincial Master, one of whom was to be confirmed by the Grand Master (2). In 1454 the Livonian Knights had already the privilege to present one candidate, and the Grand Master had to confirm this selection unconditionally (3). Since that time the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order might be regarded as a practically independent community. Loose bonds which still formerly existed between both branches of the Order, lost all significance after the humiliating treaty of Thorn when the Grand Master became the vassal of the Polish King. Another consequence was the complete isolation of the Livonian Knights. The Prussian branch of the Teutonic Order had saved the Livonian Knights in many an exigency. But it hardly was possible to expect such help now when the Order in Prussia had become weak and dependent on the Polish Crown. Thenceforth the Livonian Knights had to reckon and rely wholly upon their own strength and valor.

But such was the mental predisposition of the Livonian Knights that they were incapable to meet the critical situation created by their isolation from Prussia and by a constant growth of the Grand Principality of Moscow. Instead of investing the Master with an authority enabling him to dominate the situation, the Chapter of the Order and its Councils passed the resolutions which limited his power and made it ineffective (4). The independence gained by the Order degenerated into a rivalry and clash of arms between its fractions. While the Teutonic Knights in Prussia were for the most part Rhinelanders, the Westphalians prevailed in Livonia (5). To influence the Livonian policy the Grand Master of the Order succeeded at the end of the fourteenth century in filling the most important posts of the Livonian branch with Rhinelanders (6). The majority of the Livonian Knights being Westphalians, bitterly resented this, and when the authority of the Grand Master relaxed, they hastened to outrank the Rhinelanders (7). In the second part of the fifteenth century the internal dissensions of the Order pursued more and more the course

¹) De Wal, *Histoire*, etc., vol. 7, pp. 120—123; ²) A. Svabe, *Latvju*, etc., (Lettish), vol. 1, part. 2, p. 145; ³) *Ibid.*, p. 150; ⁴) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 107; ⁵) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 2, pp. 75—76; ⁶) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 90; ⁷) *Ibid.*, p. 99.

of anarchy. The vow of obedience was broken by the Knights in a most flagrant way. In 1468 a Marshall of the Order, being displaced from his post, refused to obey the resolution of the Chapter and opposed it by arms (1). A few years later when Master Herse attempted to restrain that reign of violence, the Knights formed a conspiracy, arrested the Master and murdered him (2). The independence which the Livonian Knights secured after the collapse of the Teutonic Order in Prussia, did not add anything but another chapter to the bloody and monotonous history of Livonian civil wars.

Our chronological nararative of the Livonian civil wars was dropped at the year 1330. Because there were no external difficulties which considerably affected Livonia before the end of the fifteenth century, these wars during all that period were perseveringly continued. To follow the whole story of the Livonian discords would be, however, as much devoid of interest as of importance. The long and sinuous line of victories and defeats which the various Livonian parties won and suffered, is extremely lacking in events that might be regarded as a turning point of the Livonian history or would be attended by lasting consequences of political significance. The chief importance of that process lies in the final effect in which it resulted, and this was the political impotence and the moral wilderness of Livonia.

A few episodes representing a type of the Livonian controversies may still be set forth. The settled purpose of the Knights in their struggle for supremacy was to have the same authority over the Livonian prelates that the Teutonic Order had in Prussia. This aim they thought they had attained in 1394 when Boniface VIII issued a bull stating that only the members of the Teutonic Order were permitted to occupy the ecclesiatic posts in the diocese of Riga (3). But the bull of Boniface VIII only caused the renewal of Livonian dissensions. The vassals of the Archbishop, the Bishops, and all who feared the predominance of the Order, took up arms and made an alliance with Grand Duke Vitautas (4). After a ruthless war negotiations were started which turned out unsatisfactory to the Knights (5). In 1424 we find the Holy See pursuing on the same question a policy entirely opposite to that of Boniface VIII. A bull was issued by which the city of Riga was released of the oath given to the Order, and the Archbishop was recognized as the only spiritual and temporal chief of the city (6). It was now the turn of the Knights to oppose the Papal orders.

The possession of Riga was another object which led to frequent wars between the Archbishop and the Order. The city fell by turns under the rule of one or the other aspirant. When this system proved annoying another combination was tried. In 1452 the Archbishop and the Master of the Order signed at Kirchholm a treaty where it was stipulated that both potentates should rule at Riga simultaneously (7). But this condominium worked unsatisfactorily. Scarcely a year passed before the Master of the Order manifested his wish to become the

1) L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., pp. 105—106; 2) Ibid., pp. 106—107; 3) Bunge, Regesten, vol. 4, p. 2; 4) L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., p. 64; 5) Ibid.; 6) Ibid., p. 96; 7) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 166.

sole ruler of the city (1). The Archbishop then declared the treaty of Kirchholm null and void and induced by promises the citizens of Riga to take up arms against the Knights (2). But only a few days later the Archbishop secretly entered into negotiations with the Master and renewed the treaty of Kirchholm (3). The citizens of Riga, indignant at this perfidy of the Archbishop, abandoned him and came to a compromise with the Master (4). This agreement did not, however, cancel the famous agreement of Kirchholm which revived again and again and continued to play for more than seventy years a considerable rôle in the Livonian intrigues and civil wars (5).

It was very fatal for Livonia that the Papal bulls and Imperial decrees were mostly only a source of renewed hostilities. Thus, for example, by the decree of 1481 Emperor Frederic III bestowed upon the Master of the Order the dignity of a Prince of the Empire and conferred to him the sovereign rights to the city and Archbishopric of Riga (6). Against that "liberality" of the Emperor Riga and the Pope vigorously protested. The latter defended his privilege to dispose of the ecclesiastic possessions by excommunicating the Order, while Riga once more took up arms against the Knights (7). The military activities which took place during the first five years assumed a course favorable to Riga. An army of the Knights was destroyed at Duenamuende (the mouth of the Dvina river), and several successful campaigns were made into the dominions of the Order in Courland. Riga hired mercenary troops at Danzig and received an auxiliary corps of 4,000 men from Sweden. At the same time a new conspiracy took place in the Order, and Master Borg was forced to leave his post. The Order did not feel strong enough to continue war, and in 1486 a treaty of "eternal peace" was concluded on the basis of the status quo post bellum. Riga remained in possession of all lands and castles it had captured from the Order during the last war (8). Relying upon the "eternal peace" Riga bade farewell to the 4,000 Swedish warriors. "But nobody thought then", says one chronicler, "that they would be so soon wanted again" (9).

Scarcely a year passed when the Knights succeeded in changing the attitude of the Pope again, and in 1487 Riga was ordered, under the punishment of excommunication, to render to the Order all places which had been taken away from it in the last war. The Papal bull served once more to break the "eternal peace", and both parties made preparations for war. Riga again invited the Swedes, hired mercenaries and requested the assistance of the Hansaetic League (10). But now the fortune of war was favorable to the Knights whose forces were under the command of a qualified leader, Marshal Walter von Plettenberg. The Archbishop played a double game and at the decisive moment entirely abandoned the citizens of Riga. In 1491 Plettenberg destroyed at Neuermuehlen the army of Riga, and the Order dictated to the city the terms of submission (11). The Arch-

¹⁾ Ibid., p. 167; ²⁾ Ibid., p. 170; ³⁾ Ibid., p. 172; ⁴⁾ Ibid., p. 173; ⁵⁾ Ibid., pp. 197, 263, 345; ⁶⁾ Ibid., p. 223; ⁷⁾ L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 109; ⁸⁾ O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 2, pp. 249—250; ⁹⁾ Ibid.; ¹⁰⁾ Ibid., pp. 255, 257; ¹¹⁾ Ibid., pp. 262—263.

bishop of Riga took advantage of the duplicity he showed during the conflict of Riga with the Knights and made the best of it by reviving the treaty of Kirchholm. The city of Riga swore once more allegiance to both masters, the Archbishop and the Order.

