

to the restoration of Nice, secondly, to the acquisition of Tunis, and, thirdly, to the rectification of her Tyrolean frontier.

The real danger to the peace of Europe lies in the attitude of France. In her case alone the interests and aspirations of her people militate against the preservation of European peace. As a matter of fact, the dominant desire of the French nation is to undo the work accomplished by the Franco-Prussian War, and to secure for France the position she held in Europe previous to 1870.

It is perfectly true that she views the prospect of any immediate war with Germany with repugnance, if not with absolute apprehension. But the desire to bring about a state of things under which such a war might be entered on with a fair chance of success is one which is common to all parties and all classes in France, whatever her statesmen may choose to profess. France is arming with a view to war, is making herself ready for war, is counting on the contingency of war. It is only through war that she can ever hope to regain her lost provinces or her lost prestige. To speak plainly, France requires the rehabilitation of her *amour propre*, and the existence of such a requirement constitutes a permanent danger to the peace of Europe.

It remains now, therefore, to consider what should be the attitude of England towards the various aims entertained by the leading nations of the Continent. Of all the dangerous delusions held by the modern school of English Liberals, the most fatal is the theory that England has only a platonic interest in Continental affairs; she has played too great a part in the past, and occupies too great a position in the present, to enjoy the immunity of insignificance; she is, to speak plainly, an eye-sore to the world at large; her safety lies in the rivalries, jealousies, and animosities of the Continental Powers. If ever these causes of division should be removed, the danger of a European coalition against England would be imminent. Whenever a conviction gains ground that England is unable or unwilling to hold her own she will be attacked at once. No change of policy on her part can avert the danger; it has got to be faced, and the whole of England's relations with the Continental States ought to be based on a recognition of the fact that under certain circumstances a European coalition against England is not only a possibility but a probability. The paramount object of her foreign policy, therefore, must be the preservation of European peace. So long as she, rightly or wrongly, declines to entertain the idea of keeping up a standing army, commensurate with the size of her population, she must make up her mind that in any Continental war she must play a very secondary part; in fact, every one of the changes indicated in the map of Europe can now be carried out, if the other Powers are so inclined, without her having the power, even if she had the will, to oppose them.

As regards Russia, it is not England's interest to oppose her advance towards the Bosphorus; she cannot rely on any effectual support in resisting the partition of Turkey in Europe, and it is not worth while for her to resist that partition single-handed. The manifest destiny of Turkey in Europe is to be divided between Russia and Austria, and whenever such a division is sanctioned by Germany, England will have to accept it; and the calamity to her would be by no means so great as is commonly supposed. The opening of the Suez Canal and the altered conditions both of war and trade have very much diminished both the strategic and the commercial importance of Constantinople, and the advance of Russia to the Dardanelles would be infinitely less dangerous than her advance to Herat or the Persian Gulf.

The advance of Austria on Salonica would be a positive gain to England, as it would diminish the chance of Russia's occupying Stamboul. If Austria should advance to the *Ægean* Sea, she will do so at the instigation and with the support of Germany.

In respect of Italy, there is no reason, but the contrary, why her aspirations should run counter to England. She has probably more genuine good-will and sympathy for her than any other Continental Power.

The real danger to England lies in the intense desire of France to reassert her old ascendancy, and this being the case, it is manifestly her interest to keep on friendly, and even more than friendly, terms with the one Power by which France is kept under restraint, and whose influence is paramount at St. Petersburg. That Power is Germany. England can assist Germany in her colonial aspirations, and can secure the safety of her commerce at sea, in virtue of her maritime supremacy; Germany, on the other hand, in virtue of her military supremacy, can secure England against any risk she is exposed to by the hopeless numerical inferiority of her standing army to those of the Continent. England and Germany, if united by a cordial alliance, would be the arbiters of Europe; and to promote and facilitate such an alliance should be the main object of British statesmanship, in England's own interests and those of Europe at large.

THE IMAGINARY ART OF THE RENAISSANCE.

In view of the present interest in art matters in Canada, the following abridgement of an article by "Vernon Lee" in the *Contemporary Review* may be useful to our readers.

The painters of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, having exhausted the suggestions contained in the bas-reliefs of the Pisan sculptors and the medallions surrounding the earliest representations of sacred characters, produced a complete set of pictorial themes, illustrative of Gospel history and the lives of the principal saints. These themes became forthwith the artist's whole stock in trade, both traditional and universal; few variations were made from year to year, or from master to master, from the conventional ideals, and these, such as they were, had a tendency to

resolve themselves continually back to their original types, until the Italian schools finally disappeared, and those of France and Flanders arose.

