

# La Palestine et les universités suisses

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## SWISS INSTITUTE.

Lecture, given by Dr. G. P. Gooch, M.A.,  
on 3rd April, 1925.

I should like to thank my old friend, the Chairman, for his kind words. It is always a great pleasure to me to address the members of the Swiss Institute, and I usually introduce the same subject and the same title, which deals with the European situation. This situation is like the English climate: it is always changing. In some countries the sun is shining brightly, and in others nothing but black clouds, and the majority of them, like my own, sees a struggle in political affairs.

I shall have a story to tell you which will not send you away in a state of hilarity, or in a state of gloom; I think it will send you away in a condition of sympathy.

The situation has always been a mixture between hope and despair, and good and evil. Following my usual practice, I shall deal with the subject of the occurrences of the last twelve months since my last visit to you, and, as usual, I am going to begin with Russia, and work my way through the centre of Europe to the West, in which we live.

A year ago I told you that the great feature in the recent history of Russia was the fact that the countries of Europe, one after another, were recognizing Russia, but only recognizing her diplomatically, which has a definite political meaning, by means of exchanging Ministers or Ambassadors. It does not mean that we are approving, but only that we are recognizing the Russian Government, but we consider that the Government is no more a government of revolution, but that it is likely to remain for a considerable time. It is more than a year ago since the British Government recognized the Russian Government during the *régime* of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, following the example set by Italy only a few months ago; but since I was here a year ago, something more has been done, and that is that the French Government, through M. Herriot, has recognized the Russian Government. I always thought that France would be the last to recognize that Government. Russia is now recognized by nearly all the Powers of Europe, and what is more important, in addition to the three Great Powers—England, France and Italy—the Russians have been recognized by nearly all European Governments; the only nations by whom they are not yet recognized are the U.S.A. and Japan, the two Great Powers in other parts of the world. The upshot of this is that the national position of the Soviet Government is more secure than two years ago, when it was considered an outcast.

Russia, though recognized, has no increase of political liberty. She is no further politically, socially or spiritually advanced than a year ago, and there is no improvement at all. The Russians have never been free in the whole course of their history; they are no further now, and I see no prospect of their becoming so in the future. The Russian Government does not pretend to believe in what we mean by democracy, and that is being governed by opinion, discussion, free Press and free Parliament. Anything of the sort was killed by the Russians in the same way as they killed the Czar and the old *régime*. The former Government of Russia was of the extreme Right; is has now become the Government of the extreme Left, and the contempt for the liberty of the individual is the same.

I would now tell you about the economic position of Russia, and the news I am about to give you is not good.

Lenin introduced the new economic policy of Russia. The Russians were allowed to buy and sell, to produce as much as they could of food, raw materials and manufactured articles, and to sell them. In spite of the restoration in the West of Europe, the economic position is still extremely bad. Capital is required everywhere. The Russian treaty was signed last summer, but was repudiated by the country. The main object of that was to get a loan to develop their national resources. They want money, but they cannot offer guarantees of security to the two countries which have the money to lend, i.e., England and France. They will not provide the security and guarantees which are necessary to open the pockets of these nations and obtain the capital which they need. There is a struggle going on in Russia and will continue for years, a struggle between Bolshevism and foreign capital, on the one hand, and the continuation of industrialism under the capitalist system, on the other.

As to the future of Russia, no one knows; some think that the *régime* will become more or less moderately free, but since the death of Lenin there are manifestations of different opinions. Trotsky, who used to be regarded as a very extreme man, is now regarded as a heretic on account of his moderation.

I give you my own view for what it is worth, and that is that Russia is not likely, in my time or yours to become a happy and prosperous country. It has such terrible traditions to live down. The Russians are largely an uneducated and ignorant people. Difficulty of transport makes

the future of Russia, as far as I can foresee it, extremely dark.