There was in Livonia an institution which might be to a certain extent regarded as an attempt to hold together the centrifugal forces of the country. This was a sort of diet, called the "Landtag". The first indication of the sessions held by the Landtag goes as far back as 1421 ⁽¹⁾. The country was represented in the Landtag by the Order, the Archbishop and other prelates, the gentry, and the cities of Riga, Dorpat, and Reval ⁽²⁾. The chief questions the Landtag was concerned with were as follows: (a) war and peace, (b) the domestic dissensions, (c) minting concerns, (d) new burdens, charges, and restrictions to be ever again imposed upon the inhabitants, (e) religious police, (f) regulations regarding dress, hunting, etc. ⁽³⁾. The sessions of the Landtag were called together by the Archbishop of Riga or the Master of the Order, and were usually held at Walk or Wolmar ⁽⁴⁾.

The Livonian Landtag bore, however, but a small resemblance to a legislative assembly as it is understood at present. It might be rather compared with the modern system of conferences between the sovereign States. Like these, the Landtag was not called together when the chief Livonian rulers, the Archbishop and the Master of the Order were at war ⁽⁵⁾. And still less than these, the Landtag was able to settle any important question if an agreement about it had not been reached by the interested parties before the session ⁽⁶⁾. The Livonian Landtag served practically no other purpose than the general social tendency of the Livonian life which might be defined as follows: unrestricted liberty in the periphery and no authority in the centre. Every German adventurer or monk who came to Livonia strove for a political system which would be powerless to restrain his avidity and fancy. In 1472 the Livonian gentry was so strong as to force the Landtag to confirm the right of open rebellion against the liege-lord if he had somewhat trodden upon its liberties. Such vassals should have been regarded as released from their oaths and homage due to their liege-lord, and the others had to support them in that rebellion until they had settled their controversies with the liege-lord ⁽⁷⁾. "Under these circumstances", says O. v. Rutenberg, "Livonia remained with her Landtag exactly the same as she had been before the Landtag: a chaos of violence and arbitrary proceedings which appeared on the stage now in their natural ugly shape and then again under the legal robe of the Landtag" ⁽⁸⁾.

¹⁾ L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., p. 95; ²⁾ O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 61; ³⁾ Ibid., p. 62; ⁴⁾ Ibid., pp. 59—60; ⁵⁾ Ibid.; ⁶⁾ Ibid., p. 62; ⁷⁾ Ibid., p. 63; ⁸⁾ Ibid.

CHAPTER IV.

The End of the Teutonic Independence.

The absence of any effective machinery of Government and the perfect inability to create one had made Livonia defenseless against any strong State which might have aimed at the permanent conquest of the country. We have seen above that the political constellation of powers neighboring Livonia had not exposed her during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to any great danger. When at last such a danger was presented by the aggressive policy of Moscow, all the internal weakness of Livonia came forth, and that visionary State collapsed forever.

There were two principal causes which had for so long prevented Russia from intervening with the Livonian affairs. The first was the invasion of the Tatars in the beginning of the thirteenth century who ruled for more than two hundred years over that country. In 1380 the Russians imposed a decisive defeat upon the Tatars at the battle of Kulikovo, and since that victory the Tatar rule, though it still lasted for another century, gradually died away. The other cause was the internal disintegration of Russia into a great number of independent principalities. But since 1328 when Ivan Kalita became the first Grand Prince of Moscow, this Principality had assumed the leadership in uniting the politically separated regions of Russia (1). The greatest rival that the expansive policy of Ivan Kalita met with at this time, was the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas who, too, had undertaken to enlarge his State by annexing the Russian territories (2). This rivalry persistently continued made of Lithuania and Poland (when the political union of both States was accomplished) the chief historical enemies of Russia. When in 1462 Ivan III Vasilievitch became Grand Prince of Moscow, the boundaries of his Principality had been already extended so far in the west as to come in direct contact with Novgorod, Pskov, and Lithuania (3). Therefore, it was against those powers that Ivan III turned his armies. It did not take any great effort to overcome the resistance of Novgorod which finally lost its independence in 1478. The subjection of Pskov was postponed for some time as the city showed every mark of obedience to the Grand Prince of Moscow (4).

By these Russian conquests Livonia was placed side by side with the most alarming neighbor. But it was not the policy of Ivan III, nor

¹) S. F. Platonov, *Lektsii po russkoi istorii* (Russian), St. Petersburg, 1904, p. 119; ²) *Ibid.*, p. 125; ³) *Ibid.*, p. 129; ⁴) *Ibid.*

was it that of his son, Grand Prince Vasilii III, to proceed with the conquest of Livonia. Their chief political object was to extend the rule of Moscow over the territories populated by the Russians, and it was, therefore, Lithuania against which they directed the offensive (1). Nevertheless, Ivan III made shortly after the conquest of Novgorod several incursions into Livonia, probably with a view to impose a due respect upon his new neighbor or in order to find out how strong the Teutonic Order was. These reconnoitring expeditions turned out to be so disastrous that they nearly put an end to the Teutonic dominion in Livonia. When, for example, a Russian army of 25,000 men invaded Livonia in 1481, the Teutonic Knights did not even venture to oppose it in open field. The Knights confined themselves to their castles and strongholds and left for five weeks the country exposed to the waste and ravage of the Russians (2). Had this debility prevailed for a longer time, a prompt catastrophe would have been unavoidable.

From this perilous position Livonia was rescued by Walter von Plettenberg by whose efforts the final collapse was postponed for half a century. In the Livonian history, void of prominent statesmen, Plettenberg has been rightly regarded by German historians as next to Bishop Albert, the originator of the Teutonic rule in Livonia. His diplomatic activities proved, however, unsuccessful. To strengthen the position of Livonia he made treaties of alliance with Denmark and Lithuania, but received practically no assistance from either (3). His endeavors to obtain some help from Germany, Prussia, and the Hansaetic League were also in vain (4). But Plettenberg succeeded in rendering less acute the internal dissensions of Livonia. He established tolerable relations with the Livonian prelates, abstained from oppressing the citizens of Riga and, by prohibiting the admission of Rhinelanders into the Teutonic Order in Livonia, removed the ground for the mutual discord within the Order itself (5). The success which Plettenberg achieved in this direction was considerably due to the critical external situation of Livonia which most expressively admonished the various fractions against the continuation of civil wars. Much more experienced and gifted was Plettenberg in military art than in statesmanship. Having disposed of a comparatively small force he defeated the Russians at Siritsa in 1501 and imposed upon them in the following year another decisive victory at Pskov (6). The military success of Plettenberg caused the Grand Prince of Moscow to abstain from wasting his armies in fighting the Teutonic Knights in order to have all Russian fighting force concentrated against Lithuania. These circumstances enabled Livonia to conclude a peace with Russia which was later renewed and lasted up to 1551 (7).

