CHAPTER XXV

CENTRAL EUROPE SINCE THE UNIFICATION OF ITALY AND GERMANY

REFERENCES: SEIGNOBOS, Europe Since 1814, Chapter VII.; Chapter XI., pp. 361–72; Chapters XVI., XVII.; PHILLIPS, Modern Europe, Chapter XX.; ANDREWS, Modern Europe, Vol. II., Chapters IX.–XII.; LOWELL, Governments and Parties in Continental Europe; STILLMAN, Union of Italy; KING and OKEY, Italy To-day; WHITMAN, Imperial Germany; WHITMAN, Austria.

Italy.

The building up of modern Italy.

ITALY had no sooner achieved her unity under King Victor Emmanuel than she became seriously occupied with pressing domestic affairs. Everything in the disturbed and backward peninsula had to be done from the beginning. Accordingly the new government created a centralized administration, devised a judicial and an educational system, and called an army and a navy into being. This upbuilding of the state in accordance with modern demands cost unfortunately a great deal of money and obliged the government to impose numerous and burdensome taxes. Even so, the expenditure habitually exceeded the revenues, creating a financial problem with which ministry after ministry wrestled in vain for several decades. It was not till the end of the century that the situation was relieved and the deficit mastered.

Unsatisfactory economic situation, especially in the south.

In every country the financial problem is closely associated with the general economic situation. To understand the domestic affairs of Italy one must begin with the fact that the country, though perhaps the most beautiful under

the sun, is poor. It has few mineral resources, above all, no coal and iron, and is largely dependent on agriculture. Furthermore, although the farming methods of the north, where there is an intelligent and active peasantry, are rapidly improving, the south lags far behind and is disturbed by an almost permanent agricultural crisis. The trouble in the southern parts is due to the fact that the land is owned by great proprietors, while the work is done by hired laborers, ground down by centuries of tyranny. The misery of this section, increased by excessive taxation, has led, on the one hand, to emigration on an immense scale to North and South America, and, on the other, to bread riots and political discontent. The result has been the growth of the republican and socialist parties, not only in the south, it is true, but also among the workingmen of the northern cities; and although the monarchy still enjoys the favor of the vast majority, it finds itself obliged to make constant concessions to the strong radical parties of the Parliament. The main task before the government at the opening of the twentieth century is to find relief for the growing wretchedness and discontent of the millions of southern tillers of the soil and for the thousands of workingmen in the industrial centres of the north.

Latent war between Church and state.

A grave problem has always been the relation of Church and state. The Pope has declared himself irreconcilable, and since the capture of Rome in 1870 has chosen to live as a prisoner in the Vatican palace. The law of the Italian Parliament (Laws of the Guarantees, 1870–1), by which he was assured the honors and immunities of a sovereign, the possession of the Vatican and Lateran palaces, and a considerable income, has never been acknowledged by him, and the Italian state has been steadily ignored and denounced. Naturally, the government has responded to this set hostility with repressive legislation. The rich possessions

of the Church have been secularized and sold and the clergy compensated with meagre salaries, paid out of the national treasury. When and how the Pope and king are to be reconciled and the latent war between them brought to a close, no one can foretell.

Italy allies herself with Germany.

A word about Italian foreign affairs. Italy, from her position, is interested, above all, in the Mediterranean; and when in 1881 France seized Tunis, she became alarmed and resolved to insure herself against further French progress in Africa by cultivating the friendship of Germany. Negotiations with Germany, a power already closely bound to Austria, led to the formation in 1883 of the Triple Alliance. The Triple Alliance is defensive in character, and after an existence of over twenty years may be declared to have been true to its avowed purpose of maintaining the peace. Encouraged by the support of the central powers, Italy presently entered upon a colonial policy in Africa, in the neighborhood of the Red Sea, with the usual consequence of becoming engaged in distant wars, coupled with several serious disasters (defeat at Adowa by the Abyssinians, 1896). In spite of the enumerated difficulties—the colonial failures, the excessive taxation, the agricultural misery of the south, the growth of socialism in the cities—every Italian may take a legitimate pride in the evident signs of a growing unity, order, and prosperity.

Colonial ventures and disasters.

France.

The republic is established.

