

**HELLAS AND UNREDEEMED
HELLENISM: THE POLICY OF VICTORY
IN THE EAST AND ITS RESULTS.
SMYRNA, A GREEK CITY. HELLENISM
IN ASIA MINOR IN THE MIDDLE AGES**

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by
GEORGES BOURDON

Smyrna, a Greek City
by
CHARLES VELLAY

Hellenism in Asia Minor in the Middle Ages
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CHARLES DIEHL

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THE POLICY OF VICTORY IN THE EAST AND ITS RESULTS.

By GEORGES BOURDON*

If I am here to address you today, it is not because I have been asked to do so. It is I who have desired, speaking quite independently and on my own responsibility, to inform French public opinion of deeds and misdeeds, about the scandalous nature of which it entertains not the slightest suspicion. You will have no difficulty in believing me if I tell you that I am not, in any sense, yielding to a feeling of vanity. In the solemn feeling of expectancy in which the world is living at present, it would be a criminal act to make imprudent suggestions, and we should feel only scorn for a bad citizen who was capable of raising his voice for causes foreign to the interests of France and the future of peace. Having recently returned from a long journey which took me successively to Greece, Asia Minor, Constantinople, Thrace, Bulgaria and Macedonia, I feel that I am fulfilling a real duty in bearing testimony publicly to what I have heard and seen, and in pointing out the dangers into which a blind policy and egoistic interests threaten to precipitate a glorious and at the same time terrible victory.

The most elementary notions are there jumbled together and opposing ideas are closely dovetailed. I arrived in the Orient with what I believed to be simple and in no way original views. Right soon I was made to see to what a degree these views were superficial. You probably cling to the archaic idea that community of peril creates community of interest and that the peoples that were in the league against death still maintain this feeling of solidarity in time of safety. You will find in the East plenty of people who are knowing enough to smile at your ingenuousness. It is the refinement of finesse

*This article is a translation of an address entitled, *Ce qu'est devenu en Orient la politique de la victoire*, delivered in Paris on June 11, 1919, before the Ligue de l'Enseignement, under the auspices of the Ligue "Droit et Liberté."

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to be the friend of one's enemy, the adversary of one's ally; to align yourself with him who has raised his knife to smite you, as against him who helped you to escape the thrust. That seems to be the way that a man, in civil as well as military life, as a government official or a private citizen, in business as well as in politics, succeeds in making history. It is likewise by this manner of procedure that people rebuff goodwill, spoil friendship, compromise their credit, feed fanaticism, revive the arrogance and covetousness of the vanquished and over the corpse of baffled justice plant the seeds for future conflicts. In this topsy-turvy world, we come at every step on furrows where cynical or foolish hands are casting, with reckless profusion and with peremptory gestures, the pestilential germs from which new carnage will tomorrow arise, unless this stupid desire is checked. Downright lies are mingled with sophistry, and the coalition of right which brought us victory is broken down by the coalition of egotism, and a whole crowd of incapables, who call themselves realists, are as a matter of fact only the marionettes of a troop of profiteers who call themselves patriots.

I shall be obliged to speak of our allies and in particular of our friends the Italians. I will do this with frankness, guarding against all charge of ambiguity. I am one of those who, though regretting it, can find explanations for the wrecking of that beautiful ship, which ever since Aug. 2, 1914 has borne the Sacred Union of all the French, but I am also one who, neither for today nor for tomorrow, can accept the hypothesis that the Sacred Union of the Allies, of all the allies, small and great, can be repudiated. Together we went into battle, to the sacrifice, and to the victory; together, with hands clasped and hearts united, we must advance over our future paths, only anxious to remove pernicious obstacles and to call to our side, when the time comes, both the spectators of the combat and the adversaries who have there opposed us.

Between our allies of yesterday and our friends of tomorrow we have, however, the right to reserve privileged places to some; with a sincere heart we have given Italy her place. We have a common origin and our languages have a common source; our interests, along many lines, coincide, and can be mutually helpful; nowhere are they contradictory; our tem-

peraments are to a certain degree identical; we form the Latin family, and if it is necessary for the sake of common harmony that there be a balancing of influences and races, it is upon Italy and ourselves that the duty devolves, in the civilization of tomorrow, to sound the rallying call of the Latin races, unless we wish this world to become a purely Anglo-Saxon world. France and Italy, united, will assure peace in the Mediterranean, and peace in the Mediterranean is a condition prerequisite to European peace.

This said, we demand from Italy that she consent with good grace to make the same sacrifices for the common good that we have been content to make, and not to render too difficult the task of the friends who have sincerely helped in our task. In the very midst of war, when our armies in the Orient were most grievously menaced, Italy did her best to perpetuate Greek anarchy, to save to the pro-German Constantine his dishonest throne, to discredit by the basest calumnies the great Cretan Venizelos, and to bring to naught the work of reparation of the Provisional Government at Salonika. It was certainly not in the interest of our coalition that this regrettable policy came to the fore. It is now ancient history; let us not dwell upon it. And yet it was only yesterday that brilliant speeches and numerous articles in the Italian press were launched against us with furious invectives. The organ of Mr. Giolitti, *La Stampa*, permitted itself to describe the German disaster as a political catastrophe for Italy, and denounced the 'extreme harshness' of the peace imposed on Germany 'by the well-known blind hatred of the French and the exaggeration of the sentiment of revenge'. Unjust and deplorable statements, which will fall with all their weight on those who utter them. We might disdain to notice them, if they were isolated expressions and did not give evidence of being part of a systematic plan.

