

## IX. THE NEW MAP OF EUROPE

### Section 1

In this chapter it is proposed to embark upon what may seem now, with the Great War still in progress and still undecided, the most hopeless of all prophetic adventures. This is to speculate upon the redrawing of the map of Europe after the war. But because the detailed happenings and exact circumstances of the ending of the war are uncertain, they need not alter the inevitable broad conclusion. I have already discussed that conclusion, and pointed out that the war has become essentially a war of mutual exhaustion. This does not mean, as some hasty readers may assume, that I foretell a "draw." We may be all white and staggering, but Germany is, I believe, fated to go down first. She will make the first advances towards peace; she will ultimately admit defeat.

But I do want to insist that by that time every belligerent, and not simply Germany, will be exhausted to a pitch of extreme reasonableness. There will be no power left as Germany was left in 1871, in a state of "freshness" and a dictatorial attitude. That is to say they will all be gravitating, not to triumphs, but to such a settlement as seems to promise the maximum of equilibrium in the future.

If towards the end of the war the United States should decide, after all, to abandon their present attitude of superior comment and throw

their weight in favour of such a settlement as would make the recrudescence of militarism impossible, the general exhaustion may give America a relative importance far beyond any influence she could exert at the present time. In the end, America may have the power to insist upon almost vital conditions in the settlement; though whether she will have the imaginative force and will is, of course, quite another question.

And before I go on to speculate about the actual settlement, there are one or two generalisations that it may be interesting to try over. Law is a thin wash that we paint over the firm outlines of reality, and the treaties and agreements of emperors and kings and statesmen have little of the permanence of certain more fundamental human realities. I was looking the other day at Sir Mark Sykes' "The Caliph's Inheritance," which contains a series of coloured maps of the political boundaries of south-western Asia for the last three thousand years. The shapes and colours come and go--now it is Persia, now it is Macedonia, now the Eastern Empire, now the Arab, now the Turk who is ascendant. The colours change as if they were in a kaleidoscope; they advance, recede, split, vanish. But through all that time there exists obstinately an Armenia, an essential Persia, an Arabia; they, too, advance or recede a little. I do not claim that they are eternal things, but they are far more permanent things than any rulers or empires; they are rooted to the ground by a peasantry, by a physical and temperamental attitude. Apart from political maps of mankind, there are natural maps of mankind. I find it, too, in Europe; the monarchs splash the water and break up the

mirror in endless strange shapes; nevertheless, always it is tending back to its enduring forms; always it is gravitating back to a Spain, to a Gaul, to an Italy, to a Serbo-Croatia, to a Bulgaria, to a Germany, to a Poland. Poland and Armenia and Egypt destroyed, subjugated, invincible, I would take as typical of what I mean by the natural map of mankind.

Let me repeat again that I do not assert there is an eternal map. It does change; there have been times--the European settlement of America and Siberia, for example, the Arabic sweep across North Africa, the invasion of Britain by the Low German peoples--when it has changed very considerably in a century or so; but at its swiftest it still takes generations to change. The gentlemen who used to sit in conferences and diets, and divide up the world ever and again before the nineteenth century, never realised this. It is only within the last hundred years that mankind has begun to grasp the fact that one of the first laws of political stability is to draw your political boundaries along the lines of the natural map of mankind.

Now the nineteenth century phrased this conception by talking about the "principle of nationality." Such interesting survivals of the nineteenth century as Mr. C.R. Buxton still talk of settling human affairs by that "principle." But unhappily for him the world is not so simply divided. There are tribal regions with no national sense. There are extensive regions of the earth's surface where the population is not homogeneous, where people of different languages or different incompatible creeds

live village against village, a kind of human emulsion, incapable of any true mixture or unity. Consider, for example, Central Africa, Tyrone, Albania, Bombay, Constantinople or Transylvania. Here are regions and cities with either no nationality or with as much nationality as a patchwork quilt has colour....

Now so far as the homogeneous regions of the world go, I am quite prepared to sustain the thesis that they can only be tranquil, they can only develop their possibilities freely and be harmless to their neighbours, when they are governed by local men, by men of the local race, religion and tradition, and with a form of government that, unlike a monarchy or a plutocracy, does not crystallise commercial or national ambition. So far I go with those who would appeal to the "principle of nationality."