We have seen how the disastrous war of France with Germany (1870–71) gave birth to a new republican government (the Third Republic), upon which fell not only the burden of making peace with the victorious foe, but also of putting down the savage rising of the Parisian communists. The elections of February, 1871, held under the depressing influence of defeat, had returned an Assembly with a strong monarchical majority. As soon as peace had been made with the new German Empire and the communists had been overthrown, the Assembly took up the problem of organizing a new government. If the monarchical majority could have immediately united upon a candidate for the throne, they might have restored the monarchy without delay; but the party of the legitimists wished to call back the older branch of the House of Bourbon, the party of the Orleanists planned to restore the grandson of Louis Philippe, and the party of the imperialists supported the son of Napoleon III. Not till 1873 did the legitimists and Orleanists agree by recognizing the heir of Charles X., who, born in 1823, was now fifty years old, and was known as the count of Chambord. But the count of Chambord, stubbornly refusing to recognize the tricolor flag (red, blue, white) as the emblem of France, insisted upon the white banner of the Bourbons, and upon this rock the whole restoration foundered. New elections held to fill vacancies increased the number of the republicans, who presently began to put the conservative forces to rout. They managed to have a number of constitutional laws passed (1873–75) by which the republic was definitely established and the power vested in (1) a Chamber of deputies, elected by universal suffrage; (2) a Senate, elected by special bodies in the departments; and (3) a president, elected for seven years by Senate and Chamber in a common session. When the Assembly at last dissolved itself and new elections were held (1876), the republicans were returned in crushing majority. The next year the Senate became republican, too, and now nothing but the presidency remained in the hands of the monarchists. The first president had been Thiers (1871–73), a very moderate man, who, for the very reason of his moderation, had in 1873 been obliged to give way to Marshall MacMahon, a thorough-

going monarchist. MacMahon presented a bold front to the rising tide of republicanism till 1879, when, convinced that his cause was hopeless, he made way for a radical, Grévy. Thus, after the struggle of a decade, the republicans had acquired and have since retained the three organs of political power.

Democratic measures.

The republican *régime* has succeeded in thoroughly democratizing France. The government has established an army on the basis of universal military service, as in Germany; it has begun to decentralize the power by making the municipal authorities elective; and it has created a system of public education on the broad foundation of a gratuitous and compulsory primary instruction. Of course, with so many explosive forces stored up as in France, the path of the republic has not been strewn with roses. The army, officered by men of the upper classes, has sometimes shown signs of disobedience, and on several occasions, notably under instigation from General Boulanger (1887–89), has threatened to take matters into its own hands. Still greater danger than from the army has threatened from the clergy.

Troubles with the Church.

The general democratic drift was by no means to the liking of the Roman Catholic clergy, traditionally linked to the cause of monarchy. Under the prudent guidance of Pope Leo XIII. the French clergy "rallied" for a time around the republic, but a renewed and definite breach took place when the government developed its educational policy. Education had hitherto been a prerogative of the Church, which by means of its schools had moulded the youth of the nation. Therefore, when the attempt was made to organize a public-school system of lay teachers under the direct control of the state, the clergy showed signs of growing resentment. In the end a clash ensued between Church and state, which has finally led to a complete falling out of the former partners. In 1901 the government began to close the schools

maintained by the religious orders, and proceeding step by step, ended (1905) by cancelling the agreement of 1801 (the Concordat) with Rome. Church and state in France are now entirely separated, as in the United States, and the state will presently cease paying the salaries of priests and bishops. Further, by the Separation Act the state has appropriated the churches and cathedrals, but declares itself ready to deliver them over to religious congregations, formed according to the terms of the law. In August, 1906, the Pope refused in a letter to the French bishops to sanction these congregations, thus openly declaring that a state of war exists between Rome and the government. There the matter rests: The state has affirmed its sovereign and democratic character, but in appropriating public education and in disestablishing the Church it has offended the Pope to the point where he seems inclined to resist to the utmost.

The alliance with Russia.

Meanwhile, the foreign policy of the republic has been largely governed by antagonism to Germany. During the early years of the Third Republic, France remained isolated, and by the creation of the Triple Alliance in 1883 seemed to be put into a distinctly inferior position. But relief was at hand. Russia, angered by the settlement of Berlin (1878), was drifting away from her traditional friendship with Germany, and presently made friendly overtures to France. Early in the nineties the growing intimacy took the form of an alliance, which has tended to restore French confidence and prestige.

Colonial expansion.

