

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

One of the most interesting questions suggested by the approaching close of this century is a comparison of the relations towards one another of the great European nations now with the relations which existed when the last century came to its end. Such a comparison helps one to realize the nature of the changes which have passed, not only upon Europe as a whole, but also upon the character of national life and national self-consciousness in each of the nations. When this century began, national feeling had in each nation far less to do with the policy of the state than it has now. Policy, especially foreign policy, was practically left to the ruler; and the ruler, though he might sometimes be influenced by popular sentiment, or might defer to it, was mostly guided by his own dynastic interests. It was only in England that any government we should now call a free government existed. Even in England the King had a good deal of power and the borough-holding oligarchy a good deal more. Still in England there was a distinct national feeling, and it was hostile to the French. France, under the republic and Napoleon, returned this hatred. The mutual dislike of Frenchmen and Germans was much less strong. So, too, was that of Frenchmen and Spaniards, though both sentiments did exist as the natural fruit of former wars. Elsewhere there were hardly any national animosities. Italy did not exist as a political community; and the Italians had so little sense of unity as a people that they could have but little common aversion to any other people. In Germany most of the princes groveled before Napoleon, and were glad to profit by his favor.

Growing Feeling of Nationality.

During the first half of the century the feeling of nationality grew apace. It was awakened by the examples of France and by the conquering career of Napoleon, who trampled upon the other nations till they turned and overthrew him. The new passion for German national union dates from the great rising against the French in 1813. France evoked the spirit which was destined ultimately to weld Germany together for the tremendous struggle of 1870. So it was first the French and then the Austrian occupation of Italy that gave birth to the movement which in Italy was at the same time and in the same minds a struggle for political freedom and a struggle for political unification. The foreigner was the hindrance to both, so the Italians drew themselves together into one for the expulsion of the foreign tyrants. The sense of an even more cruel oppression made the Greeks into a nation out of a mixed race of Hellenes, Albanians, and Slavs. Russia was still far back in darkness, and although the branches of the Russian race were unit-

ed by devotion to the Czar and the Orthodox faith, the feeling of nationality in the modern meaning of the term did not develop itself in her till our own time. Meanwhile the example of Italy and Germany had been telling on the smaller peoples. It has worked in Roumania, in Servia, in Bulgaria, among the Germans of Schleswig-Holstein, in the Austrian Empire, even in Iceland, not to speak of Ireland, where it had, of course, long existed, though it grew much faster in the second quarter of the century under Daniel O'Connell and the repeal agitation.

The principle of nationality, defeated after a severe struggle, in 1849, triumphed in Italy in 1859-70, and in Germany in 1866-71, and since then has prevailed in the smaller countries of southeastern Europe which have been freed from Turkish rule. National sentiment is now powerful all over Europe, and powerfully affects the policy of all the great states. It used to be believed that its victory would usher in a period of peace and of freedom, because, when each nationality had reached its natural territorial limits, a dangerous source of quarrels between states would be removed; stability having been attained, good feeling would follow. So, too, Cobden and thinkers of his school expected that free trade, whose general acceptance they deemed certain, would also make strongly for peace, because each nation, perceiving the benefits of unrestricted commercial intercourse, would feel that peace would promote its material interests. Further, everyone expected that as people became better educated, more free, and more enlightened, they would renounce war, "the old game of monarchs," seeing how much happier and more prosperous they would be under a system of pacific industrialism. But new forces came into play. National sentiment, in rendering each nation prouder of itself, made it more jealous of its neighbors, more eager to strengthen itself at their expense. That sort of ambition which had formerly animated monarchs now spread through the body of the people. Free trade did not extend its dominion from England over Continental Europe. On the contrary, the producers and manufacturers of the Continent conceived their interest to lie in imposing protective tariffs. Commerce between different countries did increase vastly, and increases as population grows, and as scientific discovery stimulates industrial production. But, so also does the competition increase between the manufacturers and exporters in different countries; and this competition has led not only to much ill-feeling among the competing countries, but also to a race for the acquisition of new territories outside Europe which are to be turned into markets for the exports of the states that can appropriate them.

Influence of Commerce.

As commerce has in some instances

embittered the relations of nations, so even popular government has disclosed new methods by which they may be embittered for the selfish ends of ministers or politicians. A government which finds itself in domestic difficulties owing to the resistance of a party in its own country, may be tempted to plunge into a foreign war in order to distract attention from its own shortcomings or rally the nation to its support. Louis Napoleon played this desperate game, to his own undoing, in 1870. Even Bismarck did not scruple to use foreign policy as a counter in the game of foreign politics; and in other countries less dominated by the government than Germany was under Bismarck, the same expedient has been resorted to.

Each people knows far more about other peoples than it did one hundred years ago. Each has far better means of following the political life of the others. This we owe partly to facilities of communication, partly to the newspapers, and the habit of reading which has increased their circulation and which they in turn have stimulated. But the newspapers have been by no means an unmixed blessing. It would be nearer the truth to say that they have become a fertile source of international misunderstandings and dislikes. It is easier to attack another country than to praise it; and it makes better copy, just as personal gossip is in private conversation more frequently malicious than kindly. That the press of France, Germany and England has done much to embitter the relations of these three great countries is a complaint frequently heard from European statesmen. Lord Salisbury has more than once dwelt upon it.

Influences for Good.

Against these untoward influences there are to be set three influences which have worked for good during the last half century. One is the aversion to war of the magnates of commerce and finance. Sometimes, of course, they expect to gain by strife or the prospect of it; but far more frequently they stand to lose. Their power, which is great and growing, is usually thrown into the scale of peace. The second wholesome tendency is that of the men of thought and learning and science, who in most countries, and conspicuously in France and Italy, feel so warm a sympathy with their fellow-students and fellow-workers in other nations that they do what they can to promote good feeling and discountenance war. Lastly, there is the tendency to solidarity among the socialists and so-called laborists all over Europe. The leaders of the social democratic movement, desiring to overthrow what they call the domination of soldiers and capitalists, and desiring to unite the working classes in every country for this pur-