

EXPLANATION OF EUROPEAN CRISIS IS HARD TO FIND

Diplomats and Observers Unable to Understand the Attitude of Austria.

RECENTLY STRONG FOR PEACE

Count Berchtold, Only a Few Weeks Ago, Bitterly Criticized the War Party, and His Change of Front Has Not as Yet Been Explained.

"Confusion worse confounded" is the one phrase that aptly characterizes the war situation in Europe. The leading newspapers and the most experienced observers are unable to agree on any explanation of the crisis. And the reason is not far to seek.

Only a few weeks ago the foreign minister of Austria, Count Berchtold, was earnestly defending the pacific and moderate policy he had been pursuing toward the Balkans and Russia.

Berchtold for Peace. In a speech to the delegates at Budapest he vigorously answered criticisms of spokesmen of the war party, particularly of a delegate who was supposed to be expressing the sentiments of the then heir presumptive, the late Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Count Berchtold spoke of the aged emperor's sincere and resolute devotion to peace; he gave arguments of his own, moreover, in support of a policy of patience and peace.

Feared Loss of Prestige. The frankness and directness of that speech impressed everybody except those who feared that Austria might be accused of timidity and weakness, might be misunderstood and in consequence might lose political and military prestige.

There were some among these who thought, moreover, that Russia, whose recuperative power was wonderful—whatever might be said of its efficiency and actual strength when pitted against a more civilized and free power—was getting too mighty and too confident, and was enjoying too much opportunity for rehabilitation and consolidation of its financial and military-naval resources.

These vaguely favored a bold and aggressive policy even at the risk of war, which had better come sooner than later, they held.

Sweden Takes Up Cry. But Count Berchtold's view prevailed for the moment and excellent observers concluded that Austria, at any rate, was not going to add to the troubles, complications and dangers of Europe by tempting fortune.

At that very moment Sweden was excitedly discussing "the Russian peril" and demanding new measures of defense, while a section of the German press was pointing to the "bear that walks like a man" as the foe to reckon with in the near future.

Yet the peace of Europe is broken not by Russia, not by a Balkan power desirous of revising the settlement imposed by Roumania and the concert of Europe at the Bucharest conference, but by Austria, and seemingly under Count Berchtold's direction.

What has happened in the short interval? If peace was necessary a few weeks ago, why is war inevitable today?

To understand the situation it is essential to distinguish between glittering generalities, fanciful aspirations, literature and rhetoric, on the one hand, and hard, grim, concrete facts on the other. It is essential to know what the conflict is not. It is not a war between Teuton and Slav. It is not a war between the Pan-German world party and the Pan-Slav world party. It is not war for the preservation of Hapsburg monarchy.

Moves is Anti-Austrian. The Pan-German movement is anti-Servian and cannot fail to be so. The success of that movement would destroy Austria as a political entity. The Pan-German extremists have had to be rebuked and repudiated by responsible German statesmen. As allies of Austria they could not countenance a movement which assumed and labored for the disruption and disappearance of Austria.

The Pan-Slav movement in Russia is manifestly anti-Austrian, as well as anti-German. It dreams of Slav rule "from the Adriatic sea to the Pacific ocean." It dreams of Slav union or confederation under the gentle and benevolent sovereignty of Russia.

Czar's Interest in Servia. Pan-Slavism is, however, in a limited sense, unmistakably in evidence in the czar's profound interest in Servia and Montenegro. The czar's ministers have often blundered in the Balkans and have at times caused strange

TO LEAD SERVIAN ARMY



Crown Prince Alexander of Serbia, who made a gallant record during the Balkan war, will lead his battle-scarred veterans against the Austrians.

ment, gravitation toward Germany, bitter feeling against Russia. But the blunders were personal blunders of bungling politicians. Russia has always posed and often acted as the patron, friend, and protector of the Slavs everywhere, and especially of the Balkan Slavs. It has had and still has its eye on its "estate in reversion," Constantinople, and it cannot hope to plant its flag there without the consent and support of the Balkan Slavs. It is good "Pan-Slavism" to support Servia.

But in facing Austria, Russia confronts not a German power, but a power that is itself largely Slav. Slav will thus be fighting Slav and the Germans, whatever their colors, will be fighting for Slavs and with other Slavs and postponing the realization of the Pan-German ambitions and dreams.

Jealousy a Great Factor. Here, then, is a strange paradox, but not the only paradox in a situation full of anomalies—anomalies inseparable from the very nature and complexion of the Austro-Hungarian empire, an empire, to repeat, that has been held together quite as much by the fealties and differences of outsiders as by the dynastic and personal influence of the Hapsburgs.

If Austria cannot and does not represent German interests and German culture in this fight, what is it fighting for? Pan-Servian agitation did not endanger its existence, while the war does. Its own Slav elements at no time displayed an inclination to exchange its rule for that of the czar, although they were not averse to using Pan-Slav slogans in order to secure better representation and larger recognition.

Danger to Dual Monarchy. The opinion of the soundest students of politics has long been that if Austria-Hungary was to be preserved, only a policy of peace, liberalism, greater autonomy, and home rule, conciliation of the various races and elements by reform measures, political and social contained the promise of such preservation.

The war actually endangers the existence of the dual monarchy, for aside from the chances of defeat and disaster, there is the fact that the Slav subjects of the emperor cannot sympathize with it. The separatist and particularist tendencies feared by the court and government can only be deepened and strengthened by the conflict.

The army and navy may be loyal and obedient, as many assert. The army and navy may be "Austrian," if the nation is not. But popular sentiment is a potent factor in war and popular sentiment among the Austrian and Hungarian Slavs does not favor fratricidal strife.