But I would stipulate, further, that it would enormously increase the stability of the arrangement if such "nations" could be grouped together into "United States" wherever there were possibilities of inter-state rivalries and commercial friction. Where, however, one deals with a region of mixed nationality, there is need of a subtler system of adjustments. Such a system has already been worked out in the case of Switzerland, where we have the community not in countries but cantons, each with its own religion, its culture and self-government, and all at peace under a polyglot and impartial common government. It is as plain as daylight to anyone who is not blinded by patriotic or private interests that such a country as Albania, which is mono-lingual indeed,

but hopelessly divided religiously, will never be tranquil, never contented, unless it is under a cantonal system, and that the only solution of the Irish difficulty along the belt between Ulster and Catholic Ireland lies in the same arrangement.

Then; thirdly, there are the regions and cities possessing no nationality, such as Constantinople or Bombay, which manifestly appertain not to one nation but many; the former to all the Black Sea nations, the latter to all India. Disregarding ambitions and traditions, it is fairly obvious that such international places would be best under the joint control of, and form a basis of union between, all the peoples affected.

Now it is suggested here that upon these threefold lines it is possible to work out a map of the world of maximum contentment and stability, and that there will be a gravitation of all other arrangements, all empires and leagues and what not, towards this rational and natural map of mankind. This does not imply that that map will ultimately assert itself, but that it will always be tending to assert itself. It will obsess ostensible politics.

I do not pretend to know with any degree of certainty what peculiar forms of muddle and aggression may not record themselves upon the maps of 2200; I do not certainly know whether mankind will be better off or worse off then, more or less civilised; but I do know, with a very considerable degree of certainty, that in A.D. 2200 there will still be

a France, an Ireland, a Germany, a Jugo-Slav region, a Constantinople, a Rajputana, and a Bengal. I do not mean that these are absolutely fixed things; they may have receded or expanded. But these are the more permanent things; these are the field, the groundwork, the basic reality; these are fundamental forces over which play the ambitions, treacheries, delusions, traditions, tyrannies of international politics. All boundaries will tend to reveal these fundamental forms as all clothing tends to reveal the body. You may hide the waist; you will only reveal the shoulders the more. You may mask, you may muffle the body; it is still alive inside, and the ultimate determining thing.

And, having premised this much, it is possible to take up the problem of the peace of 1917 or 1918, or whenever it is to be, with some sense of its limitations and superficiality.

## Section 2

We have already hazarded the prophecy that after a long war of general exhaustion Germany will be the first to realise defeat. This does not mean that she will surrender unconditionally, but that she will be reduced to bargaining to see how much she must surrender, and what she may hold. It is my impression that she will be deserted by Bulgaria, and that Turkey will be out of the fighting before the end. But these are chancy matters. Against Germany there will certainly be the three great allies, France, Russia and Britain, and almost certainly Japan will be

with them. The four will probably have got to a very complete and detailed understanding among themselves. Italy--in, I fear, a slightly detached spirit--will sit at the board. Hungary will be present, sitting, so to speak, amidst the decayed remains of Austria. Roumania, a little out of breath through hurrying at the last, may be present as the latest ally of Italy. The European neutrals will be at least present in spirit; their desires will be acutely felt; but it is doubtful if the United States will count for all that they might in the decision. Such weight as America chooses to exercise--would that she would choose to exercise more!--will probably be on the side of the rational and natural settlement of the world.

Now the most important thing of all at this settlement will be the temper and nature of the Germany with which the Allies will be dealing.

Let us not be blinded by the passions of war into confusing a people with its government and the artificial Kultur of a brief century. There is a Germany, great and civilised, a decent and admirable people, masked by Imperialism, blinded by the vanity of the easy victories of half a century ago, wrapped in illusion. How far will she be chastened and disillusioned by the end of this war?

The terms of peace depend enormously upon the answer to that question. If we take the extremest possibility, and suppose a revolution in Germany or in South Germany, and the replacement of the Hohenzollerns in all or part of Germany by a Republic, then I am convinced that for

republican Germany there would be not simply forgiveness, but a warm welcome back to the comity of nations. The French, British, Belgians and Italians, and every civilised force in Russia would tumble over one another in their eager greeting of this return to sanity.

