

REMAKING THE MAP OF EUROPE

Jean Finot's Views on How Parts of Germany and Austria-Hungary Should Be Redistributed in Case the Allies Win.

Jean Finot, editor of La Revue, one of the best-known writers in France, has just published in a book his writings on the European war, which have aroused worldwide attention. In the portions of the book translated below he gives interesting suggestions for the creation of new European nations out of the territories of Germany and Austria-Hungary, as well as for the future of these two empires, in the event of a triumph of the Allies.

By Jean Finot.

The End of Prussian Militarism and German Hegemony.

IN order to facilitate the advent of a new human race we must first of all destroy the main reason for the paralysis in moral and international progress which have ceaselessly pointed out during the last twenty years. Everybody is in agreement as to what that reason is. The danger comes entirely from bellicose, menacing, and formidable Germany. As her greatness is due to violent and unjust spoliation, it would be a high moral act to destroy her conquests of the past. Thus more justice and tranquillity will be secured for the world.

The question of settling territorial compensations to the belligerents, as well as reparation for the injustices dating back centuries committed against the martyr nations of the past and the present, will meet with serious difficulties. It would be easy, doubtless, to resolve them in the Prussian manner, by the right of the strongest, regardless of the national aspirations of the territories to be apportioned. German theories on this point are well known. The will of a people has nothing to do with the distribution of its soil. Treitschke well defined the German doctrine in speaking of Alsace-Lorraine: "We Germans who know

Germany and France know better what is good for the Alsations than the unfortunates themselves. In the perversion of their French life they have no exact idea of what concerns Germany." It is the same with all the peoples whom Germany wished to annex; Germany's idea was to have them feel the benefits of her gentle and humane culture only after they had been conquered and civilized in the German fashion. Therefore one must brutally seize territories before holding the slightest discussion with their possessors.

But the new Europe which must emerge from this war will have more just and humane aspirations. First of all, the geography of the world must be corrected to conform with the intimate aspirations of nations. The Alsace-Lorraine question will be decided by the very force of circumstances; the two provinces will return to France, from which they never should have departed. Certain restless spirits are already worrying over the acquisition of the Palatinate, but we must not look too far into the future. The duration and successive evolutions of this war will doubtless change much that has been foreseen. Let us confine ourselves to what is self-evident in its simplicity.

Aside from other indemnities due from Germany to heroic Belgium, she will have to cede to her a large province beyond Liège, originally Walloon, and which has never ceased being Walloon despite drastic attempts to Germanize it.

In 1805 Prussia appropriated a part of the Province of Liège and Belgian Luxemburg, where French was the language spoken. The very names of the principal towns are proof of this—Montjoie, Malmedy, Saint-Vith, &c. Persecuted by Prussia, the Walloons of this region have kept intact their love for Belgian and French ideals, and it would

be but just to free them from a yoke which has not succeeded in changing them.

Ill-advised friends dream of other conquests in Germany for Belgium. They would be a fatal gift. Millions of Germans would pour into Belgium in the wake of the annexed, and the country would find itself flooded with undesirable.

The Alsations, faithful to their mother country, will know how to save France from a like peril. Nevertheless, the return of Alsace-Lorraine will bring some problems not easy to solve; a German wedge thrust into a small territory might cause irreparable harm.

The Belgian Nation, conscious of its national future, will undoubtedly be the first to decline the honor of absorbing too large a dose of Germans. * * *

Poland as a Buffer State.

Other problems will arise, more complex but not incapable of solution. First comes that of resuscitated Poland. The proclamation of Czar Nicholas II., promising union and autonomy to Poland under Russian rule, is an act of sublime justice and political farsightedness. By reopening the question of the partition of Poland, which has been dismembered three, or, rather, five times, with utter contempt of all human rights, Czar Nicholas has afforded to the world an almost infallible means of preventing Prussia or her imitators of tomorrow from again becoming a menace to future peace. * * *

What are the historical rights of the Kings of Prussia to their eastern and western territories? It is not a question of conquests or even of treaties. The successive partitions of Poland, which are among the most revolting acts of international brigandage in history, cannot be invoked as an excuse. There is no legal basis for crimes committed against the

independence and territorial integrity of nations. Centuries of Turkish slavery and persecution have not prevented the Balkan peoples from returning to their past, nor will they prevent Poles, Czechs, or the people of the Trentino from winning back their freedom.

