

**A SKETCH OF THE GERMAN
CONSTITUTION AND OF
THE EVENTS IN GERMANY
FROM 1815 TO 1871**

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A Sketch of the German Constitution and of the Events in Germany from 1815 to 1871 by A. Nicolson

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THE
GERMAN CONSTITUTION

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OF THE
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FROM 1815 TO 1871



BY
John
A. NICOLSON *Carrock*
THIRD SECRETARY IN HER MAJESTY'S EMBASSY AT BERLIN

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1875

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PREFACE.

IN placing before the public this sketch of the Constitution of the German Empire, I by no means lay claim to having done adequate justice to so important a subject. My object has been merely to give English readers some idea of how a country, holding so prominent a position in Europe, is governed. Germany now occupies so much the attention of public men in all countries, that I thought a short explanation of the form of its Constitution might be acceptable to those who have neither the leisure nor the inclination to wade through the elaborate works which German writers have published on the subject. To those who are anxious to acquire a thorough knowledge of the Constitution I would recommend the following books for perusal: 'Das Verfassungsrecht des Deutschen Reiches,' by Rönne; 'Die Verfassung des Deutschen Reiches,' by Von der Heydt; 'Das Verfassungsrecht des Norddeutschen Bundes,' by Thudichum; 'Die

Verwaltungseinrichtungen in Elsass-Löthringen,' and 'Die Annalen des Deutschen Reiches,' by Hirth.

To render the origin of the Constitution, and the cause which led to its establishment, clear to my readers, I found it necessary to give a rapid survey of the events which occurred in Germany from the year 1815 to the year 1871, and to avoid a break in the narrative I placed the sketch of the Constitution of 1867 after the chapter on the events from 1867-1871, though, chronologically speaking, it should have preceded it. The present Constitution is, with a few exceptions, identic with that of 1867; I have therefore devoted more space to the former, and then pointed out the alterations which were rendered necessary by the admission of the South German States into the North German Confederation, and by the transformation of the latter into the German Empire. I must, therefore, beg my readers to remember that in reading of the Constitution of 1867, they have the present Constitution before them, and not to imagine that, because I have been compelled to use the past tense throughout, the Constitution has been in any way altered, except in the instances which are afterwards mentioned.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction—The Federal Act of 1815—The Diet—The Plenum Court of Austrálgal Instanz—Representative Assemblies—Article XI. of Federal Act—Meeting of the Diet—Congress of Carlsbad— Final Act of Vienna—Revolt in Brunswick—Sympathy with the Polish Revolution—Conferences at Vienna—Camp at Kalisch . . .	PAGE 1
---	-----------

CHAPTER II.

Meetings in Baden—The 'Vor Parliament'—Dissolution of the Diet—Revolt in Baden—Plans for a New Constitution—Election of Emperor—Refusal of King of Prussia to accept Imperial Crown—Appointment of Particularist Ministry—Resignation of Members of Parliament—Three Kings' Alliance—Meeting of the Old Diet—Results of the Revolution of 1848	21
---	----

CHAPTER III.

Results of the Revolution of 1848—Three Great Questions—The Slesvig-Holstein Question—Reform of the Constitution—Congress of Sovereigns at Frankfort	38
--	----

CHAPTER IV.

Austria's Position—Differences between Austria and Prussia—Gaa- stein Convention—Difficulties in the Duchies—European Powers endeavour to preserve peace—Entry of Prussian troops into Hol- stein—Dissolution of the Diet—Commencement of hostilities— Treaty of Prague	54
---	----

CHAPTER V.

	PAGE
Armistice of Nickolsburg—Treaty of Prague—The new Constitution—The South German States—The annexed provinces—The Luxemburg question—The reorganisation of Germany—Establishment of the German Empire	80

CHAPTER VI.

Laws of Central Power—Charter of the Constitution—Presidency of the Confederation—The Federal Council—Federal Court of Appeal—The Reichstag—Electoral Law—Railways and Finances—The Revenue of the Confederation—The Customs Union—The Constitutions of 1871	84
--	----