

**EXPERIENCES OF A
DIPLOMATIST, BEING
RECOLLECTIONS OF GERMANY,
FOUNDED ON DIARIES KEPT
DURING THE YEARS 1840-1870**

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Experiences of a diplomatist, being recollections of Germany, founded on diaries kept during the years 1840-1870 by John Ward

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JOHN WARD

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EXPERIENCES OF A DIPLOMATIST.

WARD.



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1840—1870.

BY

JOHN WARD, C.B.

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PREFACE.

THIS little work is scarcely one of those which require an introduction, for it is no more than a narrative of scenes and events which have passed under my observation in the course of a long residence abroad in an official capacity.

When I retired from active service I soon began to miss the regular occupations to which I had been accustomed, and I bethought myself of the advice given by Horace Walpole to Madame du Deffand, when she complained of *ennui*, not to be always reading, but to amuse herself with writing down the recollections of what she had seen. 'But why be constantly reading? Why not write something? It is more interesting. Write down then what you have seen, and, even if you are not contented with it, it will be pretty sure to amuse somebody else. My friend Mr. Gray says that if any one would only be satisfied with stating exactly what he has seen, without preparation, without ornament, without trying to shine, he would have more readers than the best authors¹.'

I pretend then to no other merit than that of having related faithfully what I have seen and heard. As to my opinions, they may be deemed right or wrong; but none have been expressed without serious reflection, and a deep sense of the duty of speaking plainly where one speaks at all.

¹ Lettres de la Marquise du Deffand. Paris, 1812. Tome ii. p. 300.

If I have not scrupled to censure the violence with which the Prussian government has extinguished the independence of so many German states, I am not blind to the benefits which may eventually accrue to the nation from the establishment of the new Germanic empire under the Prussian lead. Prince Bismarck may be regarded as the instrument of a higher power, whose work, even against his own wishes, must tend to the ultimate realization of national unity, and constitutional liberty, by the German people.

It may appear to some that I have undervalued the importance of the diplomatic profession ; and I have not certainly rated its general utility as very high. But this circumstance does not interfere with my respect for individual members of that profession, many of whom I have learned to know, and entertain towards them feelings of sincere esteem and personal regard.

DOVER, *December 31st*, 1871.

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