In order that Poland, brought to life again under the protectorate of Russia, may legally win back its old provinces, all that Russia needs to do is to appeal to the sentiment of justice of the Allies. Poland has inalienable rights to the whole territory extending from the present Russian frontier to a point very near Berlin. This is shown by the Polish frontiers before the first partition, (1772.) All therein is Polish, both the souls of the inhabitants and the names of all the localities which remain alive in the memory of the natives exactly as if the spoliation by Prussia had occurred yesterday. The City of Gdansk, (Danzig,) the ancient capital of Polish Pomerania, has remained as Polish as Krolewiec, (Königsberg.) Polish tradition and sense of nationality persist there secretly but ardently, awaiting the moment when they may come out into the open. * * *

The same is true of Silesia. Its inhabitants have remained Poles despite persecution, through centuries, of their language and religion. Attempts at Germanization broke down there before the unshakable affection of the inhabitants for their mother country. The Polish papers now printed there have a larger circulation than those in Russian Poland and Austrian Galicia.

But, at the same time, Silesia is of Czech origin. Situated between Bohemia and Poland, it belonged during the Middle Ages sometimes to one, sometimes to the other. Perhaps the congress to be held after the war may turn it over wholly or partly to Bohemia. The Em-

perors of Austria acquired Silesia together with the Czech Kingdom; somewhere Ernest Lavisse made the very apt remark that "If the Habsburgs, instead of fighting for Spanish, Italian, or Hungarian possessions, had taken good care of their Silesia they would have made impossible the eastern development of the Prussian Kingdom." It suffices to glance at the map of Silesia to see the great advantages against Prussia which will accrue to the nation getting Silesia. Situated between Berlin and Posen, Silesia might play the rôle of a second guardian for the protection of Europe against surprise from Prussia.

Bismarck, the only German diplomat of genius in a century, himself outlined the course to be followed in the congress which is to be held after the war. "The independence of Poland," the Iron Chancellor was fond of saying, "is the worst menace to Germany." "Free Poland," he used also to say, "would be equivalent to a strong French army on the Vistula; we could never hold on the Rhine if independent Poland were arrayed behind us. * * * Bülow, who was inspired by Bismarck's ideas, thought it necessary to continue the Prussianizing of Poland at all costs. And as Prussia, so basely practical, lacks a grasp of realities, she has merely succeeded in fanning the flame of patriotism among the Poles. * * *

When Poland has become a political reality the knell of Prussian dreams will be rung for all time!

And that is the only way of putting an end to the warlike dreams of a Germany which will be reconstructed sooner or later on new foundations. As no diplomatic precaution can prevent this, despite the crushing and decapitation of Prussia, an indestructible rampart must be built; it will be the glorious and honorable rôle of the Poland of tomorrow to be that rampart. * * *

The End of a Colonial Empire.

At the same time, the German dream of a colonial empire will be dissipated. With the annulment of the Treaty of Agadir, France will take back the Congo provinces and her liberty of action in Morocco. The German settlements in the Pacific—the Bismarck Archipelago, Emperor William Land, the Caroline, Marianne, and Marshall Islands, Samoa—may be considered, even now, hopelessly lost.

Japan has just put an end to the numerous piratical acts committed by Germany against China. In 1897 the Kaiser seized without any plausible excuse a large portion of Chinese territory. A few months later he obliged the Celestial Empire to cede to him the province of Shantung in trust for ninety-nine years. This was a very rich province of an area of 300,000 square kilometers. Germany appropriated Kiao-Chau and, taking advantage of the bases thus seized, began to try to dominate Chinese commerce. Her barbarous methods alarmed the Chinese and caused the Boxer insurrection—whose leaders realized the Prussian danger before the beginning of the great crusade of the civilized nations.

