

Hungarian centres. Looking to the fact that some of the journals write above all of the necessity to Austria of peace, and others call at times for instant war with Russia should she place a single soldier in Bulgaria, while all are equally supposed to enjoy official inspiration, it is useless to try to gather the policy of the Austrian Empire from the journals of its two capitals.

The difficulty of the situation is very largely explained when we remember that Austria and Hungary do not in reality agree, and that neither of them clearly sees her way. Hungary, partly from old traditions, partly from the memories of '48-9, partly from her exposed situation in the middle of an enormous mass of Slavs, is bitterly anti-Russian, and therefore warlike. Austria is anti-Russian, too, but with a distinct peace note, and with a certain desire to patch up matters of dispute, and to make ties of friendship, which, if they will not last for ever, at all events, will last some time. There is always a doubt which of the two policies is to prevail.

Austro-Hungary needs quiet; first and above all because of the state of her finances, and in the next place because she is not in a military sense equal to the strain of a war with Russia. Unfortunately for her, she is besides in a domestic situation which further enforces the necessity of peace. The mixture of races and religions which mark her internal constitution, enormously increases the difficulties of civil government, and yet they are securities against the downright rapacity of two of her most powerful neighbours. Germany cannot wish to deprive Austria of the Archduchy of Austria or the Duchies of Styria, Carinthia, or Salzburg, or of North Tyrol, where there are altogether between four and five millions of Germans, on account of the violent Slav feeling prevailing in Moravia and Bohemia, which separate German-Austria from Germany. Prince Bismarck knows perfectly that this Slavism would become Russianism if they were annexed to Germany. Russia, too, which might easily swallow Eastern Galicia, part of Bukowina, and possibly the Catholic Polish Slavs and the Jews of Western Galicia, could not digest the Magyars of the Hungarian plain, nor even the Roumans and the Saxons of Transylvania.

The reverse of the medal is, that this mixture of races and religions which in one sense secures the continued existence of a something which shall be called Austria, makes that Austria full of discordant elements, which have different sets of powerful friends outside her territory to whom they turn for advice, and with whom they continually intrigue.

The result is that Austro-Hungary is, of all countries in the world, by far the most difficult to govern, and that as a necessity of her condition she must, before all things, long for peace. The German and Italian alliance was for Austria not a matter of choice but absolute necessity, and however little direct advantage she may appear to gain from it, it may be confidently asserted that that alliance will continue. The more doubtful point is, given the fact that Germany, menaced on the one flank by Russia and on the other by France, is now only strong enough to hold her own, how far Austria will go in the direction of concession to Russia rather than draw the sword. An Italian alliance may be of great value to Austria, but an English alliance, spoken of some months ago, would be regarded by Austrian statesmen as of less instant value than a Roumanian alliance. The power of the former country at sea would be absolutely useless to save Austria from the immediate consequences of war, and her power on land would be non-existent to meet a Russian advance; while Roumania can place 150,000 men in line who are admirably officered and trained, and have the solidity of German troops. It is to be feared that time will show that those who believe that Austria can hold her own against Russia are as wrong as those who hold, upon the other hand, that Russia is invulnerable to Great Britain in a single-handed war. No skilled military observer ventures now to assert that the army of the Dual Monarchy is superior to that of Russia man for man. The Austrians do not now possess the advantage of having great generals who command the confidence of officers and men, and in spite of the rapidity with which they have been spending money lately there have not taken all the precautions they should, considering the length of frontier they require to protect. Far from underrating the military strength of Austro-Hungary, it is not rated low enough, for it suffers from a paralysis in military matters caused by divided rule. There is a joint War Minister for the Dual Monarchy, but separate Austrian and Hungarian Ministers of Defence.

It is not of much use to discuss what may be called the great possibilities of Austria as "Heir of Turkey," "Protector of Greece," friend of Servia and Roumania, president of the Balkan Confederation. Austria is naturally slow to move, and under her many difficulties has become constitutionally timid. The outlook for her, therefore, is far from promising. She will do all she can to avoid war with Russia, but if she avoids it she will be greatly humbled in the process. If she fights she will not only be humbled but will lose her territory. Germany cannot save her because of France. Italy, which could save Vienna, would have to be given South Tyrol as far as the language boundary, and nothing would exceed the pain to the Emperor, his court, and many patriotic Austrians, of being saved by Italy.

It is impossible for anyone, except an Austro-Hungarian statesman, to realise the difficulties of governing the Dual Monarchy. The common army and the common navy are really controlled by the Delegations. The Delegations consist of 120 members, sixty of whom are chosen by the Austrian Parliament and sixty by the Hungarian Parliament, which is thus vastly over-represented.

The mixture of races which characterises the internal constitution of Austro-Hungary is most prejudicial to the unity of the empire; all States are peopled by what may be called mixtures. Just as the French, although a curious mixture, are a mixture that has been well mixed, so the people of Austro-Hungary are a mixture badly mixed. Indeed the dualism of the monarchy is very nearly dead, and if Austria is to exist at all she must rapidly become tripartite, and ultimately resolve herself into a somewhat

loose confederation. The danger, too, from Socialism is greater and more present in this empire than in any other. It is a curious fact that whilst all Europe has been occupied with Russian Nihilism, though the number of active Nihilists in that country is small, Socialism has been making extraordinary progress in England and Austria as well as the German Empire. Of all the great European cities it is in Vienna that the Socialists are strongest at the present day.

