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## The Everlasting Balkans.

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AT a regular luncheon of the Club held on January 8th, Prof. Horning said:—

*Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen*,—If one looks at a geological map of Europe, one will at once see that the Balkan peninsula contains some of the oldest rock formations in the world. Therefore from this standpoint alone the title of this lecture is amply justified.

This same district must have been one of the earliest highways for the passage of people from Europe to Asia and contrariwise. Indeed, very early in the known history of the world, in the days of the Greek, we know that many a contest for superiority raged in Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece and about the Danube. Demosthenes thundered out his Philippics against the ruler of Macedon, as every classical student has good reason to know. The successor of the Greek Empires, the Roman, had its various contests with these Balkan peoples, and early in the Christian Era these districts were the scenes of renewed conflicts. Very shortly after the division under Constantine of the Latin Empire into the East and the West Roman Empire we meet, in what is now Roumania, with the Goths who were converted to Christianity about 361 A.D. The Bible was then translated from Greek into their tongue, thus giving us our earliest extended knowledge of a Teutonic speech.

Beginning with the third, but taking place mostly in the sixth and seventh centuries, we find abundant evidence of a movement of Slavic peoples towards the Balkan countries, and it is still with their descendants in Servia, Montenegro, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Roumania that the Turks are having to do. It will thus be seen that down to the fall of the Western Roman Empire, 476 A.D., and for two or three centuries later, there had been a continual changing and displacement going on which must have meant,

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and our meagre historical records said did mean, war, bloodshed and struggle almost without ceasing.

The Eastern Roman Empire, sometimes called the Greek or the Byzantine, continued intact from its origin under Constantine in 324 A.D., until the fall of Constantinople in 1453, although its existence from 1204, when it was captured by the Crusaders, was precarious in the extreme. Three peoples were its implacable foes, the Bulgars from 660 A.D. on, the Russians from the ninth century, but the great, long continued contest was with people of the Mohammedan faith to which it and the Bulgarians both finally succumbed. As is well known this faith, the third of Semitic origin, and the only one which is still professed by large bodies of Semitics, originated with Mohammed, from whose Hegira or flight from Mecca to Medina in 622 dates the Mohammedan era.

The first of these Moslems were the Saracens who made such a remarkable succession of conquests during the seventh and eighth centuries, and who met with defeat before Constantinople in 673, and again in 716. This latter battle might well be called one of the decisive battles of the world. Foiled in their attempts upon Constantinople they had also been sweeping along the north coast of Africa, had crossed over into Spain in 711 under Gebel Tarik, whence Gibraltar, overran the most of that country, and then poured over the Pyrenees into France to meet with a crushing defeat at the hands of Charles Martel, 732, at Tours. The great National Epic of France, the Song of Roland, goes back to the struggles with the Saracens, who were not driven out of South-Western Europe until 1492.

In the southeast we hear little of the Saracens after about the middle of the eleventh century. It was the Seljuk Turks, who displace them from about 1055 to 1315. This people came out of Central Asia, gave aid to the Caliph of Bagdad, but soon took possession of his dominions and overran Asia Minor. The Mongols under Zenghis Khan were their great rivals, though not for long, and it was against these Turks that Western Christendom arose in answer to the fiery appeals of Peter the Hermit, and others who wished to free the Holy City from the grasp of the Infidel. The Crusades, from 1095 to 1272, had a wide-reaching effect upon Church, State, Society and Literature. Among the celebrated warriors of these Crusades are counted Richard the Lionhearted of England and the generous-minded Saladin, leader of the Turks.

About 1227 we hear of another branch of the Turkish family, again from Central Asia, with whom we still have

