

Liberal and Unionist opinion. For this the Italian policy of Napoleon III. was primarily responsible. A policy ultimately more injurious to France could scarcely have been conceived. After having promised the liberation of Italy "from the Alps to the Adriatic," the liberator first opposed the emancipation of the Central States, then exacted the cession of Nice and Savoy as the price of his complaisance! Apart from the effects of this usurious policy upon Italian opinion, it alarmed all Europe, which envisaged a new epoch of Napoleonic conquests. An attack on the Rhine provinces was confidently expected; it is probable that only the lack of accord between Prussia and Austria prevented German intervention in the war. But the Viennese Government preferred to lose Lombardy rather than allow its rival to take the lead in the Confederation. Fear is a great stimulator of patriotic emotion; the Germans were afraid, and the anarchic condition of their Government attracted proportionate hostility. Economic development pointed the same way; commerce and industry were increasing, and swelled the urban population; the restrictions imposed upon this development by the multitude of frontier-lines aggravated political discontent. One product of these diverse forces was the formation of the "National Association," which revived and propagated the programme of the old Liberal majority in the Frankfort Parliament: Unity under the leadership of Prussia. Another was the election of a Liberal majority in the Prussian Diet.

Two policies thus found themselves confronted. Was Prussia to advance along the lines of normal constitutional progress, establish Parliamentary government, and thus win a moral hegemony over Germany which must sooner or later find political expression? This had been the policy