But even before the Russian friendship was assured, France had taken up with success a policy of colonial expansion. She has acquired Madagascar, Annam in Farther India, Tonkin in southern China—not, of course, without expense and bloodshed—and she has unfurled her flag over a considerable section of Africa. Africa, being nearer home, is the chief object of her attention, and the African policy of the repub-

lic has taken the form of amassing as large an empire as possible around Algiers, the splendid province acquired in 1830. We have seen how the seizure of Tunis (1881) raised a question between France and Italy; but far from being content with Tunis, the government has pushed its claims over the Sahara and the northwest until only the Mohammedan empire of Morocco remains independent. This forward movement in Africa, persisted in throughout the century, was watched with alarm not only by Italy, but also by England, which, after its occupation of Egypt in 1882, looked upon the Nile valley as its particular domain. Constant diplomatic friction seems at last to have been allayed by an agreement of April, 1904, which, generally speaking, assigns the whole northwest, including Morocco, to France as her sphere of influence, and in return concedes the Nile region to Great Britain.

The greatness and weakness of France.

Since the German war France has established the republic upon solid foundations; she has created a democratic army and a democratic school-system, free from clerical influence; and she has enlarged her colonial dominion; nevertheless, she does not play as important a rôle as before 1870. The reason is not to be found in any falling off of her moral integrity or industrial efficiency, but solely in the fact that her population has become practically stationary.

Germany.

Bismarck in control.

The proclamation of William, king of Prussia, as emperor, coupled with the completion of the German Empire, gave Bismarck, the creator of German unity, a position of unassailable authority. To his post of prime minister of Prussia he added that of chancellor or head, under the emperor, of the federal government. For the next twenty years he towered like a giant over German political life. The federal constitution, a compromise of Prussian autocracy and German liberalism, left the sovereign in control of the army, the administration, and the ministry; the Reichstag voted the budget and made the laws. While the chancellor was therefore secure against overthrow by an adverse Parliamentary vote, he was reduced to finding a majority for a desired measure by bargaining with the various parties. He began by an alliance with the liberals, whose programme, in the main, he adopted. With their aid he was engaged in endowing the new federation with such necessary modern institutions as a system of coinage (its unit the mark = 24 cents), the French metric system of weights and measures, and a uniform system of judicature, when he fell into a quarrel, known as the *Culturkampf* (war for civilization), with the Roman Catholic Church.

The quarrel between Church and state, 1871–79.

We have seen that Italy and France—and it is true of almost every other European country—quarrelled with the Catholic Church during the second half of the nineteenth century. The main issue has usually been the control of education. In Germany figured some additional features, especially the claim of the Church to be exempt from all interference on the part of the state. The Catholics, who form a minority in Germany, stood solidly together in and outside the Reichstag, and although the state passed several severe laws curtailing the authority of the clergy, Bismarck was at last obliged to sound a retreat. The Catholic political party, called the Centre, not only succeeded in getting most of the legislation against the Church repealed, but also in acquiring a leading position in German public life. On the great question of education a compromise was reached by which the state retained charge of the schools, but made religion an obligatory subject, handing over the Catholic instruction to the Catholic clergy and the Protestant instruction to the Protestant ministers.

Industry and social-democracy.

Economically, the most significant fact in modern Germany is the progress of commerce and industry. German manufactures, stimulated by the exploitation of the iron and coal deposits along the Rhine and in Silesia, have entered into competition with those of England and the United States, and German commerce now encircles the globe. A social consequence has been the marvellous growth of the cities, whose swarming masses have naturally banded together for the purpose of improving their position by political action. Organized by clever leaders—Lasalle, Liebknecht, Bebel—as the social-democratic party, the workingmen have steadily pressed toward the double ideal of a pure democracy and the control by the community of the means of production. The growth of the social-democracy has been uninterrupted, until in the Reichstag elections of 1903 it cast twice as many votes as any other party. This rise of a revolutionary faction, prepared to overthrow not only the monarchy but also the capitalistic middle class, greatly alarmed the government, and in the early eighties led Bismarck to turn his attention to the labor question. With characteristic ingenuity he adopted a programme of state socialism, devised to win the attachment of the workingmen. He had laws passed by which the state undertook to insure the laboring classes against accident, sickness, and old age; but although this insurance system has been in successful operation for two decades, it has not shaken the loyalty of its beneficiaries toward the party of revolution. Upon the social-democracy hinges the future of Germany. The monarchy, supported by the aristocracy, the clergy, and the middle classes, and the workingmen, with their programme of a republic with equal benefits for all, must find some common ground if Germany is to be saved from disruption.