With regard to the Balkan Confederation, if we examine into the conditions of the four smaller Powers, Roumania, Servia, Bulgaria, and Greece, what do we find? Taking one by one, and looking first at Roumania, we find that the position of the King and Government of Roumania is one of refusal of a regular alliance with Austro-Hungary, dictated by the natural resentment which is felt at the manner in which Roumania has been treated by the Dual Monarchy in the past, when she opposed most foolishly the former's Danube policy, which, in her own interest, she should have supported. Nearly one-half of the Rouman race inhabit the Austrian Empire, and the Roumanians would make great sacrifices to unite their ancient people under one single rule. Whether they are, as they assert, the actual descendants of the Roman legionaries, or are Slavs who have been partly Romanised, they are certainly separated from their neighbours by language and by race, or fancied race, and are connected with them only in that religion which comes to them from abroad in Slav form. Isolated as they are, cutting as they do the Slavonic world in half, the Roumanians need to be a tough race, and they are a tough race; in toughness and permanency of national characteristics they are equal even to the Gypsies or the Jews. The King of Roumania is every inch a king, and no more able and accomplished sovereigns sit upon their thrones than King Charles and the remarkable writer, Carmeu Sylvia, whose poems, novels, and maxims go the round of the literary world, and who is his queen.

A very different people are the Servians, next door, who are the same race as the Croats of Hungarian Croatia, though belonging to the Eastern instead of the Roman Church. Dreams or memories of Great Servia led them to attack the Bulgarians, as we know, and led to a defeat, which was all the more pleasing to those who dislike aggression in that, owing to the better organisation of the Servians, it was unexpected. The Servians claim a large portion of Macedonia in their Great Servia; and parts of it, indeed, are looked for by the Bulgarians, while others are included by the Greeks in their Greater Greece. The king of Servia is supposed to be the tool of Austria, and is known to be disliked in Russia. King Milan is unpopular in his own country, and sooner or later will probably be displaced by Prince Nicholas of Montenegro, or by the latter's son-in-law, who is, however, a feeble youth; he and his queen are also cordially detested by the King of Roumania, which is one of the several insuperable difficulties in the way of a Balkan confederation. They are merely what may be styled third class sovereigns, but unfortunately for them the king's mother and the queen herself were both originally connected with Roumania, and with Roumanian opposition. The Bulgarians are the Japanese of Europe—pleasant, courteous to strangers, all apparently young like the Japanese statesmen, prudent, and full of ideas. The English-speaking men of their national college inspire every confidence. The King of Servia recently expressed to the representatives of Bulgaria his desire for a personal union, which only shows how blind he must be to the signs of the times. To place King Milan on the throne of Bulgaria, and to make him Governor of Eastern Roumelia, would be impossible without a general war, and if they are to have a general war the Bulgarians would prefer some one more popular than King Milan.

Greece, like Roumania, has this remarkable advantage over Servia and Bulgaria, that while the former is provided with an unpopular ruler, and the latter has a monarchic constitution but cannot find a king, Greece and Roumania have kings of real ability, and charming queens. Not that the King of Greece is popular in the sense in which the King of Roumania is popular. Greece is, perhaps, too intensely democratic for any sovereign to be personally liked in Athens; but that he is able there can be no doubt. Lord Beaconsfield once said of him: "He will be a remarkably clever fellow who can teach anything to that young man." The Greeks have one great difficulty in Albania. The Albanians are a separate people, with a language unlike any other, and they have a strong sentiment of nationality. Greece should likewise be a maritime power, which it is not; for the Greek islands which mask the Dardanelles produce 50,000 of the best sailors in the world—certainly of the best sailors in the Mediterranean—it is both progressive and acquisitive, and has wonderfully developed since the picture Thackeray gave of Athens in 1844.

If the Austrians would adopt a policy of friendliness and consideration towards the Greeks, the Roumanians, and the Servians; if they would abandon the idea of advancing, under any circumstances towards Salonica; if they would strengthen the internal condition of the Dual Monarchy by converting it into a loose confederation, with equal rights conferred on Bohemia, Croatia, and Polish Galicia, while holding fast to the Italian alliance, to be paid for, when the time arrives, by the Southern Tyrol—if they did this they would be able to maintain themselves as a Great Power. While Balkan confederation is out of the question, Balkan alliance is possible, and will offer the advantage of helping to prolong Austria's existence.

The division of the Balkan Peninsula between Austria and Russia would only make the downfall of the former more certain. For Austria to advance upon Salonica would be for her to embark in the most irritating kind of warfare with the whole people of Macedonia, Great Servia, and Bulgaria; and if she accomplished her end, she could not maintain herself in Macedonia one day longer than Russia chose to allow. The ultimate result would only be her downfall and the establishment of Russia upon the Adriatic.