

proved, and in what respects it is better now than it was at the starting-point of our retrospect, we should have to penetrate far below the surface of those events that have attained publicity. It is not in the defeat of a cabinet or even in the overthrow of a dynasty that we learn whether a nation is soaring or sinking. Some vague notion we may gain of the main tendency of popular aspiration, but that notion is as likely to be wrong as right. The speeches of popular orators may be as rose-coloured and as meaningless as speeches from thrones, and equally untrustworthy as indications of the drift of opinion or the condition of the masses. Even statistics, however careful, are practically useless without a commentary. As for the relations of communities to each other, the multitude of documents that treat with such gravity of the sentiments that inspire France towards Germany, Austria towards Russia, or England towards Italy are absurdly misleading. For the entities that the writers have in their minds are not the millions that make up those great nations, but a few statesmen and journalists of more or less pronounced leanings and antipathies. Individuals do certainly exercise vast influence for good and evil on the destinies of nations, but the latter have notwithstanding a moral and intellectual development which must be studied apart from both dynasties and statecraft. This truth—which is of more importance than the success or discomfiture of any system-monger—is liable to be lost sight of in the conflict of rival ambitions to which whole nations are made subservient. It seems a cruel mockery to hear of the schemes of aggrandizement by which populations are arrayed against each other in a struggle that makes men mere pawns on a chess-board, to be moved hither and thither at the caprice of a despot. War, doubtless, has its purpose in the growth of humanity, but a policy which turns a whole continent into a series of camps and fills the air with perpetual rumours of war is hardly one for congratulation, even if it be exercised on the plea of necessity.

The year just closing has only differed from its predecessors in the greater ripeness of such rumours and the larger expenditures for such slaughter-drills. The inevitableness of a sanguinary conflict in a future more or less remote has been formulated into an article of faith which, as an understood proviso, qualifies even professions of peaceful intent. The disturbing effect of this constant menace on the public mind of Europe is shown by its proneness to sudden panics, the results of which on finances, industry and commerce would be more serious if they had not so often been proved unfounded. The many visits of crowned heads to each other have marked the isolation of the French Republic. The French Exposition also lacked the sanction of the European monarchies, though it was cordially recognized by the nations of the world. Englishmen contributed not a little to its success, and their coöperation was thankfully acknowledged. The presence of the young Kaiser at the British naval manœuvres helped to remove the ill-feeling caused by Count Bismarck's attack on Sir Robert Morier. The prominence of Bazaine in the *casus belli* and the courteous attentions paid by the Czar to the British Ambassador gave the controversy a large international significance. On the break-down and suicide of Pigott the usefulness of the Special Commission may be said to have ended, but it only reached its goal (whatever that was) a few weeks ago. The Royal Grants debate emphasized

the growth of English Radicalism as a distinct force from the traditional Liberalism of Mr. Gladstone. The sympathy shown for the dockmen in the great London strike was significant in the same direction. The county councils have been verifying the adage of the new broom and have done some good work. England has taken a lesson from her colonies in organizing a department of agriculture. There are signs of a growing rapprochement between the Unionist coalition and the Nationalists, the issue of which is, as yet, however, uncertain. The postponed Western Australia bill brought out the solidarity of the Australian colonies, as against the Mother Country. Whether they will agree as well on the federation question remains to be seen. Sir H. Parkes is hopeful, though his record with regard to the Federal Council is against him as the leader of such a movement. The Behrings Sea question was urged on the attention of the Government, but with what result is not yet known. The "Sackville incident" solved itself in a double sense, *ambulando*. Another "incident"—that which took its name from the Russian Atchinoff—had some interesting results across the channel, leading indirectly to the prosecution of the Ligue de Patriotes, which was the inauguration of the Government's vigorous and successful anti-Boulangist policy. The year, on the whole, has been a prosperous one for the Republic, which, if it uses its advantages wisely, may ultimately reconcile the not too prejudiced Conservatives. Certainly in some respects, France is less to be pitied than Germany, where such things as the persecution of Prof. Geffcken cause neither the chancellor nor his master to blush. There has been a good deal of fruitless court paid to the Czar on the part of the leading member of the Triple Alliance, but the attempt to coerce Austria-Hungary into following suit has been a failure. The boldness of Muscovite intrigue in the Balkans during the past year, the Czar's open inciting of Prince Nicholas to seek the crown of Servia (laid aside by King Milan), the evil work of anti-Austrian agents in Roumania, leading to a succession of crises, and the Czar's efforts, through the Radical Zankoff, to overthrow Prince Ferdinand, were provocations that neither Count Kalnoky nor Herr Tisza could condone. In Italy the situation remains virtually unchanged. An Italian prelate who undertook to preach conciliation by defending Italian unity was untimely in choosing the hour of his appeal, and he withdrew his *irenicon*. The Eastern Question is still unsettled. Crete has again been up in arms in vain, the unwise manifesto of M. Tricoupis only encouraging hopes that were sure to end in disappointment. His railway policy (though financially hazardous) will be welcomed by the travelling world.

