

territory has been held at one time is sufficient to support one's claim to it, there must be a great deal of renunciation and restitution. Germany would have something to say to Toul and Verdun, so her Foreign Secretary asserts; England might whisper something in America's ear; Lombardy could not be said to belong to Italy; Calais might look across the Straits; and Italy ought betray signs of nervousness when the Papal States are mentioned. On these lines the topsy-turvydom of annexations, restitutions, and disannexations would endure for ever. The fact is, there are *old* and *new* principles of government which are used as *opportunity* requires the one or the other. This may be illustrated by a case in point. Milan and Venice were, in 1815, given to Austria by a general agreement of the Powers in the treaty of Vienna. Austria could point to treaties made and signed to this effect in 1859 when attacked by Italy, rights of nationality being invoked for conquests as they are to-day with regard to Italia Irredenta. The hereditary rights and treaties (scraps of paper excluded) would to-day constitute a right any way, just as the cat jumps on the proper side. To this sorry pass have International Law and Justice come. Principles and ideals are made the sport of "Truth clad in hell-fire." Strip this action of governments of all "wrappings and ensowments" and the principle "might is right" is the result.

From France's point of view the Alsace-Lorraine epic has many sweet memories, if it has had sad ones, and has remained enshrined in the many efforts to redeem a people considered to be sold into slavery, as Joseph was sold by his brothers. The protest made by the deputies of the shorn provinces in Bordeaux was strong, striking, and somewhat of the plaintive wail, with an accusation of abandonment. The *revanche* was studiously prepared—more in salons than in men, equipment and artillery—and not abandoned until 1887. Until that time *députés protestataires* represented the provinces in the Reichstag; but, with their abandonment, as they thought, by France, there arose the advocates of autonomy for Alsace-Lorraine, which must mean inclusion in the German Confederation as an independent State.

Notwithstanding the fact that these provinces were drifting more and more from France, there lived among the French, especially in Paris, a warm feeling for the kith and kin de là bas. Déroulède, Habert, and others kept the sacred fire alive. This spirit was crystallised in the writings of Barrès, Bazin, and a most of others. The primitive purity of the civilisation peculiar to the Alsatian mountains was extolled; rustic customs and virtues were depicted; the pride and supreme devotion to the best traditions of France that existed there were expatiated on. The anguish brought into homes by the war of 1870 is described in *Colette Baudouin*; the grossness of German culture and militarism stands out in *Au Service de l'Allemagne*; while the divisions in families, as the young were attracted by the glamor of things German in education and commerce, and as the old still clung to the bewitching charms of France quand-même, are portrayed in *Les Oberlé*. Even casual readers of French literature cannot but be struck by the halo that is thrown around the déchirement of 1870. Ballads, novels, histories, school-readers, all have contributed their part in preventing the lost provinces being forgotten. The Strassburg monument in the Place de la Concorde is a type of the country, with the tricolor endaul, and its significant "Quand-même"? It has been the rendezvous of many demonstrations, but the Chambre de Députés across the river has blighted many of the fair hopes entertained.

Sympathy may be largely with France in hoping for the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine, but there is another view of the question. What think the Alsatians and Lorrainers now? Are they not to have a say in the matter, or is the after-war reconstruction to be a coercion? Their disgust for anti-clerical France has, we are disposed to think, settled the matter for all time. Before the world-war these peoples were contented with their lot: they had a large measure of autonomy since 1911, commercial prosperity had come to them, and if they from time to time saw more militarism than they would have desired, well, they were free from the nagging and petty interferences which obtained in the Third Republic, "the high-water mark of the democratic tide." Perquisitions and cruelties abounded: tracasseries and mesquineries were the order of the day. The Panama scandal and Dreyfus affair did not commend in their eyes the honesty of the France they had left. Moreover, official France in various ways disowned the forfeited provinces. There was the Schnaebelé incident, the expulsion of the Abbé Delsor. Was not Déroulède's *Ligue des Patriotes*, which had the *revanche* as its principal object, suppressed in 1889 as a political menace? A strange nemesis for the ardent patriot, and author of that super-symn of hate, *Vae Vic-*

*toribus*.\* So the author of the fiery poem, "En Avant!" † sleeps the long sleep with his dream unrealised, but his spirit is perpetuated by a chastened France.