If we suppose a less extreme but more possible revolution, taking the form of an inquiry into the sanity of the Kaiser and his eldest son, and the establishment of constitutional safeguards for the future, that also would bring about an extraordinary modification of the resolution of the Pledged Allies. But no ending to this war, no sort of settlement, will destroy the antipathy of the civilised peoples for the violent, pretentious, sentimental and cowardly imperialism that has so far dominated Germany. All Europe outside Germany now hates and dreads the Hohenzollerns. No treaty of peace can end that hate, and so long as Germany sees fit to identify herself with Hohenzollern dreams of empire and a warfare of massacre and assassination, there must be war henceforth, open, or but thinly masked, against Germany. It will be but the elementary common sense of the situation for all the Allies to plan tariffs, exclusions, special laws against German shipping and shareholders and immigrants for so long a period as every German remains a potential servant of that system.

Whatever Germany may think of the Hohenzollerns, the world outside Germany regards them as the embodiment of homicidal nationalism. And the settlement of Europe after the war, if it is to be a settlement with the Hohenzollerns and not with the German people, must include the



virtual disarming of those robber murderers against any renewal of their attack. It would be the most obvious folly to stop anywhere short of that. With Germany we would welcome peace to-morrow; we would welcome her shipping on the seas and her flag about the world; against the Hohenzollerns it must obviously be war to the bitter end.

But the ultimate of all sane European policy, as distinguished from oligarchic and dynastic foolery, is the establishment of the natural map of Europe. There exists no school of thought that can claim a moment's consideration among the Allies which aims at the disintegration of the essential Germany or the subjugation of any Germans to an alien rule. Nor does anyone grudge Germany wealth, trade, shipping, or anything else that goes with the politician's phrase of "legitimate expansion" for its own sake. If we do now set our minds to deprive Germany of these things in their fullness, it is in exactly the same spirit as that in which one might remove that legitimate and peaceful implement, a bread knife, from the hand of a homicidal maniac. Let but Germany cure herself of her Hohenzollern taint, and the world will grudge her wealth and economic pre-eminence as little as it grudges wealth and economic pre-eminence to the United States.

Now the probabilities of a German revolution open questions too complex and subtle for our present speculation. I would merely remark in passing that in Great Britain at least those possibilities seem to me to be enormously underrated. For our present purpose it will be most convenient to indicate a sort of maximum and minimum, depending upon the

decision of Germany to be entirely Hohenzollern or wholly or in part European. But in either case we are going to assume that it is Germany which has been most exhausted by the war, and which is seeking peace from the Allies, who have also, we will assume, excellent internal reasons for desiring it.

With the Hohenzollerns it is mere nonsense to dream of any enduring peace, but whether we are making a lasting and friendly peace with Germany or merely a sort of truce of military operations that will be no truce in the economic war against Hohenzollern resources, the same essential idea will, I think, guide all the peace-desiring Powers. They will try to draw the boundaries as near as they can to those of the natural map of mankind.

Then, writing as an Englishman, my first thought of the European map is naturally of Belgium. Only absolute smashing defeat could force either Britain or France to consent to anything short of the complete restoration of Belgium. Rather than give that consent they will both carry the war to at present undreamt-of extremities. Belgium must be restored; her neutrality must be replaced by a defensive alliance with her two Western Allies; and if the world has still to reckon with Hohenzollerns, then her frontier must be thrust forward into the adjacent French-speaking country so as to minimise the chances of any second surprise.

It is manifest that every frontier that gives upon the Hohenzollerns

must henceforth be entrenched line behind line, and held permanently by a garrison ready for any treachery, and it becomes of primary importance that the Franco-Belgian line should be as short and strong as possible. Aix, which Germany has made a mere jumping-off place for aggressions, should clearly be held by Belgium against a Hohenzollern Empire, and the fortified and fiscal frontier would run from it southward to include the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, with its French sympathies and traditions, in the permanent alliance. It is quite impossible to leave this ambiguous territory as it was before the war, with its railway in German hands and its postal and telegraphic service (since 1913) under Hohenzollern control. It is quite impossible to hand over this strongly anti-Prussian population to Hohenzollern masters.