This systematic plan can best be caught in full action in the Orient. It is being spread openly—I am almost tempted to say officially. When the Italian policy is active in favor of Turks or Bulgarians, or against the Serbs or Greeks, it is always just barely within the bounds of the common policy. Every time that a measure of public order is required, or that some complaint appears necessary before Turkish or Bulgarian authorities, the Italian representatives participate with the

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tips of their fingers, and merely for form's sake. Every time on the contrary, that these same authorities essay a resistance, they are sure to find an advocate in the Italian as against the Frenchman, the Englishman, or the Greek. In the thousand and one details of military occupation, the Italian officer takes the part of him whom it is really his duty to control.

He has little or nothing to do with his English or French comrades, but in Bulgaria, he walks openly with the Bulgarian officers, and in Smyrna there is even a club in which a room is especially reserved for the daily meetings of Italian and Turkish officers. In Sofia the society dames organize teas in his honor, and on two occasions Greek and Serbian officers threatened to withdraw from the Interallied Military Club if the Bulgarians were admitted, as the Italians had insistently demanded. At Smyrna the Italian authorities exerted themselves through advertisements in the papers to bring about Italian naturalization among this interloping Levantine population which throngs the harbors of the Levant and which has never been so eagerly courted. There was there a commissioner named Manfredi, who made himself so obnoxious that, on the request of the French High Commissioner, he was recalled.

We do not contest Italy's right to choose her friends, but until the peace is signed, when we find ourselves in the presence of peoples who only yesterday were fighting against us and who will remain tomorrow the declared enemies of our best allies, and when it is a matter of making governments, upon whom we have hard terms to impose, feel the threat of force—the only argument that amounts to anything to races that know only brutal domination or submission—we are certainly justified in regretting that allied solidarity, before allowing itself to dissolve, should not await the final hour of settlement. If we add that this statement is made not without a feeling of profound disappointment, Italy will surely see in this not so much regret for aid lost as sorrow for a friendship compromised. Is it wounding her or is it rendering homage to her to make a cordial appeal to her loyalty and to invoke, in our mutual interest, the recollection of so many great hours in which a seal has been set upon Latin fraternity?

In order to show, beyond any possibility of doubt, that such a policy brings heavy risks to peace, it is enough to see

the Turk and Bulgarian at work and to look into their thoughts. Do they regard themselves as conquered? Not in the least. The former, with that faculty for forgetting and submitting, which is a result of oriental fatalism, thinks no more of the bloody defeats in Mesopotamia, and will tell you that if he surrendered, it was because the fall of Bulgaria and Austria left him alone in the center of a coalition of enemies; his inviolate capital is for him the proof of a power that the Allies feared to affront.

As to Bulgaria, the case is still better. It was the will of the people under arms which put an end to a war that was always unpopular. Mr. Theodoroff, President of the Council, told me this in the plainest of terms. It was necessary to conceal from this people, which had only feelings of tenderness for Russia and affection for France, the fact that they were taking up arms against the French and the Russians; having advanced victoriously through Macedonia, they at once informed the Government of Ferdinand and Radoslavoff that they would advance no further, and in fact, for a year, the army contented itself with holding the positions it had acquired; at the end of that time, war-wearied, it signified its desire for peace, threatening to turn and march upon Sofia. It was necessary to yield. "If we made peace," Mr. Theodoroff concluded, "it was in a feeling of confidence in your justice." In a question of justice, we all know that the Bulgarians are experts. How refuse justice, if not gratitude, to a people which turned its cannons away from our army, in order to threaten with them its own government?

When a race, historically and psychologically trained to the cult of force, is freed from this burden, and when those who now wield power to the end that justice may be done, seem to spend their ingenuity in finding excuses to abdicate; when a conqueror, settled in the land of the conquered, appears to have no other thought than to make people forget that he is the conqueror, is it to be wondered at, that the conquered, cherishing the illusion that he still possesses the power, recurs to his old-time arrogance, and by cleverness, by bargaining, or, if need be, by deeds of violence, (which he may always disavow), tries to take advantage of the weakness of his conqueror,

in order to wrest back from him a part of what he lost at one blow?

This is exactly what one sees in Bulgaria.

The country is sprinkled with little Italian posts and you can imagine that their control is not very exacting. But by a singular failure to understand military necessities, the terms of the armistice neglected to impose there a state of siege, and also committed the mistake of leaving the direction of the railroads in the hands of the Bulgarians, in such a way that the Bulgarians are masters of all the means of transportation. At Sofia an Interallied staff is located, with French, English, Italian, Greek and Serbian sections, at the head of which is the French general Chrétien, the supreme representative of the Allies and acting under General Franchet d'Espérey, Commander-in-Chief at Constantinople of the Armies of the East. Bulgarian officers are everywhere to be seen, promenading with head high in air, with arrogant looks, tightly belted and stiff figures, uniformed like Russians but bearing themselves like Prussians. Are these the conquered,—these military men, who, parading along the sidewalks, yield not an inch? How absurd! The people remember having seen a division of prisoners, liberated by General Franchet d'Espérey, pass under arches of triumph, in the midst of popular acclamations saluting the victors. Many of them were without doubt such; they have journals, to which our military censor is more kind than to our own, which let them understand every morning that it was only with their permission that the Allies entered.

They, as well as their soldiers, salute neither the French nor the English, to say nothing of the Greeks and Serbs, who are anathema to them, and whom on occasion they insult right in the street. Salutes are only offered by the Bulgarian soldiers to the Italian officers. Nay, it often happens that Bulgarians publicly arrest French soldiers. There was a captain of our staff who, when insolently accosted by a Bulgarian commandant, insisted on receiving from him the salute that the simple soldiers systematically refuse to our officers. On another occasion a Bulgarian officer and one of our privates met, face to face, in a footpath in the snow. "Don't you see that I am a Bulgarian officer," said the first stiffly. "And I," said the poilu, looking him square in the face, "am a French