to do, viz., the Ottoman Turks. The Ottomans in their career of conquest reached the Bosphorus in 1355, crossed over and took Gallipoli, in 1361 Adrianople, and in 1364 the city of Philippopolis. Then fear fell upon Southeast Europe. Rightly, for in 1389 the Servians had lost their independence at Kossovo, and in their great cycle of national song we find those terrible events crystallized. We first hear of an Ottoman Navy about 1420, and in 1453 the ancient city of Constantinople at last fell into their hands. Every student of literature and history knows how important that event was for the spread of the New Learning, doubly important because it coincided with that other great event, the invention of printing, and was followed soon after by the discovery of America. One might well say that that the Middle Ages came to an end and the Modern Era began with that year. The Turks continued their all-conquering advance. In 1458-9 Servia, Bosnia, Wallachia and Albania became Turkish provinces, and in 1497-98 Poland, one of the Christian nations upon whom fell the brunt of the attack, Hungary being the other, was thoroughly devastated. It is during this time that we find Tsar and Sultan first having political relations. Under Selim I (1512-20) the extent of the Ottoman Dominions was all but doubled, Egypt being conquered and the title *Caliph* conferred upon the Sultan by its last Arab (Egyptian) holder. Persia, the foe in the rear, which was always giving trouble, and in the end helped to weaken the Ottoman power, was also conquered by Selim. From 1520 to 1566 the Ottoman ruler was the great Suleiman I, (Solomon), the Magnificent, a worthy compeer of Francis I of France, Charles V of Germany, and Henry VIII of England. In his reign the Ottoman Empire reached its greatest extent and highest glory. In 1521 war was declared against Hungary, whose armies suffered disastrous defeat at Mohács, 1526, and in 1529 Vienna was besieged for the first time. At the close of the reign, the Turkish army, led by capable generals, numbered at least 200,000 tried warriors, of whom 20,000 were Janissaries; the navy, too, was efficient and under the command of five or six very skilful admirals. The Empire was well governed in its great extent from Persia to the confines of Germany, from Egypt to Morocco; the Black Sea was a Turkish lake; all the Balkan peninsula except Montenegro was in the power of the Turks. During this reign diplomatic relations were entered into with France in the Capitulations of 1534, and a French Ambassador was received at Constantinople in 1535. Before the end of the century the

Ottoman power was one of the "European Concert." England's first ambassador was William Harebone, appointed in 1581, and Elizabeth claimed the Sultan's friendship on the ground that "both were fighting idolaters."

The decay of the Ottoman Empire began with the successors of Suleiman I, viz.: Selim II (1566-74) and Murad III (1574-95) who was a notorious weakling. But this decay was not so general that the Turks were not able to defend themselves valiantly. The naval glory of Turkey suffered a setback at Lepanto (1571), in battle with the Venetians who in the next century were to have such a great part in contributing to Turkey's lessening power. In 1568 we hear of the clash of Turk and Russian, that third force to cripple the conquering Ottoman. In fact the wars carried on by the Turks against other Mohammedan countries weakened them all and gave Russia the opportunity to expand.

There had been continual conflict with Austria, to become the successor of Hungary, marked with several peaces, more or less badly kept, in 1568, 1573, 1576 and 1584, and then the long war, 1593-1606, which ended with the peace of Sivatork, notable because it marks the end of Turkey's era of conquest.

The seventeenth century was fateful for the Turk. A long war with Venice (1644-69) thoroughly weakened her on the sea, Russia and Poland were aggressive, and finally in 1681 the Ukraine was ceded to Russia, which was a first step in the direction of making the Black Sea Russian. There was, however, a sudden change when Kara Mustafa, taking advantage of the Hapsburg's harsh treatment of the Hungarian Protestants, declared war and besieged Vienna with a huge army in 1683. The court fled, but John Sobieski of Poland led the combined Christian forces to victory, beat back the Turks and saved Western Christendom. Coalitions against the Turks became the order of the day. Such was the success of the various foes that Turkey was glad to conclude the peace of Karlowitz (1699). It marks the end of her power of offence and the first dismemberment of her Empire. It is also the end of the first stage of the Eastern question, viz., how far will the Turks be able to advance to the west?

The second stage of the Everlasting Balkan question was: how long will it take the Turkish Empire to fall to pieces? A comparatively small body of Asiatic conquerors ruling over subject people of very different nationalities and ideals, Serbs, Croats, Bulgars, Vlachs, Greeks, how long will the Turks be

able to maintain their supremacy? As events have proved, a good long time.

In the eighteenth century it is quite evident that Turkey had grown weaker because it took no advantage of an old time opponent during the wars of the Austrian succession (1740-45) or in the Seven years war (1756-63). Austria had been looking for an opportunity to expand through the Balkans towards Constantinople, as is plainly evident in the wars of the Polish succession (1736-7), and in the terms of the Peace of Belgrade (1739).