In foreign affairs Germany has played an important part since her defeat of France. Bismarck, past-master in the art of diplomacy, did not fail to see that he must secure his country first of all against its late enemy. He succeeded in forming the league of the three emperors of Russia, Austria, and Germany, which lasted until the Balkan war of 1877. Such a league of course made Germany unassailable, but it came to an end when, after the Congress of Berlin (1878), Russia showed an inclination to ascribe the hostile enactments of that gathering to Germany and Austria. Thereupon Bismarck formed a close alliance with the cabinet of Vienna (1879). The admission of Italy into this compact created the famous Triple Alliance (1883), which has been several times renewed, and which has thus far honestly contributed to the maintenance of the European peace. The Triple Alliance of the central powers and the Dual Alliance of their eastern and western neighbors make Europe on the surface look like a camp ready to bristle with arms at a moment's notice, but, deeply considered, these arrangements, by establishing a nearly even balance of power, greatly reduce the chances of war. Great Britain, hovering upon the outskirt of these great peace leagues, at first favored the Triple Alliance, but, increasingly alarmed over the rapid growth of Germany, has since the beginning of the twentieth century shown a strong inclination to rally to the side of France.

The policy of peace and the Triple Alliance.

Old Emperor William died in 1888 at the ripe age of ninety-one. He was succeeded by his son Frederick, already stricken with a mortal disease, and after a few weeks by his grandson, William II. William II., an active, talented, and religious sovereign with strong autocratic leanings, was resolved not only to rule but also to govern. He soon dismissed Bismarck (1890), because he was not inclined to be overtopped by a mere subject, and then by a policy of speeches at banquets and similar occasions entered actively into all the questions of the day. He has started many re-

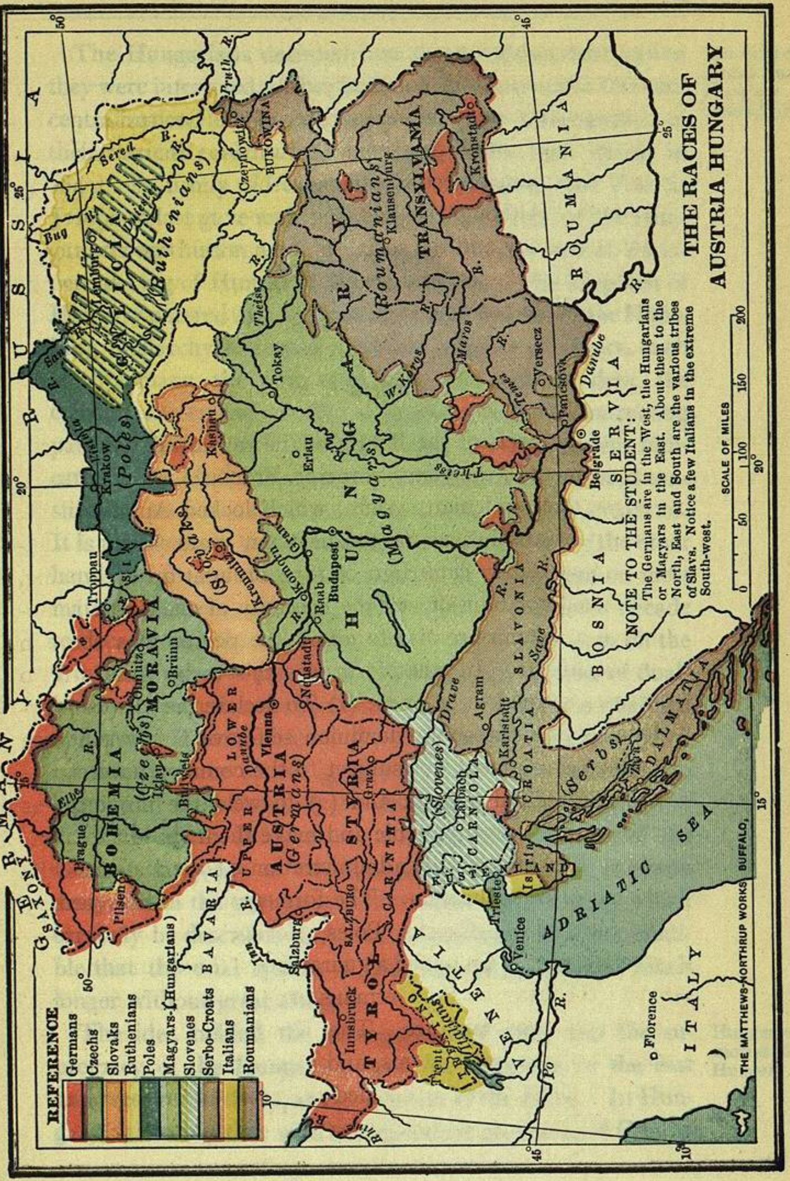
William II.