During the long rule of Walter von Plettenberg (1494—1535) a period from 1509 until 1524 was especially propitious. It was the time when Caspar Linde was Archbishop of Riga. Plettenberg and

¹ Ibid., p. 131; ² O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 2, pp. 222—223; ³ Ibid., p. 274; ⁴ Ibid., p. 272; ⁵ Ibid., pp. 270—271; ⁶ The army of the Russian at Pskov has been estimated at 90,000 men which Plettenberg had not more than 14,000 (*De Wal, Histoire*, etc., vol. 7, pp. 419, 433); ⁷ L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 118.

Linde did much to maintain the internal peace of the country and to promote its prosperity. "Livonia enjoyed during this period", says O. v. Rutenberg, "an apparent happiness and welfare which she never had during the whole history of the country" (1). Linde was perhaps the brightest personality in the Livonian history. He was one of the very few who attempted to approach the people and showed some understanding for their needs and human compassion with their sufferings (2). But after the death of Linde the harmony between the Master of the Order and the Archbishop was disturbed. The treaty of Kirchholm led once more to internal dissensions. The new Archbishop of Riga Blankenfeld entered into secret negotiations with Russia and Lithuania and opened a new period of Livonian intrigues adopted to the changed international situation. Livonia had ceased to be a forgotten place of the world abandoned to herself. Not only Russia, Poland, and Denmark, but also Sweden under Gustavus Vasa became interested in Livonia. All these powers anticipating the Livonian collapse, tried to secure their share of a country doomed to dissolution. Their influence had been strongly marked in the political intrigues and conspiracies which took place in Livonia during the last three decades of her independent existence.

The intricate external situation created by Blankenfeld forced Plettenberg to take precautionary measures for the safety of the country. The Landtag was called in at Wolmar where in June, 1526, the Livonian prelates and their vassals solemnly promised to be faithful and obedient to the Order and to join, if necessary, its military force (3). Plettenberg was recognized as general protector of Livonia, and the Order seemed to have attained the supremacy it had been three centuries striving for. The cunning Blankenfeld was present, too, at that meeting of the Landtag and, having made an attempt to justify himself against the suspicions cast upon him, was the first who pledged his faith to the Order. But the Livonian promises were seldom sincere and never lasted for long, and so "the apparent triumph of the Order was nothing but an illusion" (4). In order to strengthen Livonia by an alliance with the foreign powers, Plettenberg applied again to Germany, although no efficient assistance could be expected from her. It seems that this was also the opinion of Plettenberg, for after the victory at Pskov and up to 1525 he was rather reluctant than anxious to establish close relations with the Empire (5). But Plettenberg saw no other choice. In 1530 the Reichstag conferred to him the honors of a Prince of the Empire. It was once more confirmed that Livonia had become a part of the German Empire. But these purely chancery transactions resulted only in new taxes which thenceforth Livonia had to pay to the Imperial institution (6). The Empire which was entirely powerless to prevent Prussia from falling under the Polish sovereignty, was much more so in regard to Livonia that had no territorial connection with Germany.

Firm morals and culture are the two principal conditions which explain at the ultimate analysis the success of every human society that

1) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 2, p. 298; 2) *Ibid.*, 298—299; 3) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 136; 4) *Ibid.*; 5) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 2, p. 290; 6) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 121.

had been predestined to leave a lasting trace in the history of civilization. None of these conditions ever existed in Livonia under the Teutonic rule. It was a general moral decay which rushed the Teutonic community into its ruin and made it incapable to provide Livonia with any sound political and social foundation. And there was no force which could stop that process of corruption and self-destruction. Walter von Plettenberg was the most influential personality who had ever been at the head of the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order. Yet during his time the relaxation of Livonian morals was still pushed forward (1). "All this interval", says Count de Bray referring to the reign of Plettenberg, "was the golden age of Livonia, if it is possible to call golden age an epoc of corruption and if the brutal pleasures and coarse manners can constitute the prosperity of a people" (2). Whatever might have been the differencies which separated the Knights, the clergy, the gentry, and the burghers, all the Teutons who came to Livonia were passionately greedy for sensual pleasures, and they found it in debauchery and salacity. According to the chronicles of the time it even was the best praise of the Livonians that they were excessive drunkards (3). The same sources tell us that unchastity and concubinage had at that time so fallen into a custom among the ecclesiastic, the Knights, and the gentry that many had regarded it as no shame and sin at all (4). To Western Europe the "Livonian incivility" had become as proverbial as the "Roman subtility" (5). That predominance of purely animal inclinations in the Teutonic character, strange to mental enjoyments and void of intellectual interest, had necessarily led to brutality, rapacity, and self-indulgence. It might give us a psychological explanation for the state of anarchy which prevailed in Livonia during the Teutonic independence.

German writers used to assert that the Teutonic Knights had been the first champions of civilization in the Baltic. It is, however, difficult to trace the cultural work achieved by the Teutons. No schools were established under the Teutonic rule and no endeavors were made to promote the education of the country. We do not mean the education for the native inhabitants, for they were entirely neglected in every respect, but nothing was done for the education of the Germans themselves. The clergy bitterly opposed to the erection of any educational institution, and the prominent burghers who cared for the education of their sons usually sent them to Germany (6). "The arts", says Count de Bray, "were almost unknown in that province during the whole period of the Livonian independence" (7). The only class which were more or less advanced in education and manifested a certain interest for arts, were the citizens of Riga, Dorpat, and Reval (8). But if we consider the glory reached at the same time in the arts and letters by Italy, France, Spain, and

1) *Ibid.*, p. 125; 2) Comte de Bray, *Essai critique sur l'Histoire de la Livonie*, Dorpat, 1817, vol. 2., p. 98; 3) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 2, p. 310; 4) *Ibid.*, p. 304; 5) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 137; 6) O. v. Rutenberg, etc., vol. 2, p. 300; 7) Comte de Bray, *Essai*, etc., vol. 1, p. 251; 8) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 2, p. 316.

other countries, the realm of the Teutonic Knights would appear to us as the most uncivilized and backward place of Europe. It is comprehensible that Walter von Plettenberg who "had grown up and turned grey in the Order" (1) had no predisposition for the arts and made no attempt to promote the intellectual culture of the country. "It did not come into his mind at all", says O. v. Rutenberg, "to work upon the population of cities or upon the mode of living of the gentry by schools, education, and example; he never went beyond the inferior sphere of police regulations . . ." (2). But it is rather surprising that he who was a soldier par excellence, had neglected also the military art and left Livonia after his death almost without any military force. During the long period of peace the Teutons had completely forgotten and lost the military habits. When it became later necessary to prevent the Swedes from landing on the Livonian shore, the Teutonic troops, says Count de Bray, "had such bizarre costumes and irregular equipment that they provoked a universal roar of laughter" (3). The general process of dissolution had touched also the military organization which was the last support of the Teutonic dominion in Livonia.

Owing to this moral and intellectual infirmity, superstition and cruel customs prevailed in Livonia. A trial by fire was still used to settle the legal contests. Although the Pope and the Emperor had repeatedly ordered the abandonment of this cruel medieval form of judicial trial, yet it was maintained and during the rule of Plettenberg often used upon the people (4). Numerous human skeletons which have been found bricked in the walls of the Teutonic castles, cloisters, and churches, are the most significant witnesses left behind of that sombre and atrocious time (5). Only a few of those walled-in people might be admitted to have been the religious fanatics who had freely sentenced themselves to that sort of death. "The great number of the killed", says O. v. Rutenberg, "particularly the numerous skeletons of children, leave no doubt that we have here before us a long line of ruthless acts of murder" (6).

