

treatment of history was succeeded by the political treatment of which von Sybel may be considered the greatest representative.

But the unification of Germany, which in the middle of the century was an aspiration and a dream, was realised by quite other means than by those which the earlier school of political historians were aiming at. When once accomplished it indeed formulated new tasks and established new views for the national historians. But the real political impulse was wanting, and with it there disappeared that immediate purpose which had given life and interest to von Sybel's historical view. A prominent representative of historical learning in Germany thus looks upon the younger generation of historians as placed in a kind of dilemma. So much has happened that was new and unexpected that there seems wanting a definite orientation among the historical writers of the day. Are they to return to the lofty classicism of Ranke, or is a new conception gradually pushing forward which will afford a better understanding of historical progress and development? The difference may be stated in various ways. Is the writing of history an art or a science? Has it to be inspired by a few great and supreme ideas, or has it to adapt itself to the realistic and naturalistic view of life which the progress of the exact sciences has introduced? Were it purely an abstract or academic question, the two ways of handling the historical problem, the artistic and the scientific, the idealistic and the naturalistic, might live and thrive peaceably alongside of each other. But in Germany, as well as in other countries, the