

'deeds of noble note'. The French conception of glory has been modified from one age to another, sometimes for the worse, sometimes for the better. But, until comparatively recent times, the noble deeds expected of a powerful French Government were always deeds of war, to be accomplished in the name of some cherished national idea. Under Louis XIV the nation fought for natural frontiers, under Louis XV for colonies and commerce. The statesmen of the French Revolution roused their fellow countrymen to the most astounding military efforts by announcing that France would compel all other nations to be free in the same sense as herself. Under Napoleon I, and more obscurely under his nephew, Napoleon III, France aspired to impose her suzerainty by force of arms upon the whole of Western Europe. Since 1871 times have changed, and with them the temper of France. In the last forty-three years she has produced some visionary soldiers who dreamed of a new French ascendancy in Europe; but their vapourings have been nowhere more mercilessly satirized than in their own country. The French people are wise enough to know that they can no longer hope to overrun Europe, imposing their authority or their ideas of government at the point of the bayonet. They do not hope for this, and they have even ceased to wish that it were possible.

Still it is not to be expected that old traditions should be entirely extirpated in a moment, even by such a catastrophe as the Franco-Prussian war of 1870. That disaster made it imperative for France to maintain a huge military establishment, as a safeguard against future attacks; therefore, since 1871, the majority of Frenchmen have still been trained as soldiers, and still the influence of French military leaders upon national policy