

**THE FRANCO-  
GERMAN WAR OF  
1870; PP. 5-125**

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GRACEHILL  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.  
1872

Denmark. At this point, Prussia and Austria, thrusting aside the minor States, formed an alliance and commenced the war on their own account. The Danes resisted heroically, but in vain. They had hoped for the assistance of England and France, in which countries the popular feeling was favorable to their cause. The sympathy in England for the Danes was doubtless due, in a great measure, to the fact that the eldest daughter of the new King of Denmark had but recently married the Prince of Wales, and she at once became extremely popular in her adopted country. But as the Crown Prince of Prussia had some years before married the eldest daughter of Queen Victoria, and as his eldest son, the prospective King of Prussia, is the eldest grandson of that queen, it may be considered doubtful whether the Queen of England would regard the aggrandizement of Prussia at the expense of Denmark in the same light as the Princess of Wales. In

any case, the French and English Governments were desirous of preserving the peace for themselves ; and the Danes, left unaided, were compelled to yield to superior numbers, and to cede, not only Holstein, but also Schleswig, to the enemy. Thus Germany, after clamoring to free Holstein, a German-speaking country, from the Danish yoke, did not hesitate to impose the German yoke on Schleswig, a country inhabited by a Danish people, speaking the Danish language. The wrong, too, was inflicted by a powerful State on a weak neighbor, unable to resist.

But Prussia, ever since the accession of King William, has, in reality, been governed by his Premier, Count Bismarck, a bold and able, though unscrupulous man, whose chief object appears to be the aggrandizement of Prussia, which he would seek to accomplish by fair means or foul, and whose only thought would seem to be, how he may most firmly secure her ac-

quisitions. He has, accordingly, been very unpopular, personally, both in and out of Germany, though his success in uniting Germany has caused considerable abatement of the feeling against him in that country.

The understanding between Prussia and Austria had been that the spoils acquired from Denmark should be equally divided between them. But, as often happens in such cases, having accomplished their object the parties disagreed as to the division of the spoils. The lust of conquest has always stained the character of the Prussian Government, as Prussian history shows ; and Count Bismarck far from abandoning the policy of territorial acquisition, seems to have made it a cardinal point of his administration.

This dispute finally resulted in the War of 1866. The war lasted less than a fortnight ; and its shortness and consequences excited universal astonishment in Europe. Within this fortnight, the political face of Germany



was changed. Austria, which had been for centuries, the leading State of Germany, and which was esteemed a first-class Power, was signally defeated by Prussia (a comparatively new State,) and excluded from the affairs of the Confederation. New territory was added to Prussia, and Germany, with the exception of Austria, was formed into two confederations, as stated above. Part of the territory annexed to Prussia was Hanover, whose king, George V. (grandson of George III., King of both England and Hanover), unfortunately for himself, sided with Austria in this war, and lost his dominions in consequence. This war, it will be seen, increased the power of Prussia, as she became territorially and politically the leading State of Germany, and, indeed, one of the leading Powers of Europe. Her victory over Austria, though it took the world by surprise, was in reality quite natural. Austria was composed of several distinct nationalities, speaking

different languages, and which, though under the same sovereign, were united by no common bond. Prussia, however, is inhabited, principally, by a population descended from a common stock with identical interests. The provinces she acquired in the partition of Poland would appear to be united and in complete harmony with the rest of Prussia. Her successes are also due to the excellency of her military institutions. Every man is something of a soldier, and liable to take the field in case of necessity.

Another result of the War of 1866 was the acquisition of Venice by Italy. Ever since the days of the Roman Empire, Italy had been divided into several independent States, at one time feudatory to the German Empire, but which in the Middle Ages became the seats of several famous republics, and the scenes of numberless wars. Italy remained divided until the movement of 1859 united the whole peninsula into one

kingdom, with the exception of Rome and of the adjacent territory, which remained under the temporal sovereignty of the Pope: and of Venice, which had been an Austrian province ever since the days of the first Napoleon, and which was not taken from Austria at the same time as Lombardy, which, with the aid of France, Sardinia wrested from that monarchy in 1859. A general movement at that time throughout Italy united the greater part of the peninsula to the dominions of the Sardinian monarch (Victor Emmanuel) who thenceforth assumed the title of King of Italy. By allying herself with Prussia against Austria in 1866, Italy acquired Venice, which was ceded to her at the end of the war; and she thus only needed the remains of the Papal dominions to complete the political unity of the peninsula. The continued occupation of Rome by Napoleon III. prevented the immediate union of the city of Rome to the Italian kingdom; though it was evi-