Passing from Russia, I will say a few words about Poland, a country which has slightly improved since a year ago. Poland has plenty of national resources, a tremendous lot of timber, plenty of coal, the great river Vistula flowing through the country for hundreds of miles, and sufficient land to grow food for the whole population; but they have great difficulties, and they continue. The Poles are not very good, in the way of co-operation politically, to form and keep a stable Government. There is a constant change of portfolios in Government offices, but that is not the greatest of the difficulties. Over one-third of the population of Poland consists of people who are not Poles at all. They are Russians, Germans, Jews, and the Ruthenes of Galicia. These four peoples, put together, make up about one-third of the whole population. They are not particularly happy under the Polish *régime*—I do not say they would be happier under any other *régime*—but of other things which I shall mention, the racial minorities are at present a weakness rather than a source of strength to the States in which they find themselves. The lesson we have learnt in England, and only in recent times, is the way to strengthen your State in the truest sense, and that is to increase the number of your contented citizens—a fact which we have learnt gradually in Canada, S. Africa and Ireland, and is being learned very slowly indeed in Poland, Roumania, Serbia and Czechoslovakia. It is one of the most difficult lessons to learn. This lesson teaches us that it is the duty of the majority to treat the racial minorities of the State with consideration and sympathy; it is not only the right, but the wise thing to do.

I have spoken of the natural resources of Poland, and have reminded you how great they are. I have also reminded you of the racial majority of the Poles, and how they must give increasing consideration to the traditions and ideals of the racial minorities. Now, there is a third point in regard to the Poles, and that is their foreign relations. Poland is a very big country; it is not a Great Power in a technical sense. You know there are seven Great Powers in the world, five in Europe and two outside. Poland is not one of these seven. She has a population of 27 millions and a large geographical area. Although not one of the Great Powers, she comes next in order to them; she is at the top of the Powers of the second class. In spite of this position, her foreign relations are not at all satisfactory. You know where Poland is on the map? She is sandwiched between Germany and Russia. Germany and Russia both suffered very much in the war; their Governments had been subject to revolution and had been through economic and industrial crises. This is perfectly true, but they will recover. Everyone knows that probably in the lifetime of many of us in this hall, Germany and Russia will again become Great Powers in every sense of the word—great in population, great in wealth, great in energy, and great in military power. Now, there is Poland between the two, and her relations to one are just as bad as her relations to the other. I should regard the internal relations of Poland as being decidedly hopeful. In regard to the external relations to Poland, the conditions are decidedly dangerous. I may have something to say a little later on in the evening about the question of security, in which I shall have to mention the name of Poland.

Now I pass from Poland down to the south. You will observe I have not time to speak to you of the many countries that belonged to Russia and are now free, namely, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania; I have not time to deal with them, nor do I think it necessary, as there is nothing very important or very new to say about them. We therefore come south to the Balkans, and let me begin with Greece.

We have been reading about Greece in the papers during the past twelve months, and, indeed, before that. We read that she appeals to our sympathy for her sufferings and struggles, but we also read much that encourages us to be hopeful. We read of the wonderful spirit of the little Greek nation, the wonderful efforts they are making to deal with the great mass of refugees who are coming from Turkey in Asia, Smyrna and the rest of the Turkish Empire, Constantinople and Eastern Thrace.

I have said here before, and I say again, that the Greeks are one of the indestructible nations of the world. However great its troubles, its foreign foes and its civil wars, the Greek race always survives, retains its self-confidence and its belief in its past and future. Greece is still struggling with a good deal more than a million of refugees, who have poured over the frontier, or have been brought through the Aegean Sea to Greece, to find a country impoverished by years of war, distracted by civil strife, and not highly endowed by nature. Some of you may have travelled in Greece, as I have done, and brought away with you, as I have done, an impression of the natural features of Greece. There are some fertile parts in the north of Thessaly which belonged to the Turks until 1912. Greece is a very

barren country, and is only able to support its population because they need very little and eat less than anyone in Europe. They are thrifty, otherwise they would not be able to live on that barren rocky little country. Now, these overwhelming numbers of refugees would have been beyond the capacity of Greece to deal with, but the League of Nations, amongst its many other beneficial humanitarian duties, held out a helping hand to the Greeks and their refugees. There is a Committee who will be looking after them for a few months. A loan of £10,000,000 was raised under the auspices of the League, but the money had to be spent on the purchasing of raw materials, for industries and other arts and crafts. This is well covered by Greek Customs and other securities.

