

surrounding lowlands—Upper Italy, Hungary, or South Germany—are more or less at their mercy. A state which held not only this Alpine citadel, but also the middle course of a river like the Danube, could easily satisfy its hunger after conquests.

Vienna, which occupies the centre of this incoherent empire, has certainly exerted a considerable levelling influence upon the various races peopling the empire. These latter, however, resent the pressure which is exercised by the two dominant races, and the time is not perhaps very remote when the existing institutions will be replaced by a federation voluntarily organized by the nationalities inhabiting the empire.

Formerly the Germans were supposed to form the majority of the inhabitants, and since the empire has taken the title of Austria-Hungary there are some who believe that Germans and Magyars combined constitute a decided majority. Such, however, is not the case. They are the dominant races, true; but amongst every four Austro-Hungarians there is but one German, and amongst seven only one Magyar. The Slavs virtually form a majority. Even many of the "Germans" are merely Germanised Slavs; but, irrespectively of this, nearly one-half of the population is Slav by race and Slav by language. As respects nationality, therefore, Austria is nearly as much Slav as its two neighbour states of Turkey and Russia. But the Slavs, unfortunately for the political influence they might exercise, are split up into distinct nations. The northern and southern zones are inhabited almost exclusively by Slavs, whilst the central zone is divided between Germans, Magyars, and Rumanians. This central zone, from 150 to 200 miles in width, separates the northern from the southern, or Yugo-Slavs. It constitutes the most important portion of the empire, for it is traversed by the Danube, the great commercial highway of the country. If the Ruthenians desire to hold intercourse with their kinsmen in the south, they are obliged to cross this hostile zone; and in reality they scarcely ever come into contact, except perhaps at some Panlavic congress, when, to the delight of the Viennese, they are compelled to express their ideas in the hated language of the German. The Northern Slavs belong to three nations speaking distinct languages, viz. Czechians (including Moravians and Slovaks), Poles, and Ruthenians. No love is lost between the two latter. The Southern Slavs, including the Slovenes of Carniola and Styria, the Servians, Croats, and Dalmatians, exhibit greater affinities than their northern kinsmen; but, unfortunately for the political influence they might exercise, they are split up into hostile religious factions, some being Roman, others Greek Catholics, whilst the Slavs of Bosnia and the Herzegovina are in part Mohammedans.

Next to Slavs, Germans, and Magyars, Latin nations occupy a considerable portion of the empire. The Italians of the Southern Tyrol and the coast of Istria are inconsiderable in numbers, and gravitate towards Italy; but the Rumanians in Eastern Hungary and Transylvania occupy a very extended territory. It is amongst them that most of the gipsies are met with, whilst the Jews are found in all parts of the empire except in the Alps. Austria, in fact, is largely