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978-1-107-58575-1 - Europe in The xix Century (1815-1914)

John E. Morris

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EUROPE
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by

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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

My purpose has been to give such details of the great events since Waterloo that the general reader and the student may be able to attach some value to such names as Navarino, Magenta, Sadowa, Sedan, Plevna. After experience of a great war it should be needless to apologise for writing about past wars, the success which attends determination and preparation, the feebleness of alternate bluff and non-interference. But I trust that the importance of *les idées* has not been lost. The First French Revolution tried to express "the rights of man"; the Republic at first defended and then sought to spread, in defiance of all crowned heads, these same "rights"; very soon the "idea" of conquest and glory for France's own sake eclipsed all else. Even so the "ideas" of National Unity and of Self-Determination, though the word was not yet invented, dominated Europe in the middle of the 19th century; yet "glory" still played its part. Therefore to see how ideas can be realised it is necessary to show how they have been realised, namely by war.

I maintain against some critics that I have rightly written "Napoleon III's Second Decade" to Chapter VI. Bismarck is, of course, the central figure, but he had his chance just because Napoleon was so feeble. It was not so much what the one did as what the other failed to do that influenced Europe. We see this now very clearly. We believe in Self-Determination, and Napoleon's mind

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swung between the *idée* of glory and the *idée* of helping those who would be free, so that the man who believed solely in the *idée* of German Unity under the coercive power of Prussia was able to crush each power that wanted to determine its own future.

Since 1914 I have been much struck by the present generation's ignorance of Carlyle's influence. Yet he is almost worshipped to-day in Germany, and Hertling quoted him recently as justifying Germany's retention of Alsace and Lorraine. It is impossible to deny that his was the mind that, at the same time when Palmerston was finding out Napoleon and unwilling to cooperate with him, made us pro-Germans in those critical sixties; at least he influenced educated minds, and in that decade blind uneducated jingoism was not a strong factor in the political world. There was, indeed, much excited talk against Prussia in 1864 and 1866. But Carlyle wrote that it "will go altogether as soon as knowledge of the matter is had," and it did go. So we grew to admire the strong man. Too late we saw that a new strong man, developed on Carlylean lines, really meant something when he talked about "the mailed fist."

So we come back to our main fact. The Crimean *entente* faded away because we could not trust Napoleon III; we looked on France with distorted vision after 1870; and it was only after a long period of blind anti-Russianism, while France and Russia were drawing near together, that we learnt the wisdom of a better *entente* with the Third Republic. And even then neither statesmen nor people knew enough Latin to translate *si vis pacem para bellum*.

In this edition a few pages have been added to carry the reader from the Berlin Congress to the murder of

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the Crown Prince of Austria in 1914. Throughout I have aimed at preserving chronological sequence, so as to show how German Unity and Italian Unity and other movements advanced together; if each movement has its own chapter the mind is apt to lose the sense of cause and effect as between different nations.

J. E. M.

BEDFORD,

February 1919.

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