No wonder the intelligent world is puzzled and utterly at a loss to explain Austria's course.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. BELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.)

LESSON FOR AUGUST 9

THE BARREN FIG TREE AND THE DEFILED TEMPLE.

(Temperance)
LESSON TEXT—Mark 11:13-33.
GOLDEN TEXT—"By their fruits ye shall know them." Matt. 7:20.

Event crowds fast upon the heels of event during the days of this most tragic week in all the history of the world. Temperance means restraint and a constrainingly proper use of God given appetites and privileges, hence the significance of this lesson as emphasizing the principles of temperance.

I. Sealing, vv. 12-14. The day following his triumphal entry into Jerusalem Jesus and his disciples journeyed from Bethany, his abiding place, each night, into the city. Seeing leaves upon the fig trees, he had a right to look for fruit, for the fruit of that tree comes before the foliage. But none is found, and Jesus seals its barrenness. His act was a parable in action, Hosea 10:1. Profession had superseded possession, and Israel is therefore to be judged, set aside, until the day when they shall look upon him whom they have pierced.

Cleansed the Temple. II. Cleansing, vv. 15-19. Entering the familiar scenes of the city and temple, whence the hosannas had echoed so loudly the day previous, Jesus saw its desecration and degradation. Outwardly a delight, it was inwardly deceitful, "a den of robbers," and his anger waxed hot. Everything he saw and bailed was in some way connected with the temple worship. Even so the most holy things created by the wisdom of a loving God may become the instruments of the most despicable degradation. Ostensibly in the name of religion these temple merchants were in reality ministering to self and private gain. As at the beginning of his ministry so again Jesus exercised his authority and cleansed the temple from its pollution and for a time (v. 16) guarded it from further desecration.

The temperance application at this point is very clear. Appetite, mental or physical, is a God given faculty, but must be kept within control. Properly used they are a delight, a blessing to the man and his friends. Allowed to rule and appetites are terrible task masters. Purify the fountain of a man's heart, govern his motive and the stream of his acts will bless all, himself included.

III. Forgiving, vv. 20-25. The next day on the way from Bethany to Jerusalem they again passed the fig tree and it was withered. The disciples marveled at the swift execution of his curse and Peter calls attention to it, v. 21, Matt. 21:13, 20. In reply Jesus again emphasizes the lesson, "Have faith in God." This does not mean that this is an explanation of how he withered the tree, but rather why it had died. Israel was placing its trust elsewhere than in God, and therefore withers from the "roots upward." Notice that the root is not blasted, and a beautiful tree will again blossom forth from the living root. So Israel shall once again spring up into a new and fruitful nation, Isa. 27:6. Jesus' teaching by this tree is an illustration of wherein Israel had failed. They had not faith in God. Faith can remove mountains, and no difficulty can hinder those who have faith in God, Mark 9:23. Faith grows upon the word, Rom. 10:7, yet love is greater, I Cor. 13:2. If we really desire the things we pray for, we "shall have them." We not only expect but go beyond in our petition and count as ours the things asked for. The lack of a forgiving spirit will effectually shut us out from God.

Authority Challenged. IV. Challenged, vv. 27-33. Upon again entering the city and the temple, there came to Jesus the chief priests, scribes and elders who challenged the authority by which he wrought these things, undoubtedly referring to his triumphal entry and to his cleansing of the temple. His reply is a counter challenge concerning the baptism of John. For at least two years John had been dead and his voice silent with a probable forgetfulness on the part of these men, and a decreasing influence of his message upon their lives. Yet the question of Jesus had projected power as he brought John back to them with this question as to his authority, "was it from heaven, or of men?" That there was keen sarcasm and cold logic embodied in his question is revealed by the recorded dilemma of his enemies, vv. 31, 32.



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"If some of these financiers keep telling on one another they'll all end with the character that Cal Clay gave the deacon."

The speaker was Gifford Pinchot. He resumed:

"Cal Clay was a witness in behalf of the deacon, who was up for chicken stealing."

"'Calhoun, my man,' the lawyer said, 'what do you know of the deacon's character?'"

"'Hit am unbleachable, sah,' Cal replied."

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Good That He Returned.

"Boy, watch my horse till I come back!" called a man to a boy lounging around the station, as he hastened to bid farewell to a departing friend. "Sure!" said the boy, taking the reins.

Just then the locomotive whistled and the horse rearing suddenly, started at full speed up the road.

The boy started after the fleeing animal, and, as the owner appeared, exclaimed with relief:

"It's a good thing you came now, sir, for I couldn't have watched him much longer."

Time Passed in Atonement.

The latter part of a wise man's life is taken up in curing the follies, prejudices and false opinions he had contracted in the former.—Swift.

The Vital Question.

Hye—Are you really in love?
Slye—Dunno; haven't received Bradstreet's report yet.

The fact that a man's home is mortgaged is no sign that he owns an automobile.

If we could only get all the kickers and knockers together and compel them to fight it out!

And most people gladly take advice from a stranger.

is Positive Proof. Some little uptown boys were playing "judge," a game invented by the daddy of two of the boys. They think it's lots of fun. One of the boys in the game impersonates a judge, another the district attorney, another a criminal, while others are the foreman of the jury, a policeman, a jailer and the attorney for the defense. Any that remain are jurymen. After one of the youngsters commits a "crime" he is arrested and brought to trial with all the legal formalities the children can remember.

This time one of the youngsters was supposed to have killed another, but he protested his innocence vigorously. Then up rose the "victim."
"Of course you did it!" he said.
"Can't you see I'm dead?"—New York Tribune.

Not Always to the Swift. Budd—So he beat you at chess?
Judd—Yes; I wasn't slow enough.

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