Sooner or later Germany's aggressions in the Far East would have caused massacres of Christians and long wars with the yellow men, whose only desire is to live in peace with the whites. Now that the port of Tsing-tao has fallen into the hands of the Japanese, Germany has lost forever her base of operations in the Far East.

England will not fail to destroy the German war fleet, and the German merchant fleet will dwindle in the natural course of events.

When German commercial preponderance has been destroyed, her manufactures greatly diminished, and her armies annihilated, what will be left of the devastating power of the Hohenzollerns?

Freed Germany.

The supremacy of Prussia, backed by her soldiery, her landed gentry and her agrarians of evil memory, must vanish immediately after peace has been signed, and the aspect of Germany must necessarily change. When the centre has been shifted Germany may resume her interrupted march toward a more social and humane ideal. The war of 1914, so fatal apparently, may turn out advantageously for her. On the ruin of a million privileged individuals, the rights and liberties of an entire nation will be born again; a nation which, trampled upon and humiliated, has bowed servilely to

a tyrant surrounded by courtiers and exploiters of the masses. Paradoxical as it may seem, this war will be a war of liberation for Germany.

Had she followed the course she had taken, her people would eventually have come to resemble her reigning dynasty; they would have shown the same haughtiness, the same arrogance, the same contempt for the rights of the weak, together with cruelty and immorality in deed and thought. Starting with the landowners and the soldiery, the direct props of the dynasty, who modeled themselves on their rulers, the same defects were gradually permeating the whole nation. The social classes threatened to turn into veritable castes.

With the exception of the privileged landowning and officer classes, especially noted for their brutality toward other social groups, the German Nation, maltreated and oppressed, has never led an enviable existence. The discontent of the nation has been shown especially in the rise of socialism. Many were pleased to see in the latter the sworn enemies of the Emperor and his accursed régime, but the Socialists have merely justified the cruel saying of Boerne regarding German Liberals. "The most convinced among them would throw himself into the water," said the German satirist, "as soon as a Prince dropped his ring and told him to fetch it."

And who will dare throw the first stone? Their worthless Constitution gave the Germans neither freedom of speech nor of action; imprisonment and loss of civic rights for the smallest offense paralyzed their enthusiasm and reduced their propaganda to mere parade demonstrations. They were allowed to preach peace and anti-militarism, but only for neighboring countries. Their servility manifested itself painfully at the famous session of the Berlin Parliament where their chief Haase made a speech expressing a humility toward the throne which would have made a member of the Duma blush. Nevertheless, this same Haase was the most violent among the orators at pacifist and anti-militaristic congresses.

Such being the case with the Socialists, what could the disorganized and disunited bourgeoisie and peasant class do?

All who have come into contact with the real Germany, the one behind the superficial Germany dominating Berlin and other great Prussian cities, could easily note the indignation of thinking citizens when they spoke of their Ivan (the Emperor's nickname) and the oligarchy of landowners and officers.

This suffering part of the population will look upon the end of Prussian supremacy as the beginning of a new era, which will give them equality and the life of worthy and free citizens.

There will be no more sons martyred in military barracks, no more unjust taxes for the profit of an idle class, no more revolting inequality which demands sacrifices from one class and gives privileges to another, including that of maltreating and persecuting the most representative and noblest citizens.

This class of persecuted citizens, once they have been delivered from the ancient yoke, will return to the great family of nations. Europe will welcome them fraternally. No longer will they have to blush at being Prussians. Freed from the old mode of thinking and acting, they will become doubly dear to universal consciousness.

The Dismemberment of Austria-Hungary.