The real aggressor during this century was Russia which like Turkey, was little affected by the revolutionary movements taking place in Western Europe. Slavic Russia fomented trouble among the kindred Slavs of Servia, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Roumania, and as the land of the Orthodox Greek Church, assumed the right to look after the interests of the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire. Peter the Great and Catherine II both cherished dreams of driving the Turk from Europe, and in 1781 there was a vague arrangement to revive the Greek Empire at Constantinople under Constantine, a son of Catherine. There was a war with Turkey (1768-74), followed by the important peace of Kuchuk-Kainarji, of which the main points were that the Black Sea and the Archipelago were to be open to Russia's vessels, and the Tsar was to have the right to build a Greek Church at Constantinople, an entering wedge to further claims to protect the Christians. In 1784 the Crimea was absorbed by Russia, there was another peace with Austria (1791), and with Russia (1792), followed by a further war in 1806 which was suddenly closed by the treaty of Bukharest in 1812. At the same time she continued her activities among the Balkan peoples, and Servia rose in revolt in 1804.

While these movements were going on in Eastern Europe, Western Europe was in the throes of Revolution which resulted in the Reign of Terror in France, and in more or less disturbance in the neighboring countries. The appearance of Napoleon Bonaparte changed the whole state of affairs, and as one after another of the great countries suffered at his hands, it was finally necessary for them all to combine, which they did in 1813-15, to drive him into exile. At the Peace of Tilsit between France and Russia (1807), Turkey was a signatory power and the Treaty of Bukharest (1812) preserved Turkey as a neutral State, an important matter for Russia, who otherwise was open to attack by Persia, Austria, Turkey or France. The Congress of Vienna in

settling affairs in 1815, after Waterloo, omitted to guarantee the existence of Turkey, for the anxious aim of the diplomats was to preserve the *status quo* for fear that the disappointed Liberals of all countries would after all turn the world upside down. The Congresses of Aix-la-Chapelle (1818), Troppau (1819), Laibach (1820), and Verona (1822), all had this purpose in view, but affairs in Servia, which had ended in 1817 in autonomy under the nominal rule of the Sultan, and the revolt in Greece, 1820, all helped to upset their plans. Throughout Europe a tremendous enthusiasm greeted the uprising in the classic land of Greece, which is reflected in literature by the songs of Müller, Leconte de Lisle, and Byron. Her independence was acknowledged by Russia in 1829, and by all the Powers in 1832.

It now seemed as if the fall of Turkey were imminent and Tsar Nicholas I (1825-55) decided to eschew international politics to push his own plans in South-Eastern Europe. This marks the *third stage* of the eastern question, and it is noticeable that here is encountered the opposition of France, England and Italy. At the Convention of Akkerman (1826) Russia's demands on Turkey were acceded to, but the "untoward incident" of Navarino (1827), when the Turkish Navy was blotted out by Russian and French vessels, caused the Sultan to call for an "Holy war," which resolved itself into a duel between Turkey and Russia, closed by the peace of Adrianople (1829). By its terms the Danubian principalities, the present Roumania, became practically independent, the rights of Russia to navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles were recognized, and also Greek independence. All this was taking place in the reign of Mahmud II (1808-39), but the heaviest blow was still to come. This was the attack of Mehemet Ali of Egypt upon Syria to satisfy his claims for aid given during the revolt of Greece. England and France forced the Sultan to satisfy these, and the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi (1833) seemed to make Turkey quite dependent upon Russia. By it the Dardanelles were closed to all *foreign* war vessels. The eastern question reached quite an acute crisis when Abdul Mahmud (1839-61) came to the throne of Turkey. Mehemet Ali had to be satisfied, and to do this the powers of Europe took concerted action at the Convention in London, 1841, which resulted in Mehemet Ali being made hereditary pasha of Egypt, and in the Dardanelles being closed to *all* warships. The eastern question now seemed in a fair way of losing importance.

In the sketch thus far little has been said of reforms which from time to time had been forced upon various Sultans. The laws of the great Suleiman (1520-66) had themselves been of the nature of reforms but still the position of the non-mussulman subjects was extremely terrible. In fact it had been proposed in 1644 to have recourse to a state-ordered massacre, which, however, was not carried out. Mustafa Küprili, vizier from 1689 to 1691, did improve the lot of these *rayas*, but the wars with the various powers and the risings in various provinces made matters very bad by engendering hatred and animosity on every hand. When in 1839 the new Sultan Mahmud proclaimed the *Tanzimat* or perfect equality of all subjects, though he was following up various partial reforms already instituted, his proclamation was met by contempt from without as well as by violent opposition at home. And yet progress was made from year to year.