Africa has had the eyes and ears of civilization for a good part of the year. Egypt was menaced by an Ethiopian invasion, which General Grenfell had the honour of repelling. The death of King John of Abyssinia (England's old friend) led to unexpected results for Italy, whose claims, however, based on a treaty with King Menelek of Shoa, France disallows. East Africa has been the stage of a German-Arab conflict, but its glory is to have restored Stanley and Emin Pasha (maimed unhappily through an accident) to anxious civilization. The annals of exploring adventure have produced few parallels to the story of the heroes—especially that of Stanley's second journey up the Aruwimi and through the central forest to Fort

Bobo, where Lieut. Stairs held garrison. On reaching the trysting-place at Kavilli, he was disappointed to hear that Emin and Mr. Jephson had been captured by the Mahdists. He was determined, however, to fulfil his mission and to justify its name at whatever personal inconvenience, and his triumphant return was one of the bright spots of the past year. Some difficulties arose between England and Portugal in connection with the Delagoa Bay railway and the Zambezi region, which led to some acrimonious controversy. South Africa has been prosperous. The Armenians have been protesting anew against Moslem tyranny, Moussa Bey being the chief offender. The Shah's visit to England has led to some reforms in Persia, such as the introduction of the Western banking system. Some Afghan frontier alarms were hardly heard in the turmoil of European rivalries. In India there has been a good deal of agitation and some military expeditions were necessary to meet refractory border states. In Burmah the dakoits have not been idle, and they have kept the forces busy. China has inaugurated a railway policy, from which much is expected. The Siberian railway project has also been taken up in earnest by Russia, the Government of which country sent a commissioner to this continent to inspect and report on the American and Canadian transcontinental lines. Japan's new constitution goes into force on the 1st of January next. We have already dealt with it at some length.

Our relations with Australia are destined to become more intimate and mutually advantageous. The Canadian Dominion is the model of the federation which is now under discussion. Hawaii was the scene of an abortive revolution. One of the insular inspectors, by birth a Canadian, has been on a visit to Canada, and has advocated closer relations between the Sandwich Islands and the Dominion. In South America the event of the year has been the Brazilian revolution. The Haytian combatants gradually wore each other out, Gen. Legitime being the victor. The Pan-American Conference of Mr. Secretary Blaine has been at work for some months, but as yet it is not certain with what result. The inauguration of President Harrison took place in due course, and the usual changes in the various services followed. The year has had its share of disasters, among which that of Conemaugh and the Quebec rock-slide will be mournfully recalled. In Canada the year has been one of much controversy of a kind which it was hoped that we had outgrown. But, notwithstanding bitter words, which are never in season, there has been, thanks to the moderation of enlightened public men and the kindly good sense of our people as a whole, no serious rupture of good relations between the two great sections of our population. It has been our constant aim, as far as lay within the range of our modest influence, to reconcile, instead of accentuating, differences, and we have the satisfaction of knowing that our efforts have, in the main, been acceptable to our readers. Some of those whom we were, at the beginning of the year, glad to number among the friends of this journal, have been taken to their rest. Among them were benefactors of their compatriots and their race, of whom any country might be proud. In conclusion, we would thank all our subscribers and those who have aided us by their contributions, and trusting that in the future, as in the past, our relations may continue on the same friendly basis, we wish them and all our readers

A HAPPY NEW YEAR!