If Prussia was always a breeding place of violence and brigandage, Austria resembled a stagnant swamp. Emanations from Viennese policy and diplomacy continually poisoned the life of European countries. This empire, made of pieces torn from all its neighbors, could maintain itself only by intrigues and crimes committed by its governing class. When the hour of final settlement has sounded, most of its provinces, artificially united, will resume their normal destinies.

Hungary, which, shielded by the Dual Monarchy, has been able to imitate the Austrian system of exploitation in her relation to the peoples dependent on her, will be greatly weakened. Transylvania and other Rumanian districts will be detached from Hungary and added to the Rumanian fatherland. Of a total population of 21,000,000 in the Hungarian Monarchy there are, according to official figures, only 10,000,000 Magyars, (Hungarians,) 3,000,000 Rumanians, about 2,000,000 Serbians, 2,000,000 Slovaks, 1,800,000 Croatians, 2,000,000 Germans, and 500,000

Ruthenians. Let me add that these figures are not at all accurate.

According to Rumanian and Slav estimates, the Magyars only number seven or eight millions, while the Rumanians and Slavs total about 11,000,000. The relations between Rumanians and Hungarians are typical of the persecution of minorities in Europe. Despite the constitutional form of government and the supposed liberalism of the Magyars, the Rumanians are deprived of the most elementary rights. In reality one-third of the Magyar population, they had only five representatives in Parliament in 1910, against 404 Magyars. The rest of the units composing the population of Hungary had only four Deputies. The Magyar Government persecuted everything that was nationally Rumanian and treated those of other nationalities as the Germans did the Poles.

Education is conducted exclusively in the Magyar tongue. The denationalization of the Rumanians was aimed at systematically and with unparalleled cruelty; all Judges, Government employes, and teachers were drawn entirely from the Magyar element; the Rumanians, not understanding the official language, were reduced to employing interpreters in the courts.

Exasperated by such persecution, the Rumanians tried to send a petition to the Emperor Francis Joseph. About 300 citizens chosen from among the most representative Rumanians went to Vienna in 1893 to ask an audience of the Emperor, but the Magyar Government not only prevented their being received but instituted legal proceedings against the authors of the petition, on whom infamous punishment was inflicted. And yet the wording of the petition was most moderate. * * *

The probable intervention of Rumania in the present war will bring the liberation of all Hungarian provinces peopled by Rumanians. Among these are Transylvania, with about 750,000 Rumanians; the Banat, with 700,000, and Crishana, Bukowina, and the Province of Maramouresh, where there are about 400,000 Rumanians.

There will be some difficulty about turning over these provinces to their rightful masters. The inhabitants belong to different racial strains; divisions and quarrels dating far back separate them. The Banat of Transylvania, which the Rumanians consider a direct dependency of their country, is not entirely homogeneous * * * part of it is inhabited by Serbians; other parts have an enormous Rumanian majority. Justice would demand that it be apportioned between Rumania and Serbia, but that would create fantastic boundaries, inevitable and threatening sources of future conflict.

How is the problem of Slavonia, Croatia, and Dalmatia to be solved? The native strains there are wholly Slavic, but, according to Belgrade, they are simply Serbs. Yet the form of civilization is unquestionably Italian in origin. The principal cities of Dalmatia—Ragusa, Spalato, Cattaro, Sebenico—were founded by the Venetians. When Austria got possession of Dalmatia in 1815, the Italian tongue was prevalent both in the towns and rural districts, and Dalmatian youths were in the habit of finishing their education at Italian universities. The greatest patriots of the region, such as Tommasco and Boskovicz, were students of the University of Padua.

Italians and Austrians.

Austria has made a point of destroying the work of Italians; she has shown like zeal in thwarting Italian civilization and the people of Italian blood. By setting up the language of the governing classes against the Slavic tongues of the inhabitants she has succeeded little by little in uprooting the Italian tongue. The persistent work of a century and a half has borne its fruit; thousands of families of Italian descent seem now to have become Croatian or Dalmatian. Italian writers themselves sadly admit this.