But an Englishman must needs write with diffidence upon this question of the Western boundary. It is clear that all the boundaries of 1914 from Aix to Bale are a part of ancient history. No "as you were" is possible there. And it is not the business of anyone in Great Britain to redraw them. That task on our side lies between France and Belgium. The business of Great Britain in the matter is as plain as daylight. It is to support to her last man and her last ounce of gold those new boundaries her allies consider essential to their comfort and security.

But I do not see how France, unless she is really convinced she is beaten, can content herself with anything less than a strong Franco-Belgian frontier from Aix, that will take in at least Metz and Saarburg. She knows best the psychology of the lost provinces, and what

amount of annexation will spell weakness or strength. If she demands all Alsace-Lorraine back from the Hohenzollerns, British opinion is resolved to support her, and to go through with this struggle until she gets it. To guess at the direction of the new line is not to express a British opinion, but to speculate upon the opinion of France. After the experience of Luxembourg and Belgium no one now dreams of a neutralised buffer State. What does not become French or Belgian of the Rhineland will remain German--for ever. That is perhaps conceivable, for example, of Strassburg and the low-lying parts of Alsace. I do not know enough to do more than guess.

It is conceivable, but I do not think that it is probable. I think the probability lies in the other direction. This war of exhaustion may be going on for a year or so more, but the end will be the thrusting in of the too extended German lines. The longer and bloodier the job is, the grimmer will be the determination of the Pledged Allies to exact a recompense. If the Germans offer peace while they still hold some part of Belgium, there will be dealings. If they wait until the French are in the Palatinate, then I doubt if the French will consent to go again. There will be no possible advantage to Germany in a war of resistance once the scale of her fortunes begins to sink....

It is when we turn to the east of Germany that the map-drawing becomes really animated. Here is the region of great decisions. The natural map shows a line of obstinately non-German communities, stretching nearly from the Baltic to the Adriatic. There are Poland, Bohemia (with her

kindred Slovaks), the Magyars, and the Jugo-Serbs. In a second line come the Great and Little Russians, the Roumanians, and the Bulgarians. And here both Great Britain and France must defer to the wishes of their two allies, Russia and Italy. Neither of these countries has expressed inflexible intentions, and the situation has none of the inevitable quality of the Western line. Except for the Tsar's promise of autonomy to Poland, nothing has been promised. On the Western line there are only two possibilities that I can see: the Aix-Bale boundary, or the sickness and death of France. On the Eastern line nothing is fated. There seems to be enormous scope for bargaining over all this field, and here it is that the chances of compensations and consolations for Germany are to be found.

Let us first consider the case for Poland. The way to a reunited Poland seems to me a particularly difficult one. The perplexity arises out of the crime of the original partition; whichever side emerges with an effect of victory must needs give up territory if an autonomous Poland is to reappear. A victorious Germany would probably reconstitute the Duchy of Warsaw under a German prince; an entirely victorious Russia would probably rejoin Posen to Russian Poland and the Polish fragment of Galicia, and create a dependent Polish kingdom under the Tsar. Neither project would be received with unstinted delight by the Poles, but either would probably be acceptable to a certain section of them. Disregarding the dim feelings of the peasantry, Austrian Poland would probably be the most willing to retain a connection with its old rulers. The Habsburgs have least estranged the Poles. The Cracow district is the

only section of Poland which has been at all reconciled to foreign control; it is the most autonomous and contented of the fragments.

It is doubtful how far national unanimity is any longer possible between the three Polish fragments. Like most English writers, I receive a considerable amount of printed matter from various schools of Polish patriotism, and wide divergences of spirit and intention appear. A weak, divided and politically isolated Poland of twelve or fifteen million people, under some puppet adventurer king set up between the Hohenzollerns and the Tsardom, does not promise much happiness for the Poles or much security for the peace of the world. An entirely independent Poland will be a feverish field of international intrigue--intrigue to which the fatal Polish temperament lends itself all too readily; it may be a battlefield again within five-and-twenty years. I think, if I were a patriotic Pole, I should determine to be a Slav at any cost, and make the best of Russia; ally myself with all her liberal tendencies, and rise or fall with her. And I should do my utmost in a field where at present too little has been done to establish understandings and lay the foundations of a future alliance with the Czech-Slovak community to the south. But, then, I am not a Pole, but a Western European with a strong liking for the Russians. I am democratic and scientific, and the Poles I have met are Catholic and aristocratic and romantic, and all sorts of difficult things that must make co-operation with them on the part of Russians, Ruthenian peasants, Czechs, and, indeed, other Poles, slow and insecure. I doubt if either Germany or Russia wants to incorporate more Poles--Russia more

particularly, which has all Siberia over which to breed Russians--and I am inclined to think that there is a probability that the end of this war may find Poland still divided, and with boundary lines running across her not materially different from those of 1914. That is, I think, an undesirable probability, but until the Polish mind qualifies its desire for absolute independence with a determination to orient itself definitely to some larger political mass, it remains one that has to be considered.