The former masters of Livonia, the Letts and the Esthonians, were reduced to such a state of subjection which was practically not different from that of slavery. The bereavement of their political rights went probably along with the military success of the conquerors. When the resistance of the country was finally broken the dispossession of rights went further, and the inhabitants were given a treatment which did not pay any attention to their human dignity, sanctity of family life, and property. There was no feeling of obligation shown to the Letts who during the whole thirteenth century had faithfully assisted the Germans in conquering the country. The services they rendered were forgotten and the former allies were reduced to the same state of submission and servility (7). It has been found, however, that at the time of Plettenberg the people still had certain rights to property

1) L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., p. 134; 2) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, pp. 290—291; 3) Comte de Bray, Essai, etc., vol. 2, p. 99; 4) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 293; 5) Ibid., p. 301; 6) Ibid., p. 302; 7) Comte de Bray, Essai, etc., vol. 1, p. 112.

and inheritance (1). This circumstance has caused some writers to assert that slavery had taken place in Livonia not during the period of Teutonic supremacy, but under the Polish and Russian rule when also these last rights left to the Letts and the Esthonians were cancelled. But it seems that the said conclusion, based upon the indications found in the juridical documents of that time, does not take in due consideration the general conditions prevailing in Livonia at the Teutonic time. The juridical statements hardly can be admitted to reflect the historical truth. Livonia was a country where the sanctity of right never was observed. O. v. Rutenberg was probably very near to the inner reality of the Livonian life when he said: "The evolution of the legal institutes of Livonia until the time when they received a real validity, may be of interest to the jurists, but it has a very small significance to an historian. The law has only then a high value and even the highest for life when it has also the force to exert its authority and to impose respect for it. There was in Livonia, particularly for the peasants, only one law and it was arbitrary despotism. This law may be mild and human in one case and despotic and atrocious in another: it is the worst of all laws equivalent to lawlessness" (2).

Livonia has been often called in German writings the "earliest German colony" and its loss to the Empire has been bitterly regretted. But this "colonization" was of a peculiar nature and had very little in common with the movement of colonization, for example, on the American continent. The real spiritus movens of the Teutonic enterprise in the Baltic was not the Empire, but the Holy See. Also the German "colonists" did not come to Livonia as settlers and land cultivators who were prepared for a peaceful and hard work. They came there rather as extortioners looking for an opportunity to live from the fortune produced by the toil of others. That exploitative character of the Teutonic "colonization" made it necessary to convert the new Christians of the Baltic into submissive slaves. The Letts and the Esthonians had to accumulate the wealth which permitted the Knights and the prelates to live in opulence. When a war was made upon the Russians or the Lithuanians, or when the civil war broke out, they had to join their respective masters and give up their lives for a cause in which they were in no way concerned: When Livonia was attacked in her turn they were the ones who had to suffer the most from the invading armies, while the Knights took refuge in their castles and strongholds. Owing to these hardships the unfortunate country people began to go over to the cities where better conditions prevailed or to run away anywhere to escape from the Teutonic oppression. But the right of people to look for better living was denied by the Germans. There were issued sharp regulations which forbade the people to change domiciles, and they became glebae adscripti. Those runaway peasants who were captured, were cruelly punished by the Teutons and were often submitted to the trial by fire (3). It seems, however, that the movement never was entirely stopped, for the question of

1) L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., p. 122; 2) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 40; 3) Ibid., pp. 292, 299.

runaway peasants was often discussed at the sessions of the Landtag (1). It might be that by limiting the freedom of movement of people the Germans intended not only to secure their labor for the cultivation of lands, but also to avert the opportunities of organized peasant revolts. The revolutionary movement of the Baltic nations during the Teutonic occupation is still little explored. But various police regulations of the Order which had been directed against the meetings and gatherings of the population and the persistence with which the runaway peasants were persecuted, indicate that the menace of revolt was before the eyes of the Germans (2).

Pursuing the cruel and self-indulgent policy to make submissive slaves of the native population, the Germans were quite consistent from that viewpoint when they did nothing for the education of the people. Ignoble means are required to accomplish an ignoble task. He who has a feeling of human dignity or has become interested in matters relative to civilization, cannot be a perfect slave. The Germans did not need, however, to invent any special methods to pilot the country towards intellectual and moral paralysis. Their own qualities were so well fitted to this purpose that a simple and constant contact with them produced the required effect. So, for example, the chronicles of the sixteenth century also describe in dark colors the moral condition of the Livonian peasants. The latter used to justify their conduct by saying: "But our masters and younkers do exactly the same. Why must it be forbidden to us?", or: "That is an old Livonian custom", etc. (3).

The long Teutonic rule was the greatest historical calamity the Letts had ever met with. It had interrupted their political development, restrained their cultural progress and, by contact with the Teutonic corruption, their morals were most negatively affected. Many qualities of the modern Lettish character might have their origin from that somber period when the sound mentality of the people was impaired by the Teutonic infection. There are, nevertheless, two important facts which prove that the intellectual vigor of the nation had not been broken during the Teutonic slavery. The first is the modern Lettish renaissance which has begun since the middle of the nineteenth century and has led to the foundation of the independent national republic. The second is the rich Lettish folklore which might be regarded as the greatest historical document of the Lettish nation. The folklore contains a great number of wonderful and melancholy songs which relate the feelings, the aspirations and dreams of the oppressed nation under the Teutonic rule. The mutual hatred and contempt which the Teutons and the Letts had for each other, had caused the latter to conceal within themselves their inner life and to maintain a strict reserve against the Germans. These circumstances might explain why two historical sources, the Lettish folklore and the German chronicles, often differ on the description of the Lettish national life and the Lettish moral feelings in past centuries.

The most important event which took place in Livonia during the rule of Plettenberg, was the Protestant Reformation. Already as early

1) L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., p. 122; 2) Comte de Bray, Essai, etc., vol. 1, p. 251; 3) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 305.

as 1521 the disciples of Luther began to teach his doctrine at Riga ⁽¹⁾ where they found many devoted followers. Riga took the lead in the Protestant movement ⁽²⁾ from where it soon spread over the whole country. The cities of Riga, Dorpat, and Reval were joined by the gentry. The latter consisting mostly of the episcopal vassals had strong secular motives of their own to promote the Reformation, for it loosened their dependence from the liege-lords. The Order and the Bishops did not feel strong enough to resist the new movement which gained a firm ground in Livonia and was carried out without any bloodshed at all ⁽³⁾. The Reformation took a still more radical and prompt course in Prussia than in Livonia. "Apostasy" was there committed by Grand Master Albrecht himself who being influenced by Luther, came at last to the sound conclusion that the Teutonic Order as a purely medieval institution had outlived its time. In conformity with the treaty of Cracov on April 8, 1525, the lands of the Order were transformed into a secular duchy of the Polish Crown. Albrecht became Duke of Prussia and the Teutonic Order was dissolved ⁽⁴⁾. Livonia and Prussia were these two countries which did not offer any resistance at all to the Protestant Reformation, and where the new doctrines most rapidly extended its influence ⁽⁵⁾. This was largely due to the predominance of the Teutonic Order in both countries. The medieval régime still prevailing there, contrasted much more with the requirements of modern time, than was the case in other parts of Europe. It also shows that the Teutonic Order which was established for the promotion of Catholicism in the Baltic, had finally achieved the results which were the very opposite to its original vocation. The secularization of the Teutonic Order in Prussia had left a deep impression upon Livonia. The cities, as Riga, Dorpat, and Reval, were highly inclined to follow the step of Duke Albrecht and to transform Livonia into a secular State with a lay Prince at its head ⁽⁶⁾. But this, the only reasonable course left to Livonia, was not followed. Plettenberg was too faithful a veteran of the Order and was at that time too much advanced in age in order to venture upon such a radical renovation.

