

**A POLITICAL AND
MILITARY REVIEW
OF THE AUSTRO-ITALIAN
WAR OF 1866**

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A Political and Military Review of the Austro-Italian War of 1866 by W. J. Wyatt

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W. J. WYATT

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A
POLITICAL AND MILITARY REVIEW
OF THE
AUSTRO-ITALIAN WAR OF 1866,
WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE
GARIBALDIAN EXPEDITION TO THE TYROL,
A REVIEW OF THE FUTURE POLICY OF ITALY,
AND
HER PRESENT FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.

BY
CAPT. W. J. WYATT,
(UNATTACHED)
FORMERLY OF THE RADETSKY HUSSARS.



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246. e. 62.

P R E F A C E.

A PERSONAL acquaintance with many of the scenes herein described, must be the author's apology for submitting his impressions to the criticism of the public; besides which, the sources from which the materials for this Review have been derived, are connected with a personal knowledge of the Italian territory, and a long residence in Austria, during and subsequent to the late War. The author has also availed himself of the best military reports which have emanated from the respective belligerent powers; and he cannot deprive himself of the opportunity to express his sincere gratitude for the unbounded hospitality and kindness shown to him, by His Imperial Highness the Archduke Albrecht during the period he was temporarily attached to his staff, and also to all the officers of that Imperial Army, (under whose banners the author himself formerly had the honor of serving) from whom he received every facility and consideration.

ERRATA.

- Page 22, line 4, for "July 24th" read "June 24th."
— 33, " 27, for "over" read "on."
— 37, Note *, for "Campagna" read "Somma Campagna."
— 39, " †, for "unction" read "junction."
— 44, line 23, for "togards" read "towards."
— 48, " 25, for "not" read "only."
— 68, " 2, after "Storo," insert "and."
— 91, " 2, for "upwards" read "upwards of."
— 120, " 17, after "Russia," insert "viz. to prevent the alliance
of Austria with Italy."

CHAPTER I.

Description of Italy and the Political parties existing after the Battle of Solferino.

THE Alliance of Italy and Prussia was a temporary necessity for Italy and a permanent one for Prussia.

Every sober-minded Italian must agree that as soon as Italy obtained Venice the necessity for the Alliance ceased, and that its continuance in any shape whatever would be tantamount to a declaration of War towards Austria and France; and it could not be natural, as Prussia is founded on the divine rights of kings; Italy on those of the people.

But Prussia will do her utmost to induce Italy to believe that their Policy is identical, viz., to rule over all nations who speak a dialect similar to their own, in order to force Austria and France to concentrate large bodies of Troops on the Italian frontier, and thereby weaken the Austrian and French troops concentrated towards the Prussian territory.

Can any Italian for one moment suppose that Austria and Switzerland will give up their best provinces? Are the Hungarians, Sclavonians and Croats prepared to give over to Italy the only

outlet they have to the sea, on which mainly depends their future prosperity. The cause of the re-union of Italy is not to be traced solely to the idea of Nationalities. It was the common commercial interest of the Italian people which drew them together, there is no reason to suppose that a number of people who may happen to be under different rulers should, on account of their speaking a similar language, wish to be united together; for example, why did that part of Belgium which speaks the Dutch tongue unite itself to Belgium? What was the cause of the unity of Switzerland? The inhabitants of Alsace and Burgundy, who up to the present moment still speak a dialect similar to that of Germany, and formerly belonged to that Empire, are known to be determined Frenchmen, and, lastly the late War between the Northern and Southern States of America, which was solely occasioned by a difference of commercial interests. Italy will shortly have to choose which of the two paths she intends pursuing—a Prussian or an Austrian. Without a doubt there existed in Italy after the peace of Villa Franca three parties, the moderate Liberal, the Clerical and the Patriotic Republican party. The moderates, in order to crown Victor Emanuel King of Italy, knew it was necessary to introduce a sound system of finance, a re-organization of the laws, and a thorough distinct classification of the different grades of society; in order to effect these it was necessary to come to some compromise with

the Austrians to induce the former Sovereigns of Italy to return as subjects of the Italian King, with the titles of Royal Dukes. They knew if this was once effected the purchase of Venetia and the occupation of Rome would be only a matter of time, and they felt that the immense private revenues which the Royal Dukes were spending in Foreign countries would be very acceptable to the Italians, also that trade was greatly depressed in their former capitals, which naturally would create a feeling of discontent amongst the lower orders. They knew that there was not the slightest fear of Austria attacking them either by sea or by land, and all that Italy required was a small national army and the principle of our Volunteers to be carried out to the fullest extent. Had they been able to pursue this plan, a few years later their brightest aspirations would have been crowned with success, but their greatest enemy was the old Clerical party, which unfortunately supposed that the alliance of a Liberal united Italy with Austria would be the downfall of the political power of the Pope, which would nearly amount to the loss of every political influence they possessed. They therefore did all in their power to prevent this union.

Let us not be too severe on the priestly party; we know it will never do for the Church to head reform, for whenever she has done so she has met with a check. In ancient times, when learning