But the future of Poland is not really separate from that of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, nor is that again to be dealt with apart from that of the Balkans. From Danzig to the Morea there runs across Europe a series of distinctive peoples, each too intensely different and national to be absorbed and assimilated by either of their greater neighbours, Germany or Russia, and each relatively too small to stand securely alone. None have shaken themselves free from monarchical traditions; each may become an easy prey to dynastic follies and the aggressive obsessions of diplomacy. Centuries of bloody rearrangement may lie before this East Central belt of Europe.

To the liberal idealist the thought of a possible Swiss system or group of Swiss systems comes readily to mind. One thinks of a grouping of groups of Republics, building up a United States of Eastern Europe. But neither Hohenzollerns nor Tsar would welcome that. The arm of democratic France is not long enough to reach to help forward such a development, and Great Britain is never sure whether she is a "Crowned Republic" or a

Germanic monarchy. Hitherto in the Balkans she has lent her influence chiefly to setting up those treacherous little German kings who have rewarded her so ill. The national monarchs of Serbia and Montenegro have alone kept faith with civilisation. I doubt, however, if Great Britain will go on with that dynastic policy. She herself is upon the eve of profound changes of spirit and internal organisation. But whenever one thinks of the possibilities of Republican development in Europe as an outcome of this war, it is to realise the disastrous indifference of America to the essentials of the European situation. The United States of America could exert an enormous influence at the close of the war in the direction of a liberal settlement and of liberal institutions.... They will, I fear, do nothing of the sort.

It is here that the possibility of some internal change in Germany becomes of such supreme importance. The Hohenzollern Imperialism towers like the black threat of a new Caesarism over all the world. It may tower for some centuries; it may vanish to-morrow. A German revolution may destroy it; a small group of lunacy commissioners may fold it up and put it away. But should it go, it would at least take with it nearly every crown between Hamburg and Constantinople. The German kings would vanish like a wisp of smoke. Suppose a German revolution and a correlated step forward towards liberal institutions on the part of Russia, then the whole stage of Eastern Europe would clear as fever goes out of a man. This age of international elbowing and jostling, of intrigue and diplomacy, of wars, massacres, deportations en masse, and the continual fluctuation of irrational boundaries would come to an end



forthwith.

So sweeping a change is the extreme possibility. The probability is of something less lucid and more prosaic; of a discussion of diplomatists; of patched arrangements. But even under these circumstances the whole Eastern European situation is so fluid and little controlled by any plain necessity, that there will be enormous scope for any individual statesman of imagination and force of will.

There have recently been revelations, more or less trustworthy, of German schemes for a rearrangement of Eastern Europe. They implied a German victory. Bohemia, Poland, Galicia and Ruthenia were to make a Habsburg-ruled State from the Baltic to the Black Sea. The Jugo-Slav and the Magyar were to be linked (uneasy bedfellows) into a second kingdom, also Habsburg ruled; Austria was to come into the German Empire as a third Habsburg dukedom or kingdom; Roumania, Bulgaria and Greece were to continue as independent Powers, German ruled. Recently German proposals published in America have shown a disposition to admit the claims of Roumania to the Wallachian districts of Transylvania.

Evidently the urgent need to create kingdoms or confederations larger than any such single States as the natural map supplies, is manifest to both sides. If Germany, Italy and Russia can come to any sort of general agreement in these matters, their arrangements will be a matter of secondary importance to the Western Allies--saving our duty to Serbia and Montenegro and their rulers. Russia may not find the German idea of

a Polish plus Bohemian border State so very distasteful, provided that the ruler is not a German; Germany may find the idea still tolerable if the ruler is not the Tsar.