Meanwhile Lutheranism continued to make progress in Livonia. Margrave William of Brandenburg, a brother of Duke Albrecht of Prussia, obtained the important post of coadjutor at the Archbishopric of Riga, though his evangelical inclinations were well known ⁽⁷⁾. Under his influence many episcopal vassals and even the Knights became Lutherans ⁽⁸⁾. The monks threw off the cowl and settled down as citizens, while the nuns got married ⁽⁹⁾. As soon as the League of Schmalkalden was formed, Riga entered into relations with

¹⁾ L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., p. 127; ²⁾ O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 375; ³⁾ L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., pp. 126, 128; ⁴⁾ De Wal, Histoire, etc., vol. 8, pp. 236—237; ⁵⁾ Ibid., p. 177; ⁶⁾ O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 346; ⁷⁾ L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., p. 139; ⁸⁾ O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 375; ⁹⁾ O. v. Rutenberg quotes in this connection the following old report: "There remained in the Convent of St. Mary Magdalen at Riga only three nuns, for they were more than seventy years old. All young nuns married. It was why at the very moment when the young brides left the cloister, the devil expressed them his felicitations by a thunder-like noise which struck them all with horror" (O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 351).

it and in 1541 finally joined the League (1). The Protestant Reformation had deprived the Teutonic Order of the last ground justifying its existence as a community of militant monks. There were not only no more pagans to be converted to Christianity, but also there were only a few Catholics left over. The Livonian cities and the gentry were two principal classes which had actively participated in promoting Lutheranism in Livonia. The native population, except those who were living in the cities, was not versed in Catholic doctrines and, therefore, the Protestant Reformation remained to it "a business of the masters" (2). "As to the people", says Count de Bray, "they hardly noticed that a change of religion had taken place. Under Catholicism they automatically attended the ceremonies which were not explained and the prayers that were recited in an unknown language . . . The ignorants who directed the people had accustomed them to all sorts of superstitious practices which had a reprehensible similarity to idolatry" (3).

Although the executive power of Plettenberg was considerably limited by the chapters of the Order and other representative bodies of Livonia, yet the great authority he enjoyed had to a certain extent restrained the Livonian internal dissensions. After his death in 1535 the mutual warfare as usual assumed its traditional course. Meanwhile the year of 1551 approached when the long peace which Plettenberg had secured from Russia expired. Since 1533 Russia was ruled by Ivan IV Vasilievitch, called the "Terrible". The Principality of Moskow had reached at that time great strength and extension and prepared itself to take a respectable place among the leading European Powers. Ivan IV emphasized this new position of Russia by changing in 1547 the title of Grand Prince to that of Czar. The Russian policy now paved the way to the Baltic Sea in order to obtain direct communication with Western Europe. As this way was barred by the Livonian rulers, the Czar decided to remove them. The last ten years of the Livonian independence were marked by an active political interest which Russia, Poland, Denmark, and Sweden manifested for this country. It was a time when a sound comprehension of political factors and great diplomatic ability were more than ever required from the Livonian Knights and prelates. Their proceedings proved, however, that they were as little mature for this task as they were for all other duties which the State administration had imposed upon them.

To secure the peace from Russia the Livonians started negotiations which resulted in a new treaty signed at Novgorod in June, 1554. The peace was obtained for a period of fifteen years, but upon conditions which the Livonians found most embarrassing. The Bishopric of Dorpat had to pay Russia a special religious tax for a regular discharge of which the whole country was held responsible. The Russian churches in Livonia were to be restored. A free transit through Livonian territories was required for Russian ambassadors, foreign artists, and tradesmen going to Russia. The Livonian alliance with Poland was

1) *Ibid.*, pp. 378—381; 2) The first book which appeared in the Lettish language was Catechism and it was published only after the Reformation (about 1535);

3) Comte de Bray, *Essai*, etc., vol. 2, p. 93.

considered by Moscow as *casus belli* (1). The Czar had probably intentionally formulated these hard terms believing they would be rejected (2). But the treaty was at last accepted, and in the following year the Master of the Order swore to it in the presence of the Russian Ambassador (3). At the same time the Order entered into secret negotiations with Gustavus Vasa, the King of Sweden, and made with him an offensive alliance against Russia (4). But when the Swedes took the field, the Knights became nervous and refused to join their ally. Indignant at this procedure, Gustavus hastened to terminate the war with Russia by making a peace upon conditions unfavorable to Sweden (5). The Knights had almost simultaneously committed two breaches of treaty. The Teutonic diplomacy had gained two bitter enemies at a time when a faithful ally was urgently wanted.

While, owing to these circumstances, the external situation of Livonia became most critical, another civil war broke out. It led to political complications which made the Russian attack unavoidable. It was mentioned before that Margrave William of Brandenburg was appointed during the rule of Plettenberg coadjutor of the Archbishop of Riga. In 1539 he became Archbishop and, assisted by his brother Duke Albrecht of Prussia (a vassal of the Polish Crown), embraced a policy which prepared the ground for the Polish aspirations to Livonia (6). Contrary to an act of the Livonian Landtag Archbishop William appointed to the position of his coadjutor young Duke of Mecklenburg who in 1555 arrived in Livonia. The Knights saw no other means to overcome this entanglement than that of the sword. The recourse to a new civil war was not prohibited by the critical external situation which expressively forbade it. The arrival of the new coadjutor served as the pretext to open hostilities, and both parties, the Archbishop and the Order, prepared for war. Although there was at that time a strong party within the Order itself which favored the Polish policy of the Archbishop (7), yet the military success was on the side of the Knights. The archiepiscopal castles were taken, his lands plundered, and the Archbishop made prisoner (8). Sigismund Augustus, the King of Poland, seeing his Livonian policy jeopardized, arrived in the summer of 1557 with a strong army at the frontiers of Courland. To notify the Livonians of his presence there, he sent to Fuerstenberg, the Master of the Order, a naked sword (9). This expressive gesture of the Polish King produced the desired effect, and negotiations were started accordingly. Archbishop William was restored to his possessions and the Duke of Mecklenburg recognized as his coadjutor. The fatal issue of the negotiations consisted, however, not in the new humiliation of the Order, but in an offensive and defensive alliance concluded between Livonia and Poland at Posvol on September 14, 1557 (10).