It would seem from the dicta of Allied statesmen that one of the post-bellum consequences will be that peoples shall be allowed to choose their own allegiances. It seems to us that, if such an option is given Alsace-Lorraine, the decision may be considered judged. To Germany they will stick. They may have disliked Germany, but they have learned to loathe France. A referendum in this matter shall bring no consolation to the Allied cause. But, if practical politics are to be discussed, make them a buffer State between France and Germany, and the probabilities are that they would gladly assume the responsibility of working out their own salvation, though experience has taught that in a general crisis buffer States come in for a severe mauling, as instance Belgium and Luxemburg.

The overwhelming argument against a reversion to France is her anti-clericalism. The lost provinces have been disgusted with her pettifogging visions of the clerical menace, and so have definitely renounced her. Nothing but a crushing military victory against Germany will bring these frontier provinces within French hegemony, and then, *vae victis!* If such restoration is made a *sine qua non* in European reconstruction, it shall be a sad day for Alsace-Lorraine, and it is piously to be hoped that von Kuhlmann's words will come true that "so long as a single German hand can hold a gun, the integrity of the territory handed down to us as a glorious inheritance by our forefathers can never be the object of any negotiations or concessions."

How awkward it would be for an Alsace-Lorraine forming portion of France! France does not recognise the Church, but to persecute her. Her laws against members of Congregations have done their work: they have been driven into exile. Church and State have been separated; Church property has been confiscated; nothing has been spared, not even the foundations which unsuspecting Catholics gave for the benefit of their souls. And all this carried out in a spirit of malevolence and hatred. The wheel is come full circle. Alsace-Lorraine is not in a hurry to become a part of this system. The Archbishops of Strassburg and Metz are not anxious to lose their palaces, all ecclesiastical property, and the 2,636,370 marks which is yearly contributed by the Imperial Government to Catholic worship. Logically, poverty, destitution, and slavery await them if they are unfortunate enough to be annexed by France—we say *logically* for an atheistical Government could not afford to make exceptions where religion is concerned. Parish priests do not feel called on to abandon their presbyteries, and relinquish their claim to their churches, and the right of visiting their schools. It is reasonable to suppose that the Congregations of both sexes in these two provinces are not anxious to take the road to exile. It has few attractions.

"Tu proverai si come sa di sale  
la pane altrui, e com'è duro calle  
lo scendere e il salir per l'altrui scale."

—Dante *Paradiso*, c. xvii. 58.

It is admitted on all sides that Alsace-Lorraine has prospered materially, in an unwanted way, under German rule. The large measure of autonomy granted in 1911 paves the way towards ultimate independence in the German Confederation. Together with these advantages, the dominant matter of religion seems to demand a German alliance, a consideration which the Allies cannot afford to overlook in their ardent zeal for satisfying legitimate aspirations. Union with France would mean irremediable

\* Eh bien, mois je le hais, ce peuple de Vandales,  
De reîtres, de bourreaux—tous ces noms sont les siens;  
Je le hais, je maudis dans leurs races fatales  
La Prusse et les Prussiens.

Enfin, c'est là surtout le voeu de ma jeunesse,  
C'est seul pour quoi je vis, c'est à quoi seul je tiens,  
Que la Patrie en deuil se reprenne et ne laisse  
Que la Prusse aux Prussiens!

† En avant! tant pis pour qui tombe  
La mort n'est rien. Vive la tombe,  
Quand le Pays en sort vivant.  
En avant!

How like the "Chant du Départ" of Marie-Joseph de Chénier:

La république nous appelle;  
Sachous vaincre, ou sachous périr;  
Un Français doit vivre pour elle,  
Pour elle un Français doit mourir.