The destiny of the Serbo-Croatian future lies largely in the hands of Italy and Bulgaria. Bulgaria was not in this war at the beginning, and she may not be in it at the end. Her King is neither immortal nor irreplaceable. Her desire now must be largely to retain her winnings in Macedonia, and keep the frontier posts of a too embracing Germany as far off as possible. She has nothing to gain and much to fear from Roumania and Greece. Her present relations with Turkey are unnatural. She has everything to gain from a prompt recovery of the friendship of Italy and the sea Powers. A friendly Serbo-Croatian buffer State against Germany will probably be of equal comfort in the future to Italy and Bulgaria; more especially if Italy has pushed down the Adriatic coast along the line of the former Venetian possessions. Serbia has been overrun, but never were the convergent forces of adjacent interests so clearly in favour of her recuperation. The possibility of Italy and that strange Latin outlier, Roumania, joining hands through an allied and friendly Serbia must be very present in Italian thought. The allied conception of the land route from the West and America to Bagdad and India is by Mont Cenis, Trieste, Serbia and Constantinople, as their North European line to India is through Russia by Baku.

And that brings us to Constantinople.

Constantinople is not a national city; it is now, and it has always been, an artificial cosmopolis, and Constantinople and the Dardanelles are essentially the gate of the Black Sea. It is to Russia that the waterway is of supreme importance. Any other Power upon it can strangle Russia; Russia, possessing it, is capable of very little harm to any other country.

Roumania is the next most interested country. But Roumania can reach up the Danube and through Bulgaria, Serbia or Hungary to the outer world. Her greatest trade will always be with Central Europe. For generations the Turks held Thrace and Anatolia before they secured Constantinople. The Turk can exist without Constantinople; he is at his best outside Constantinople; the fall of Constantinople was the beginning of his decay. He sat down there and corrupted. His career was at an end. I confess that I find a bias in my mind for a Russian ownership of Constantinople. I think that if she does not get it now her gravitation towards it in the future will be so great as to cause fresh wars. Somewhere she must get to open sea, and if it is not through Constantinople then her line must lie either through a dependent Armenia thrust down to the coast of the Levant or, least probable and least desirable of all, through the Persian Gulf. The Constantinople route is the most natural and least controversial of these. With the dwindling of the Turkish power, the Turks at Constantinople become more and more like robber knights levying toll at the pass. I can imagine Russia making enormous concessions in Poland, for example, accepting retrocessions, and conceding autonomy, rather than foregoing her ancient destiny upon

the Bosphorus. I believe she will fight on along the Black Sea coast until she gets there.

This, I think, is Russia's fundamental end, without which no peace is worth having, as the liberation of Belgium and the satisfaction of France is the fundamental end of Great Britain, and Trieste-Fiume is the fundamental end of Italy.

But for all the lands that lie between Constantinople and West Prussia there are no absolutely fundamental ends; that is the land of quid pro quo; that is where the dealing will be done. Serbia must be restored and the Croats liberated; sooner or later the south Slav state will insist upon itself; but, except for that, I see no impossibility in the German dream of three kingdoms to take the place of Austro-Hungary, nor even in a southward extension of the Hohenzollern Empire to embrace the German one of the three. If the Austrians have a passion for Prussian "kultur," it is not for us to restrain it. Austrian, Saxon, Bavarian, Hanoverian and Prussian must adjust their own differences. Hungary would be naturally Habsburg; is, in fact, now essentially Habsburg, more Habsburg than Austria, and essentially anti-Slav. Her gravitation to the Central Powers seems inevitable.

Whether the Polish-Czech combination would be a Habsburg kingdom at all is another matter. Only if, after all, the Allies are far less successful than they have now every reason to hope would that become possible.

The gravitation of that west Slav state to the Central European system or to Russia will, I think, be the only real measure of ultimate success or failure in this war. I think it narrows down to that so far as Europe is concerned. Most of the other things are inevitable. Such, it seems to me, is the most open possibility in the European map in the years immediately before us.

If by dying I could assure the end of the Hohenzollern Empire to-morrow I would gladly do it. But I have, as a balancing prophet, to face the high probability of its outliving me for some generations. It is to me a deplorable probability. Far rather would I anticipate Germany quit of her eagles and Hohenzollerns, and ready to take her place as the leading Power of the United States of Europe.