At the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century, consequently, there existed just sufficient power of imitating nature to admit of the simple indication of events, without any realisation of details. Hence resulted such pictorial illustrations of the chief incidents of Sacred history as concerned the whole Christian world. From this time to the middle of the sixteenth century, the whole attention of every artist was engrossed in resolving the powers of mere indication into those of absolute representation, in developing completely the technicalities of drawing, anatomy, perspective, colour, light, and shade, and in elaborating those ideals which the followers of Giotto possessed only in their most rudimentary forms. This remarkable man, born in 1276, in the neighbourhood of Florence, was the first to free art from the dry Gothic mannerisms which prevailed at that epoch, and to give expression and action to his figures. He was distinguished above all his contemporaries by the nobility of his forms, by the graceful arrangements of his subjects, and by the broad majestic folds of his draperies; and his treatment remained unequalled until the appearance of Masaccio. Giotto's school embodied in their Scriptural representations an amount of logic, sentiment, and careful observation, sufficient to furnish material to three of the generations who succeeded it. Setting aside Giotto himself, who concentrated and diffused the vast bulk of imaginary effect, as well as of artistic penetration and skill, there is, in even the least of his followers, an extraordinary felicity in the realisation of detail.

The pictorial suggestions advanced by the Pisan sculptors and the painters of Giotto's school were as good in their way as they could be—simple, straightforward, often grand, so that the succeeding generations who followed them could only spoil but not improve upon their originals. These suggestions were also the only representations of Scripture history possible, until Art had acquired those new powers of foreshortening, of light, shade, and perspective, which were sought for only after the complete attainment of the more elementary powers which the Giottos never possessed. It is not wonderful that the painters of the fifteenth century were satisfied with following in the steps of this school; for, besides its traditions, it had left them a programme of great magnitude to carry out. The work of their predecessors was merely poetic, or at the most merely decorative, in the sense of a mosaic or a tapestry, and it is so satisfactory in the case of Giotto and one or two of his followers among the Siennese that we are apt to overlook the fact that everything, in the way of detail as opposed to mere indication, remained yet to be done. Such realisation could only be achieved after a series of laborious failures. Giotto, in his finest work at Florence even, did not attempt to model his frescoes in colour, and the excessive ugliness of the Gaddi frescoes at Santa Croce is largely due to the author's effort to make form and effect depend, as in nature, upon colour. In the Peruzzi and Bardi Chapels, Giotto contented himself with merely indicating faces and draperies in dark paint, and laying on the colour (in itself beautiful) to fill up the lines, but not to create them. This is the one solitary instance of the first and most important step toward pictorial detail that the great imaginative thirteenth and fourteenth century inventors left to their successors. In many cases each man or group of men took up a particular branch, as perspective, modelling, anatomy, colour, motion, with the several subdivisions, usually with grotesque and painful results. The absence of individual imagination, implying the absence of individual creative power, is conspicuous in the works of Angelico. This very essential of illustrative art, the faculty of reproducing imaginary scenes, belongs completely to the German engravers of Dürer's school.

Throughout the fifteenth, and deep into the sixteenth century, the same conventionality prevailed, until traditional suggestions and creative powers mingled and produced a new artistic element; from this time each man could invent for himself, for each man had acquired that artistic knowledge which the followers of Giotto had indicated, and the design of that school being fulfilled, Art went abroad to seek for new methods and new effects for its developed powers. One of the peculiarities of rudimentary art—of the art of the early Renaissance, of that of Persia, Japan, and of every peasant potter throughout the world,—is to fill its imperfect work with suggestions of all manner of things that it loves, and thus try to give in the pleasure of general effect what it loses in the actual execution of detail. Upon this depends the balance of the Imaginary Art of the Renaissance, represented by the school of intellectual design and decorative art, which dealt in arabesques, not of lines or colours, but of associations and suggestions. The motive which influenced this school, a motive masked as religious symbolism by the old workers in mosaic, the carvers, and embroiderers, is the desire to paint agreeable objects, in default of painting a fine picture. The beginning of such attempts is naturally connected with the use of gilding, whether the gold grounds of the panel-pictures of the fourteenth century represented to the painters only a certain expenditure of gold foil, or whether the streakings and veinings of coppery and silvery splendour, the stencillings of rays and dots, the fretwork, the magnificent inequality and variety of brown, yellow, or greenish effulgence, were vaguely associated in their minds with the glory of that heaven in which the Virgin and saints dwelt.

With the fifteenth century begins in Italy as well as Flanders the deliberate habit of putting into pictures as much as possible of the beautiful luxurious ideas of this world. The house of the Virgin, originally a very humble affair, gradually develops into a very delightful residence in the choicest part of the town. The Virgin's bedchamber in Crevelli's picture in the National Gallery is quite as well appointed in the way of beautiful carving, etc., as that of a lady in a portrait by Van Eyck. Crevelli not only gives us the Virgin's town house, but a whole street, where richly dressed and be-wigged gentlemen look down from terraces, duly furnished with flower pots, of houses ornamented with terra cotta figures, and