I have not a doubt that there is terrible sufferings amongst the refugees, for many millions are in Salonika, in the Greek Islands of the Aegean Sea. This terrible suffering requires all the help we can give, but I have no doubt the worst is over.

The way that Greece has dealt with the problem of these refugees is very creditable, and I quoted to you a year ago, and I quote again, what a very eminent professor at Athens said to me. "It is a terrible burden for the time, but twenty years hence they would be a great additional strength to the country." In ten to twenty years Greece will have assimilated her population. They will have well cultivated lands, will have developed a number of industries, and will have added to the strength and wealth of the country. Therefore, in leaving Greece, I suggest to you that the future is likely to be brighter after the terrible years of struggle of suffering through which they have been living during the war, and the years after the war.

Now, what have I to say about Bulgaria? I cannot give a very good account of it. Bulgaria was beaten in the war, has to pay a heavy large sum annually for indemnity to the victorious Powers; but there are other difficulties: Bulgaria has what Greece had—internal dissension. It is bad enough to be beaten in a war and to pay an indemnity, but still worse if you have an absence of national sentiment. Ever since the end of the war Bulgaria has been distracted by internal elements. Three years she was ruled by Stamboliski, the leader of the peasants, a leader who became such a despot that he was overthrown and killed, and since then Bulgaria has been ruled by the party in the Towns. The present Government is ruled by money, which is a very simple state from the point of view of economics. Most of the people are peasants, but the intellectuals are to be found in the towns and to be found mainly in the professional classes. Their army was limited to 30,000 by the Peace Treaty, but however small, the army is very important in the State of Bulgaria. Since the death of Stamboliski they have been ruled by the *intelligentsia* and army chiefs. There is not only a struggle, but there is further difficulty, and that is the Communists. You will say, and rightly, too, is it not extraordinary that a country almost entirely composed of peasants should be subject to the Communist danger? The answer is that the Communist danger is largely, if not entirely, due to Russian propaganda. The extent of Russian propaganda in England is under discussion, but it is very different from the extent of propaganda in Bulgaria. About eighteen months ago, there was a very serious and alarming revolution, which was put down at the cost of a great deal of bloodshed. How strong Communism is, I do not know, it is the essence of these secret movements that no one knows how strong they are; but the Government is very frightened of them, and the situation is that the Government in power at Sofia is not representative of the majority of the country. I shall not be surprised if at any moment there should be another revolution, and if the agrarians did not seize the reins of power.

(To be concluded.)

## La Palestine et les Universités Suisses.

Nous apprenons que Monsieur le Professeur W. E. Rappart a assisté à l'inauguration de l'Université Juive comme délégué de l'Université de Genève. Monsieur Rappart qui était seul à représenter notre pays à cette cérémonie, fut l'objet d'une touchante manifestation de sympathie de la part d'une soixantaine d'ingénieurs, chimistes, fonctionnaires, magistrats, médecins, journalistes et architectes, tous d'anciens élèves d'universités suisses actuellement en Palestine, qui avaient organisé une soirée familière en son honneur à l'Hotel Allenby à Jerusalem.

## FESTA PRO "SEMINARIO DIOCESANO TICINENSE."

Un appello urgente è stato fatto da S. Ecc. Mons. Aurelio Bacciarini, Amministratore Apostolico del Cantone Ticino, a riguardo delle condizioni del Seminario Diocesano Ticinese, che con poche entrate assicurate, e per mancanza di adeguato sostegno si trova ora in posizione molto precaria.

Moltissimi sono i candidati al Sacro Ministero, che per forza di circostanze, devono dipendere in parte od interamente sul Seminario per la loro