The one power to whom a reformed Turkey was displeasing was Russia. The Tsar Nicholas I, who in 1833 had secretly agreed with his brother sovereigns to preserve the integrity of Turkey, felt that the Convention of London (1841) had robbed him of some advantages. He, therefore, made a proposal in 1844,—he called Turkey the "Sick Man" then, and the phrase has stuck,—repeated again in 1853, that Great Britain should receive Crete and Egypt, Constantinople be made a free city, and the Balkan States put under the protection of Russia. This was politely rejected and the Eastern question slumbered.

In 1850, however, Napoleon III, a restless ruler, suddenly raised the question of French rights to the "Holy Places" which had been encroached upon by the Russians, and as neither Russia nor France would arbitrate, and as the other powers advised the Sultan to resist Russia's claims to a protectorate over the Christians, because that involved the integrity of the Sultan's Empire, there was nothing left but war.

The Crimean war resulted in a humiliating peace for Russia in 1856 whereby the Danubian principalities were given an European guarantee, the condition of the Christian subjects of the Sultan was to be improved, the Black Sea was made neutral, and the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was assured as well as its place in the European Concert of nations.

We are now reaching a very important series of changes throughout Europe. The revolutionary ideas which had their birth in the latter part of the eighteenth century, though

hindered in development by the reaction of 1848-52, had produced various "national" movements. In 1861 the Danubian principalities were christened Roumania. Greece drove out the autocrat Otto in 1862. In 1863 there were Polish troubles. In 1859 Italy made a strong effort to fight through to unity which was accomplished in 1866 and 1870. Austria's expansion was, therefore, shut out in that direction. Prussia settled her differences with Denmark in 1864, with Hanover and Austria in 1866, and in 1870-71, at the head of the German States, she thoroughly humbled her old enemy France and returned from Versailles the head of the newly-founded German Empire. There was an uprising in Crete in 1868, and the Powers had to quiet Greece in 1869. Serbia and Montenegro had also been astir during "the sixties."

In 1875 the Eastern question again became acute. The extravagance of Sultan Abdul Aziz (1861-76) had plunged Turkey deeply into debt and, when Bosnia and Herzegovina rebelled (1875), the Turkish exchequer was all but exhausted. Bulgaria followed suit, the "Bulgarian atrocities" were perpetrated, and Europe was aroused. The new Sultan Abdul Hamid (1876—), hesitated about undertaking reforms, and Russia's Slav and Orthodox sympathies caused her to proclaim war. Except for the splendid defence of the Shipka pass and Plevna, the Russian advance was unchecked, and the contest was soon over. The treaty of San Stefano was very hard upon Turkey, for it provided for the independence of Roumania, Serbia and Montenegro with increased territories, for an autonomous Bulgaria to include East Roumelia, for the cession of Dobrudja and Bessarabia to Russia, an indemnity and various minor points. England opposed and the Treaty of Berlin (1878) revised the terms.

By the terms of the Berlin treaty Roumania became independent. Bulgaria was restricted to the district north of the Balkans and Eastern Roumelia, i.e., a major portion of Macedonia which had been given to Bulgaria by the treaty of San Stefano, was given back to the Sultan. Serbia was somewhat enlarged, the Sultan relinquished all claims to Montenegro and Greece was put off. Cyprus was handed over to England to be restored, if the promised reforms were carried out, and Russia made certain restorations also. Bosnia and Herzegovina were to be administered by Austria-Hungary. It is safe to say that no one was satisfied, and that no one expected the settlement would last for long. And so it proved. Roumania became a Kingdom in 1881 and elected a Hohenzollern who with his wife, Carmen Sylva,