The treaty of Posvol might be regarded as the best witness of the Teutonic political inconsistency and diplomatic inability. It gave no

1) L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., pp. 148—149; O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 429; 2) L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., p. 151; 3) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 429; 4) Ibid., p. 431; 5) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 431; 6) L. Arbusov, Grundriss etc., p. 149; 7) Ibid.; 8) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 437; 9) Ibid., p. 438; 10) L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., p. 150.

advantage to Livonia, but was connected with most obvious calamities. Only two years before the Knights had solemnly pledged their oath to the Czar to observe the terms of the treaty concluded at Novgorod. Shortly after they had broken the spirit of the treaty by making a military alliance with Sweden. Now at Posvol they had literally violated the treaty of Novgorod which regarded the Livonian alliance with Poland as *casus belli*. An attempt had been made, however, to avoid the consequences which arose from the treaty of Novgorod. It was stipulated that the treaty of Posvol would come into force only after twelve years when the treaty of Novgorod expired (1). But this sophistry of the Teutons still aggravated the situation of Livonia. It could not reduce the effect of the challenge given to the Czar who was glad of any plausible pretext justifying his warfare against Livonia. At the same time the Poles were not obliged to assist the Knights if they should be attacked by the Russians before the date when the treaty of Posvol would come into force (2). Besides, Poland and Lithuania were at that time at peace with Russia in conformity with a treaty which expired only five years after the agreement of Posvol (3). Consequently, during the period which ended with the final collapse of Livonia, the Poles were bound by a treaty with Russia to abstain from lending any military assistance to the Knights.

It might be supposed that the disastrous agreement at Posvol was not due so much to the Livonian simplicity as to the Polish malignity. The Poles at Posvol were in the position to dictate the terms of the treaty, and the Polish politicians might have been anxious to precipitate the collapse of Livonia by involving her in war with Russia. But had such been the Polish diplomacy, it was the task of the Livonian diplomats, if they were equal to it, to thwart the Polish machiavellism. But probably this was not the case. The King of Poland came to Livonia to restore the situation of the polonophile party led by Archbishop William. It was achieved by another treaty signed at Posvol on September 5, 1557, i. e. nine days before the date when the military alliance was concluded (4). Realizing the complete isolation of Livonia, it would have rather been the Knights than the Poles who had insisted upon signing the treaty of alliance. There are many indications which prove that the Livonians were well cognizant of the danger which menaced them from Moscow. The feeling of danger was prevailing throughout the country. A good many of prelates, Knights, and gentry were at that time nervously engaged in selling their estates to the highest bidder and, as soon as money was received, they made haste to return to Westphalia (5). Some historians even see in the panic of the Westphalians who fled from Livonia, like rats deserting a ship in distress, one of the chief circumstances which led to the general catastrophe (6). That, nevertheless, the internal dissensions and intrigues still continued and the foreign policy went from bad to worse, is a significant attestation of the poor intellectuality which had always

1) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 150; 2) The passive attitude of Poland during the Russian invasion which did not fail to follow the treaty of Posvol, proved that such was the interpretation the Poles had given to that treaty; 3) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 151; 4) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol., 2, p. 438; 5) *Ibid.*, pp. 412, 427; 6) *Ibid.*, p. 517.

distinguished the Teutonic Knights and monks during their rule in Livonia.

However eager Ivan IV might have been to occupy Livonia, he was restrained by a certain sense of legality. Having become the ruler of Russia in 1533, he respected until 1551 the treaties which the previous Grand Princes had made with Livonia. In 1554 he assented to another treaty of peace, but it was broken by the Knights. The Czar had now legal ground to attack Livonia and he hastened to make use of it. At the end of 1557 the Czar sent the Knights a formal declaration of war in which he reproached the Teutonic perfidy and violation of the "Laws of God" and promised to "visit" the Knights in Livonia (1). In January 1558 the first invasion of a strong Russian army took place which crossed the country ravaging with fire and sword everything that it encountered. That which it met with was no one but the unfortunate people, for the Knights did not offer any resistance at all to the Russians (2). The Livonian military organization was at that time as decomposed as all other Teutonic institutions. The fighting force which the Knights and Bishops had was perhaps good enough for civil wars in which it was mostly trained, but it was entirely unable to resist a foreign enemy. The mercenaries raised in Germany were not reliable and often revolted when the pay was postponed (3). Livonia was practically defenseless. When the Czar ascertained the Livonian weakness, he threw one army after another in Livonia. The cruelties and destruction dealt by the Czar's armies which were joined by a large number of Tatars, fully justified the surname "The Terrible" which History has given to that sovereign. The Knights not only avoided a meeting with the Russians in the field, but even surrendered many castles without any attempt to defend them (4). In the summer of 1558 the city of Dorpat also capitulated before the invaders. All Livonian efforts to obtain any peace proved futile. The Czar insisted upon a complete submission of Livonia under the Russian sovereignty (5).

The conquest policy of the Czar did not go along with the military success of his armies. The city of Dorpat and the eastern part of Esthonia which the Russians possessed at the end of 1558, was the only acquisition they gained from the Livonian collapse achieved by their force. Formidable incursions throughout the country were often repeated, but the Czar made no haste with the permanent occupation of it. Owing to this indecisive policy the Livonian independence dragged on for another couple of years. Livonia applied for help everywhere, but no one was eager to support her independence. In 1558 three delegations were dispatched to the King of Poland, but he gave them to understand that the Polish armies would defend only Polish territories, and left the Livonians to draw a proper conclusion from it (6). Another delegation went to Sweden, but Gustavus Vasa had not forgotten the Teutonic perfidy and refused to deal with the Order. In Germany there was only one institution which practically did anything for Livonia, and it was the Imperial Chancelry. Letters were

1) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 2, p. 443; 2) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss*, etc., p. 153; 3) *Ibid.*, p. 160; 4) *Ibid.*, p. 155; 5) *Ibid.*; 6) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte*, etc., vol. 2, p. 474.

dispatched to the Czar (1), Denmark, Sweden, Poland, and even to Spain and England. But no assistance was secured by that busy correspondence. "The Empire", says L. Arbusov, "had done nothing; its diplomatic mediation was more detrimental than useful; and thus the Empire had lost its earliest oversea colony" (2).

Under these conditions it became obvious that the Livonian independence could not be maintained. The only task left for the Livonian rulers and diplomats was to prevent the dismemberment of the country and to submit it as a whole under the sovereignty of a strong foreign State. But Livonia had never been a politically united community, and up to the last moment she faithfully observed that fractionary tradition of hers. Three powers, Denmark, Sweden and Poland, entered into an active competition with each other to secure the greatest portion of Livonia, and they all found among the Livonian fractions correspondent agents to foster their aspirations. The least active of these powers was Sweden. This modesty of Sweden might be historically regretted. As far as the civilization and the general welfare of the country were concerned, the best issue would have been to submit the whole of Livonia under the humane and bright rule of the dynasty of Vasa.

Without fighting and valor Livonia went to pieces as decays an organism paralyzed by long and grave disease. Russia was the first that despoiled Livonia of Dorpat and Eastern Esthonia, while other Livonian territories slipped through the fingers of the Czar. The next power was Denmark which tried to restore her former possessions in Esthonia. But the negotiations which Denmark assumed with Moscow and Reval proved unsuccessful (3). Gustavus Vasa had already established in 1535 good relations with Esthonia (4), and the city of Reval and the Esthonian vassals became more and more inclined toward a political union with Sweden. The Danish aspirations were, however, to a certain extent satisfied by the Bishop of Oesel and Pilten who was eager to sell his estates and to return to Westphalia (5). This transaction was concluded in September 1559, and in April of the following year Duke Magnus of Holstein, the brother of the Danish King, arrived in Livonia and took over his new possessions (6). The exemption of large territories from Livonian sovereignty by a commercial transaction is significant not only for the general weakness of Livonia at that time, but also shows how independent were the Livonian rulers and how loose were the bonds which politically united them. The action taken by Sweden was well concerted with the city of Reval and the Esthonian vassals. In March 1561 the Swedish Field-marshal Claus arrived with some warships at Reval and accomplished the final submission of Esthonia under the sovereignty of the King of the Sweden. On June 4, 1561, the respective documents were signed and the country took oath of allegiance to its new sovereign (7).