Being more numerous in Istria, the Italians there have been more fortunate in resisting the denationalization of their land. Austrian atrocities have not been able to kill in them either love of their mother country or fidelity to her culture. This is all the more creditable to them in view of the fact that Italy, a member of the Triple Alliance, was unable to give them efficacious aid, whereas the Slavic population was powerfully helped by the Government at Vienna.

Istria and the Trentino, which have re-

mained equally Italian, will be annexed to Italy in accordance with the principles of international justice. But the Government at Rome, having already obtained possession of Vallona and contemplating in addition the annexation of Trieste and Pola, will by these steps become mistress of the Adriatic. It is the conquest of Pola that seems to worry European Foreign Offices most of all. But on what can opposition to it be based? Pola is essentially Italian. Of its total population of 70,000, to be sure, there are only 12,000 or 15,000 Italians, according to Austrian statistics, but the Vienna Government reckons, among the other elements, a very large garrison, likewise workmen at the arsenals, who are recruited from among the Slavs of neighboring regions.

As for Trieste, it is as Italian as Milan or Turin; attempts to Germanize it have failed lamentably. German families there, under the influence of a superior civilization, have become more "irredentist" than the Italians themselves. Faithful, however, to its motto, "Divide et impera," Austria has spared no efforts to destroy Italian influence there. The Government employes in this province are exclusively Slavs or Teutons and the Italian language is proscribed from all official transactions. Slavic leagues, under the protection of Vienna, are found everywhere; Czechs and Croats, martyrs in their own lands, have special privileges in Trieste. But all efforts have foundered against the rock of Italian sympathies.

What is to be done with Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia? The upholders of the doctrine of Balkan balance of power will probably oppose their being annexed to Serbia. Moreover, the aspirations of the native populations will make their apportionment very difficult. * * *

A referendum to the inhabitants will probably solve the expected complications. Perhaps neutral republics will be founded, their future to be guaranteed by the coming congress. Croatia and Slavonia might easily be made into a Slovak republic, while Dalmatia might be reborn under the name of the kingdom of Illyria—which would be welcome to several Russian statesmen. The proximity of powerful Italy, instead of endangering their existence, would give them complete security. * * *

The Austria of Tomorrow.

As to Bohemia, which, in spite of so much suffering, has not abandoned her national aspirations, she will be detached from Austria and allowed to resume the glorious traditions of her past in the form of an independent kingdom or republic.

What will be left of Austria? If she does not succeed in freeing herself from Germany before the close of hostilities, all she will be able to save from the catastrophe will be the archduchy of Austria—that is, about 32,000 square kilometers. This, to be sure, is one of the richest districts of the empire; Lower Austria, with Vienna as its capital, and Upper Austria, with the City of Linz, will, thanks to their mining and manufacturing resources, allow future Archdukes to keep up their pristine splendor.

The generosity of the other powers might, to be sure, add to this archduchy Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, and Tyrol.

This geographical rearrangement, according to the principle of nationality, will fulfill the most ambitious desires of the nations involved. As these provinces are greatly mixed, it would doubtless be impossible to construct a Serbia peopled entirely by Serbs, or a Bohemia peopled wholly by Czechs. But when power is given to those national groups having the majority, respect for justice toward the minority must be insisted upon.

In the new Europe which will result from the coming congress there must be no more political or religious persecution; absolute liberty of creed and language must ensue.

The political programs which have been adopted in Austrian territory by opposing parties provide considerable material toward solving the questions at issue. Evidently it will be hard to reconcile at once so many conflicting aspirations and interests, but we must trust to the new humanitarian tendencies which will overcome the difficulties which the past found insurmountable. Great sufferings create great souls. The Europe that is to emerge from this atrocious war will seek concord. Once the independence of all these little nations is decided upon it will be easier to smooth over internal quarrels, which up to now have always been encouraged by the ruling classes.