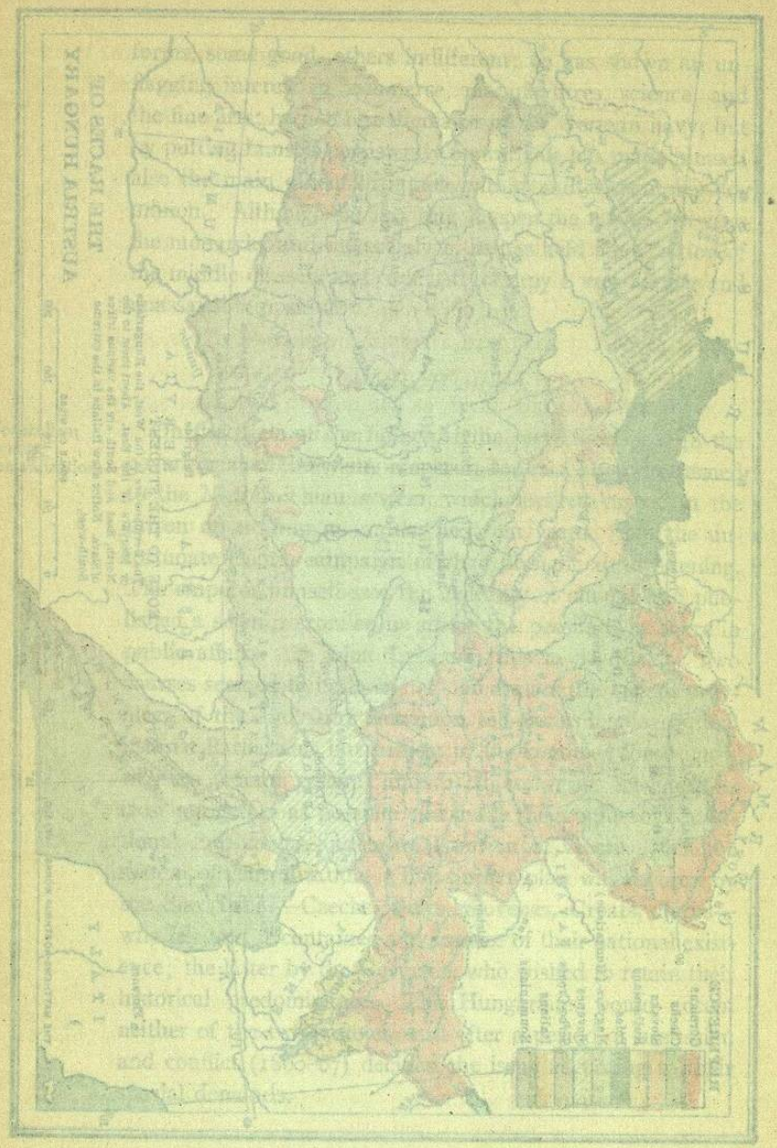
forms, some good, others indifferent; he has shown an unflagging interest in commerce, manufactures, science, and the fine arts; he is the real creator of the German navy; but by putting himself persistently forward he has made himself also the main object of attack within and without his dominion. Although he has dug deeper the chasm between the monarchy and the socialists, he has held the affection of the middle classes, and seems to occupy a very strong and unassailable position.

Austria-Hungary.

Federalism versus centralization.

On the heels of the failure of the revolution of 1848 the government of the young emperor, Francis Joseph, returned to the Metternichian system, which locked Austria in the prison of absolutism for the next ten years. But the unfortunate Italian campaign of 1859 brought an awakening. The emperor himself saw the necessity of change and published a solemn promise to admit the people to a share in public affairs. In what form was this to be done? Two courses seemed to be open: (1) To declare the various provinces of the Hapsburg dominion self-governing, each with its own Parliament but subject to the common sovereign—this the federal system; and (2) to weld the provinces as closely together as possible and make them subject to a national Parliament and administration at Vienna—this the system of centralization. The former plan was favored by the Slav tribes—Czechs, Poles, Slovenes, Croats, Serbs—who felt that it contained a guarantee of their national existence; the latter by the Germans, who wished to retain their historical predominance. The Hungarians would accept neither of the two systems, and after a period of hesitation and conflict (1860–67) decided the issue according to their special demands.





