

was astonished and somewhat amused when so small a State, at such expense to itself, joined in so vast an undertaking; but before long, statesmen began to see that no wiser course could have been suggested—no more skilful plan adopted. So bold a scheme was not, of course, to be carried without difficulty, and all the more so that the true object Cavour had in view could not be openly declared. It took a whole week of most animated discussion before the House of Representatives would sanction the convention, involving such expense to the nation. However, Cavour, backed by the favor of the people, who thoroughly believed in his honesty and ability, and strongly supported by the King, to whom he had doubtless made known his ulterior views, carried the day. From that day Sardinia became the recognized ally of England and France, and Austria for the first time began to understand that from a weak province it might one day develop into a powerful antagonist. The popularity of Victor Emmanuel throughout Italy was growing apace, and the ability and firmness which directed the policy of the country was beginning to be recognized. In Count Cavour the Austrians well knew they could never expect to find anything but a determined and implacable enemy, so long as Austrian dominion was felt in Italy. From childhood he had been taught to look upon them as tyrants and aliens, whom it was necessary to drive from the soil, not only because their rule was in itself bad and despotic, but because their very presence was a national humiliation and disgrace. In 1848 he had been among the first to advocate strongly a war with Austria, and after the defeat of Custoza, had hastened to enroll himself as a soldier, though the armistice of Milan prevented him from ever actually serving, and one of the causes he assigned for his anxiety to join England and France against Russia, was to give the Sardinian troops

“an opportunity of wiping out the defeat of Novara.” The love of country was very strong in Cavour. Later on, when, after the annexation of Tuscany, it became necessary to cede Nice and Savoy, or forfeit the good-will of France, and probably ruin the cause of Italy, he is said to have exclaimed, after signing the treaty which he knew would bring down so much odium upon his head, and in all probability ruin his career and blast his reputation: “*Perish my name, perish my fame, only let Italy live.*” In truth it were difficult to find a truer patriot than Cavour, and none are more willing to admit it now than some of those who, with Garibaldi, inveighed against him so bitterly at the time. The devotion of the hero of Caprera himself to his country was not more strong, while his services, great as they undoubtedly are, must be admitted to be but very small compared with those of Cavour, to whose genius the nation may be said to owe its very existence.

After the conclusion of the Crimean war in 1856, it became necessary to call a conference to decide what should be done with the Danubian principalities, Wallachia and Moldavia. The conference, held in Paris in 1857-8, was attended by all the principal powers,—among others, by Sardinia, represented by Cavour, as plenipotentiary. It was affording him the opportunity he so long had sought for, and by his skill and dexterity the Italian question, much to the annoyance of the Austrian envoys, was introduced, and the grievances of the Italians discussed. Sardinia's day had come; the blood and money freely spent in the Crimea had purchased her what Cavour had so ardently sought for, an opportunity of pleading her cause before the tribunal of European public opinion. The Austrian envoys, it is probable, had feared some attempt of the kind—though how powerful the appeal would be, and how bitter the accusation, they knew