has given good government to the country. Bulgaria rose in revolt in 1885 and annexed Eastern Roumelia, to which the Sultan had to agree. Alexander of Battenburg was chosen King, but he had a very troubled rule of two years, trying to please Russia, and then was glad to abdicate. Ferdinand of Cobourg was chosen to succeed him, and he has won his spurs. The conversion of his little son Boris to the Greek Church in 1896 helped mightily to make the father safe. Serbia's appetite was whetted by Bulgaria's success, and an excuse was found for a war with Bulgaria which lasted two weeks and ended with loss for Serbia. The history of King Milan and of his son Alexander was not edifying, and Serbia has never secured the popular regard that the other States have enjoyed. King Peter ascended the throne in 1903. Montenegro went on her way peacefully. Greece has not played a very successful part, and in 1897 made a foolish war with Turkey in which she met defeat. It was Turkey herself which was hopeless. It was soon seen that the promised reforms were not likely to be carried out, and the chief sufferers were the Christians of Asia Minor and Macedonia. The Armenians were in trouble in 1890, and in 1894 and 1895 terrible massacres took place. In 1896 the Armenians attacked the bank in Constantinople, and again they suffered grievously. The disunion of the Powers allowed the great assassin to escape. Crete was a constant thorn in the Sultan's side, and in 1898 Greek influence became paramount. Macedonia, like Armenia, had never received the promised reforms and Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece were conducting a racial propaganda. They all looked upon Macedonia as the natural direction for their own territorial expansion. Added to these troubles came the religious difficulties between the Greek Patriarch and the Bulgarian Exarch. In 1903 Russia and Austria drew up a plan of reform, but all was useless, troubles only increased.

Egypt had been rebellious all through until in 1881 it was necessary for England to interpose and assume a protectorate. At various times it was proposed to relinquish this, but finally the agreement of 1904 with the French made England's tenure permanent. France, had already taken over Algiers, took charge of Tunis in 1881, and Italy's late attack on Tripoli has completed the spoilation of the Turk in Africa.

In 1908 there was a very sudden and dramatic development of the Near Eastern question. The young Turks arose, overthrew the old Sultan and his useless government, prom-

ised all manner of reforms, and set up a constitutional Parliament. This was in July. Everybody rejoiced, churches and races gave thanks, and England, always a friend, was hopeful for Turkey. But in October Bulgaria proclaimed its independence, Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina and the boldest held his breath. In 1909 there was a brief counter revolution which was crushed. The young Turks did not punish the murderers of the Armenians at Adana, and seemed bent on establishing a military government, highly centralized. Crete proclaimed union with Greece to which there was little response. Turkey and Roumania came to an understanding in 1910. Russia, lamed by Japan in 1904, was powerless to answer effectively the Austrian moves when supported by Germany, and German influence increased at Constantinople and in Asia Minor. Then in 1911 Italy attacked Tripoli, and while peace negotiations were in progress between Italy and Turkey, there was a sudden declaration of war by the Balkan allies, Oct. 3, 1912, which was followed by a campaign very similar to the Franco-Prussian of 1870. Peace envoys met in London early in December and the powers looked on. Rumor says that Austria will not permit Serbia to have any more coastline on the Adriatic or annex Novi-Bazar, which would block her way to Salonica. At present no one knows what the upshot will be, because the allies seem to be in no yielding temper, and the Turks as usual hope to gain by procrastination.

Two or three things look fairly plausible. A Balkan alliance with a great deal of added territory would seem to shut the door to Germany's advance in Asia Minor and to shut off Austria's last chance of expansion. Will this new Alliance, composed largely of Slavs, be just another Slav Empire, a second Russia? How will Italy, a friend of England, act, especially if she should get a strip of Albanian coast and be able to make the Adriatic an Italian lake? Will she join with this new confederacy in opening a new field for English commerce? And what will England do? She has already one Slav Empire to deal with in Persia, the Middle East problem. Will she assure the Turk of Asia and help to make the greatest Mohammedan ruler the good friend and ally of the greatest Mohammedan Empire of the world, Great Britain? But she can scarcely afford in that case to see the Turk driven completely out of Europe. Constantinople must be neutral or friendly. And what of Germany? If the door to Asia is shut, and if Austria-Hungary is the next "Sick Man," as very many believe who know the troubled

history of that composite nation, then will not Germany and England have to become friends to resist the Slavs in Europe and in Asia? And what more natural alliance or more to be desired than that of Germany, Great Britain and the United States, Teuton-dom, to present a united front east and west in defence of the highest type of civilization the world knows!