

TIME

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HUNGARY

Habsburg Return?

Hungary is reported to be on the brink of a revolution. The principal reason given is that there is a widespread distrust of the present Government. The rapidly falling crown has also a good deal to do with the discontent.

The Government has never been popular with the majority of the people; it was only accepted by them as a temporary measure, pending the advent of King Otto—the late King Charles' young son—to the throne of Hungary.

There is no idea of setting up a republican government. The peasants are overwhelmingly in favor of a monarchical form of government. The distrust arises from the fact that in Parliament there are four main groups each comprising one or more political parties, and these groups fight among themselves for their own particular interest. The first group is supported by the aristocracy who want a return of the Emperor and the Empire. They have, of course, lost a good deal of their property and are working to get it back. The second is backed by those people who openly advocate the return of King Otto to the throne. They say: "Since that is our will and intention, why should we seek to hide it—especially since there is nothing in the Treaty of Trianon to prevent a Habsburg reascending the throne of Hungary?" The third group, including the Government of which Count Bethlen is Premier, unofficially support King Otto, but be-

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lieve that a regency (with Admiral Horthy as regent) is the only course the country can adopt in view of the anti-Habsburg attitude of the Little Entente. There is, however, a feeling that this party is seeking to consolidate its power for its own political advantage; as a corollary, it is rumored that they are plotting to put someone else on the throne, which is possibly not true. The fourth group is composed of the revolutionary parties—a very small and noisy minority—who are out for a republican government. (Communism is dead.)

Hungary has a population of 7,840,832, according to the 1921 census. Of these, over 5,000,000 are peasants and almost solidly in favor of a Habsburg King. Recently when Admiral Horthy proposed to make a visit to an agricultural district, the peasants declared that they would be glad to see him, but if he expected them to build a triumphal arch, he would be very disappointed. There was, according to a wizened peasant spokesman, "only one man whom they would delight in so honoring, and his name is King Otto." That typifies their attitude.

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The reason for the great attachment of the peasants to the Habsburg family is not sentimental but religious. In 1001 Pope Silvester II gave King Stephen I a crown (which is still used) in recognition of his invaluable work in constructing Hungary, cementing the Magyar nationality and firmly establishing the Hungarian Church—Roman Catholic. The Habsburgs, having worn the Holy Crown, are the only family that are eligible to ascend the throne—so think the peasants. The attachment of the peasants is not to a royal family but to the Crown, which means everything to them.

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