1) The Czar answered to the Emperor that the important matters should no be discussed through courriers (O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 475); 2) L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., p. 152; 3) Ibid., p. 157; 4) Ibid., p. 145; 5) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 475; 6) L. Arbusov, Grundriss, etc., p. 160; 7) O. v. Rutenberg, Geschichte, etc., vol. 2, p. 499.

In the general competition for Livonian territories Poland was the most successful power and seized the lion's share. The Polish success was chiefly due to the active and often unscrupulous diplomacy of King Sigismund. As was stated before a strong polonophile party led by Archbishop William was established in Livonia and was supported by Polish arms against the aggression of the Order. But since the summer of 1558 important changes took place within the Order, and it, too, soon became a sort of Polish affiliation in Livonia. In July 1558 Gotthard Kettler whose Polish tendencies were well known, was appointed coadjutor of the Master of the Order (1). A year later Kettler forced Master Fuerstenberg to give up his post and became Master of the Order himself (2). Both of the most influential Livonian rulers, the Archbishop of Riga and the Master of the Order, were now favorably inclined toward Poland, and the submission of Livonia under the Polish sovereignty was practically decided. In the autumn of 1559 Kettler and Archbishop William signed at Vilna important treaties with King Sigismund. Large Livonian territories were ceded to Poland as security for the protection of the whole country against the Russians which the King promised (3). But when shortly after the Russians renewed incursions into Livonia, King Sigismund protected only those territories which were pledged to him, and left all other parts of Livonia exposed to the ravage of the Russians. The Livonians entreated the King to fulfil his promises given at Vilna. But the King remembered now that the treaty between Poland and Russia would expire only in 1562, and he, therefore, regretted his inability to help Livonia before that date (4). The King expressed, however, his readiness to take over still other Livonian territories and to protect them accordingly (5).

It was obvious that the King of Poland, fearing to become overreached by the Czar and the Swedes, made haste with the final submission of Livonia. In October, 1561, the negotiations began to this end at Vilna, and on November 28 the treaties of submission (*Pacta Subjectionis*) were signed. Courland became a duchy which thenceforth Kettler held in fief from the Polish King, while the remaining Livonian territories were directly incorporated into Poland. All the rights and privileges the Germans had enjoyed in Livonia were confirmed by the King in a special document called *Privilegium Sigismundi Augusti* (6). This was the final dismemberment of Livonia, the various parts of which were now submitted under the Russian, Danish, Swedish, and Polish sovereignty. Riga alone maintained for another twenty years its independent position of a free Imperial city. On March 5, 1562, Duke Kettler of Courland, Archbishop William of Riga, and their vassals swore allegiance to their new sovereign, King Sigismund of Poland. At the same date the Livonia branch of the Teutonic Order was dissolved (7).

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The Teutonic history as a whole is but one particular example illustrating the cases where the great historical movements and the leading ideas of the time were dishonored by the people pursuing the

1) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss, etc.*, pp. 154—155; 2) *Ibid.*, p. 158; 3) O. v. Rutenberg, *Geschichte, etc.*, vol. 2, p. 477; 4) *Ibid.*, p. 482; 5) *Ibid.*; 6) L. Arbusov, *Grundriss, etc.*, p. 164; 7) *Ibid.*

self-indulgent aims of their own. The advance of Christianity and the crusading spirit of Medieval Europe were the two principal factors which constituted the historical background of the Teutonic enterprise in the Baltic. The power and influence which both these factors possessed, were misappropriated and profaned by unscrupulous adventurers and monks who, closely assisted by the ambitious Popes and industrious merchants, imposed for their common avails the rule of extortion and oppression upon the Letts and other inhabitants of the Baltic. But the main force of such people usually consists in destruction and negative acceleration of events, while the creative work of civilization requiring a judicious disposition of mind and persistent efforts of will, is out of the sphere of their action. It is why the Teutonic Knights were successful only in the thirteenth century when they were engaged in a purely destructive work, i. e. in exterminating the native population and in reducing it to slavery. But they entirely failed in accomplishing the political, social, and cultural tasks which their position of masters imposed upon them. The inglorious end of the Teutonic independence was but a historical consequence in which the whole period of their inglorious existence necessarily resulted.

The collapse of the Teutonic independence did not, however, coincide with the end of the Teutonic rule in Latvia. During the three centuries that followed the sovereignty of the country was several times changed and given over by the Poles to the Swedes and by the latter to the Russians. But the Teutons were elastic enough to adopt themselves to every political régime and, having maintained their rights and privileges, continued to exercise their unlimited authority over the people and its property. Even before the Great War a few hundreds of German barons still held in their hands the half of all Lettish lands and estates. It was but quite recently that the last act of the long historical struggle between the Teutons and the Letts took place. On September 16, 1920, the Latvian Parliament (Saeima) passed a law determining a maximum of land possession permitted to every citizen of Latvia regardless of his nationality. All lands exceeding the said maximum were taken over by the State which distributed them among a large number of landless people eager to settle down as farmers and land proprietors of their own. The act of the Latvian Parliament might be regarded as a just redress of historical wrong caused to the nation by the Teutonic invasion in the thirteenth century. No Teutonic spirit of oppression or revenge could be traced in that legislative measure, for the German barons were granted exactly the same rights to land possession and cultivation which the Law admitted to the Letts and other citizens of Latvia.

There are German scholars, like H. v. Bruiningk, who assert that the course of events which took place in Latvia since the beginning of the thirteenth century, was historically the best issue for the Letts in that international environment which surrounded them. Under the historical circumstances which prevailed at that time, the loss of the Lettish liberty was foredoomed. If it were not the Teutons, then the Russians would have subdued the Letts, and the masses of Russian colonists penetrating into Latvia would have entirely denationalized and assimilated the native population. Therefore, the Teutonic occupation, whatever its cruelties and hardships might have been, was

the only historical possibility which had enabled the Letts to preserve at least their nationality (1). According to these German scholars it appears that the Teutonic oppression has saved the Lettish national integrity, and that the Letts, consequently, should even be grateful to the Teutonic Knights for all the crimes, humiliation, and oppression they had committed and imposed upon the people during the long past centuries.

We do not think, however, that the Lettish nation has contracted such a moral indebtedness towards the brutal masters of its past. Owing to the particular nature of its subject the science of history has no definite laws (2) which might enable us to foresee the course of events in the future or to state what that course would have been in the past. Therefore, the said assertions of German scholars possess no more scientific value than all other historical hypotheses which might be formed on the subject. Consequently, these assertions are far from possessing the apodictical character which they pretend to have.

