

by means of a separate peace with Austria. But even if the Hohenzollern were not the saviors of the Reformation, they certainly were its beneficiaries. Even though they hadn't the least ambition to fight for the cause of the Reformation, they were only too willing, and in fact eager, to commit plunder in its name. The Reformation, to them, was merely a religious pretext for secularizing church property, and the greatest part of their conquests in the 16th and 17th centuries can be traced back to a single great source: the blunder of the church, a further curious emanation of Divine Right.

In the genesis of the Hohenzollern monarchy, three events stand out prominently: the acquisition of the Electorate of Brandenburg, the addition of the Dukedom of Prussia, and finally the elevation from a Duchy to a Monarchy. We have seen how the acquisition of the electorate was accomplished. The Dukedom of Prussia was acquired by the following three measures: first, through secularisation; secondly, by marriage, and moreover, in an equivocal manner: the Elector Joachim Frederick married the younger daughter, and his son, John Sigismund, married the older daughter of the insane Duke Albrecht of Prussia, who had no male heirs. The third measure was bribery. And, moreover, he bribed the court of the Polish king on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the parliament of the Polish republic. The corruption was full of complications and lasted a number of years. A similar method was used to convert the Prussian Dukedom into a monarchy. In order to obtain the royal title, the Elector Frederick II., who subsequently became King Frederick I., had to secure the consent of the Emperor, whose Catholic conscience, however, was an obstruction. Frederick thereupon bribed the Jesuit father Wolf, the confessor of Leopold I., and added in trade 30,000 sons of Brandenburg who were slaughtered in the Austro-Spanish war of the Succession. The Hohenzollern Elector went back to the old Germanic institution of employing living beings as money, save for the difference that the Germans of old paid with cattle, and he with

human beings. Thus it was that the Kingdom of the Hohenzollern was founded by the grace of God.

From the beginning of the 18th century, as the power of the Hohenzollern grew, they improved their methods of expansion; in addition to bribing and bargaining, they also used the system of division of spoils by partnership with confederates, against countries which they themselves had not defeated, but which they plundered after defeat. Thus we see them, together with Peter the Great, partitioning the Swedish provinces, and with Catharine II. taking part in the partition of Poland, and with Alexander I. in that of Germany.

Whoever, therefore, opposes the claims of Prussia to Neuenburg by contending that the Hohenzollern acquired them by bribery, commits a grievous error. He quite forgets that Brandenburg as well, and Prussia, and the royal title were obtained purely by bribery. No doubt they possess Neuenburg by the same Divine Right as their other territory, and they cannot waive the former without risking the latter.