The dual empire of Austria-Hungary created, 1867.

The Hungarians declared that as an independent nation they were interested neither in Slav federalism nor in German centralization, but wanted singly and solely a recognition of their ancient constitution, suppressed after their defeat in 1849. So firmly did they comport themselves that Francis Joseph at last gave way. Having in 1867 declared the Hungarian constitution again in vigor, he was crowned at Budapest as king of Hungary. At the same time the kingdom of Hungary entered into an agreement with the rest of the Hapsburg monarchy to regard a certain number of affairs, such as diplomacy, the army and navy, the national debt, the coinage, the customs tariff, as common to both contracting parties. Thus was called into being the dual system indicated in the official designation of Austria-Hungary, and constituting an unclassifiable novelty among political creations. It is plainly more than a personal union, and yet, on the other hand, less than a close federation, as the agreement on most matters (coinage, customs) has to be renewed from decade to decade, and the agreement on no matter, not even on the army and navy, is perpetual. Judging this scheme of dualism by its record, a student can give it at best but a qualified approval. The two halves of the monarchy have quarrelled constantly, some of the agreements have been permitted to lapse, and the refusal of the emperor to grant certain new demands of the Hungarians, touching the abolition of the German language in the Hungarian half of the common army, led in the year 1905 to a condition in Hungary which can only be described as latent revolution. It is not credible that the dual system of 1867 can be maintained much longer without great changes.

Hungarian success in Hungary.

The idea behind the arrangement of 1867 was the supremacy of the Hungarians and the Germans, in the east and west respectively, at the expense of the Slavs. In Hungary, taken together with its dependent provinces of Croatia

and Transylvania, the Hungarians did not constitute one-half of the population, but such was their patriotic vigor and political intelligence that they have, though frequently with questionable means, secured their ascendancy. Austria, which was defined as including all the Hapsburg dominions not assigned to Hungary—that is, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Lower Austria, Tyrol, etc.—has led a very stormy life since the dual settlement. The Germans, though traditionally in control, constituted only a strong minority, and partly from lack of homogeneity, partly from lack of support on the part of the emperor and his government, have been obliged to relax their hold. The trouble has lain in the inability of Francis Joseph to make up his mind definitely about the old issue of federalism versus centralization. After supporting for a time the centralized system, which naturally favored the Germans, as it confirmed their rule over non-German provinces, Francis Joseph turned in 1879 to the federalists, who in varying combination have been at the helm ever since, and who, although they have not yet dissolved the Austrian state, have steadily pursued their federalist objects, thereby putting the Germans on the defensive. The struggle of the various nationalities[1] in Austria and Hungary, but especially in Austria, is intense and uninterrupted, and would have long ago led to a complete dissolution of the Hapsburg dominion, if it were not for the pressure of two circumstances. All the nationalities unite in loyalty to the Hapsburg dynasty; and however much they quarrel, they balk at separation for fear that something worse may befall them.

German failure in Austria.

The tale of the Austro-Hungarian foreign policy is soon told. Since Austria's exclusion from Germany (1866) her

Austria-Hungary interested chiefly in the Balkans.

[1] The census of 1890 gives the following figures for the leading nationalities: Germans, 10,600,000; Hungarians, 7,500,000; Czechs, 7,400,000; Ruthenians, 3,500,000; Poles, 3,700,000; Serbs and Croatians, 3,300,000; Roumanians, 2,800,000; Italians, 700,000.

chief interest has lain in the Balkans, where she naturally came into rivalry with Russia. At the Congress of Berlin (1878) she received, like almost everybody else, a piece of the Sultan's cloak in the shape of the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Austria-Hungary was asked to administer these territories provisionally under the sovereignty of the Sultan, but nobody doubts that the occupation is permanent. As the rivalry with Russia had by reason of this step grown acute, Francis Joseph concluded (1879) the treaty with Germany which in 1883, by the accession of Italy, grew into the Triple Alliance, still operative at this day (1906).

The future of Austria-Hungary.

The future of Austria-Hungary is one of the grave problems of Europe. The falling apart of the monarchy would raise a tremendous dust-cloud and cause an almost certain scramble for the scattered remains among the neighbors. That anything will occur to strengthen the wabbling structure is not likely. On the other hand, the loyalty to the reigning House, and especially to the person of the old emperor, Francis Joseph (1848—still reigning 1906), as well as the conservatism inherent in the blood of men, may keep the warring nationalities from the last step and indefinitely secure to the monarchy its present precarious existence.