But they do not even contain that degree of probability which distinguishes a scientific hypothesis from a vague conjecture. It is highly improbable that the Letts were confronted in the thirteenth century with a historical alternative which left to them no other choice than either to be subdued by the Teutonic Knights or by the Russians. The examination of the political situation of that time authorizes us to assume that the occupation of Latvia by the Russians was not at all an unavoidable historical consequence if the Teutonic conquest would not have taken place. We saw above that the Russian expansion in the eleventh century led by Grand Prince Yaroslav was successfully resisted by the inhabitants of the Baltic. After the death of that Prince in 1054 Russia became divided into numerous small principalities. Their mutual warfare as well as the conquest of Russia by the Tatars in the beginning of the thirteenth century postponed the Russian westward expansion until the end of the fifteenth century. When Bishop Albert and his Knights began the conquest of Livonia, such Lettish tribes as Zemgilians and Kuronians, were entirely independent from any political influence of the Russians. The vague claims of sovereignty which the Russian Princes of Polotsk and Pskov pretended to have in regard to the Letts, the Livs, and the Selonians, indicates that also these nations were practically independent. In any event, that loose political dependence was not an obstacle which could have stopped their gradual development into independent political communities. For the reasons mentioned above no strong Russian pressure was exercised upon the Baltic until the end of the fifteenth century. Had it been done, the Teutons being enfeebled by their perpetual civil war, would have collapsed long before the middle of the sixteenth century.

1) H. v. Bruiningk, *Livlaendichse Rueckschau*, Dorpat, 1879, p. 11, quoted according to A. Svabe, *Latvju kulturas vesture* (Lettish), vol. 1, part 2, p. 93. — Under the influence of these German assertions the same view on Lettish historical destinies is also held by the Lettish researcher A. Svabe (*Ibid.*); 2) Ernst Bernheim, *Lehrbuch der historischen Methode und der Geschichtsphilosophie*, Leipzig, 1903, p. 141.

Had the Teutonic invasion been postponed for some time, it is very probable that it would have been rather the Scandinavians than the Russians who would have become the masters of the Baltic. We mentioned in our narrative the great interest which the Danes and the Swedes took in the Baltic during the period when Bishop Albert and his Knights were engaged in subduing the Letts, the Livs, and the Esthonians. The Danish King Valdemar II (1202—1241) pursued a most active policy of eastward expansion. Regardless of the Teutonic presence in Livonia, he secured for himself Esthonia and very unwillingly gave up his claims to Latvia. Valdemar II who was strong enough to extend his authority over the Wendish cities and the southern shore of the Baltic Sea, had, of course, much more effective means than Bishop Albert to accomplish also the conquest of the Baltic, had the Teutons not anticipated it. The Letts, having become associated with the Scandinavian nations and their civilization, would probably have had a much more human and dignified past than they had under the brutal oppression of the Teutons.

There was in the thirteenth century still another political possibility which might have favorably affected the historical destinies of the Lettish nation. We saw above that the Lithuanians who were at the beginning of the Teutonic occupation politically as much splitted as the Letts were, succeeded, however, within a few decades in forming a powerful State under the leadership of Grand Duke Mindaugas. Considering the close national affinity between the Letts and the Lithuanians, which was at that time still more pronounced than it is now, it is probable that the process of their political formation would have resulted in uniting both nations under one rule. Having a strong national basis, the Letto-Lithuanian State might have prevented the final extermination of the Old Prussians as well as the loss of the Lithuanian independence on account of their political union with Poland. But this political possibility, too, was thwarted by the Teutonic occupation which inaugurated the most unfortunate and lurid period in the history of the Lettish nation. —

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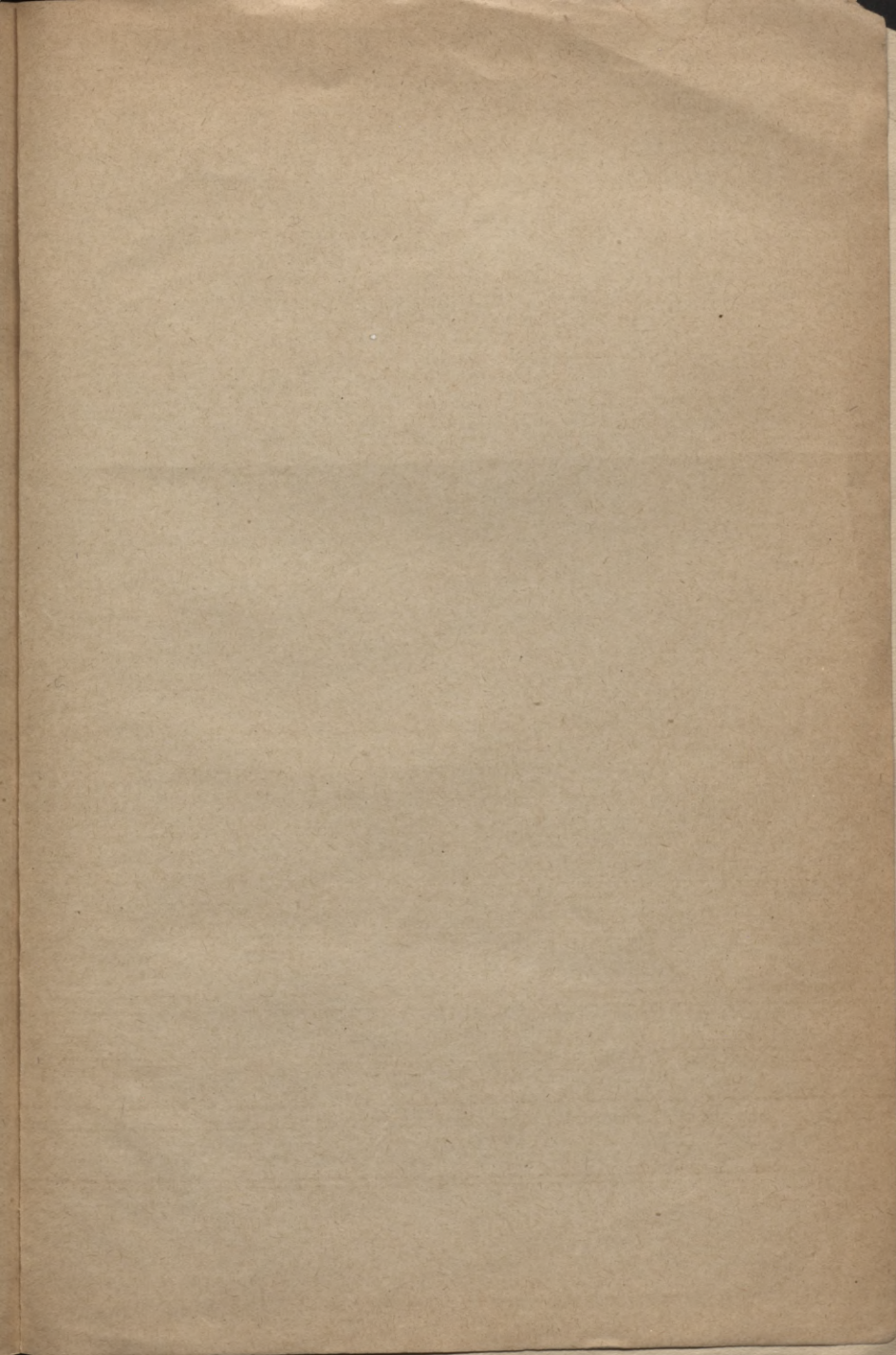
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