THE BALKAN PENINSULA

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A BALKAN PEASANT

THE BALKAN PENINSULA

BY

FRANK FOX

AUTHOR OF "AUSTRALIA," "BULGARIA," "SWITZERLAND," ETC.

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PREFACE

This book was written in the spring of 1914, just before Germany plunged the world into the horrors of a war which she had long prepared, taking as a pretext a Balkan incident—the political murder of an Austrian prince by an Austrian subject of Serb nationality. Germany having prepared for war was anxious for an occasion which would range Austria by her side. If Germany had gone to war at the time of the Agadir incident, she knew that Italy would desert the Triple Alliance, and she feared for Austria's loyalty. A war pretext which made Austria's desertion impossible was just the thing for her plans.

It would be impossible to reshape this book so as to bring within its range the Great War, begun in the Balkans, and in all human probability

to be decided finally by battles in the Balkans. I let it go out to the public as impressions of the Balkans dated from the end of 1913. It may have some value to the student of contemporary Balkan events.

My impressions of the Balkan Peninsula were chiefly gathered during the period 1912-13 of the war of the Balkan allies against Turkey, and of the subsequent war among themselves. I was war correspondent for the London *Morning Post* during the war against Turkey and penetrated through the Balkan Peninsula down to the Sea of Marmora and the lines of Chatalja. In war-time peoples show their best or their worst. As they appeared during a struggle in which, at first, the highest feelings of patriotism were evoked, and afterwards the lowest feelings of greed and cruelty, the Balkan peoples left me with a steady affection for the peasants and the common folk generally; a dislike and contempt, which made few exceptions, for the politicians and priests who governed their destinies. Perhaps when they settle down to a more peaceful existence—if ever they do—the

inhabitants of the Balkan Peninsula will come to average more their

qualities, the common people becoming less simple-minded, obedient, chaste, kind: their leaders learning wisdom rather than cunning, and getting some sense of the value of truth and also some sense of ruth to keep them from setting their countrymen at one another's throats. But at the present time the picture which I have to put before the reader, with its almost unbelievable contradictions of courage and gentleness on the one side and cowardly cruelty on the other, is a true one.

The true Balkan States are Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Albania. Roumania is proud to consider herself a Western State rather than a semi-Eastern Balkan State, though both her position and her diplomacy link her closely with Balkan developments. Turkey, of course, cannot be considered in any sense as a Balkan State though she still holds the foot of the Balkan Peninsula. Greece has prouder aspirations than to be considered one of the struggling nationalities of the Balkans and dreams of a revival of

the Hellenic Empire. But in considering the Balkan Peninsula it is not possible to exclude altogether the Turk, the Greek, the Roumanian. My aim will be to give a snapshot picture of the Balkan Peninsula, looking at it as a geographical entity for historical reference, and to devote more especial attention to the true Balkan States.

FRANK FOX.

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SKETCH MAP OF THE BALKAN PENINSULA

THE BALKAN PENINSULA

CHAPTER I

THE VEXED BALKANS

The Fates were unkind to the Balkan Peninsula. Because of its position, it was forced to stand in the path of the greatest racial movements of the world, and was thus the scene of savage racial struggles, and the depositary of residual shreds of nations surviving from great defeats or Pyrrhic victories and cherishing irreconcilable

mutual hatreds. As if that were not enough of ill fortune imposed by geographical position, the great Roman Empire elected to come from its seat in the Italian Peninsula to die in the Balkan Peninsula, a long drawn-out death of many agonies, of many bloody disasters and desperate retrievals. For all the centuries of which history knows a blood-mist has hung over the Balkans; and for the

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centuries before the dawn of written history one may surmise that there was the same constant struggle of warring races.

It seems fairly certain that when the Northern peoples moved down from their gloomy forests towards the Mediterranean littoral to mingle their blood with the early peoples of the Minoan civilisation and to found the Grecian and the Roman nations, the chief stream of these fierce hordes moved down by the valley of the Danube and debouched on the Balkan Peninsula. Doubtless they fought many a savage battle with the aborigines in Thessaly and Thrace. Of these battles we have no records, and no absolute certainty, indeed, that the Mediterranean shore was colonised by a race from the North, though all the facts that we are learning now from the researches of modern archaeologists point to that conclusion. But whatever the prehistoric state of the Balkan Peninsula, the first sure records from written history show it as a vexed area peopled by widely different and mutually warring races, and subject always to waves of war and invasion from the outside. The Slav historian Jireček concludes that the Balkan Peninsula was inhabited at the earliest times

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known to history by many different tribes belonging to distinct races—the Thraco-Illyrians, the Thraco-Macedonians, and the Thraco-Dacians. At the beginning of the third century, the Slavs made their first appearance and, crossing the Danube, came to settle in the great plains between the river and the Balkan Mountains. Later, they proceeded southwards and formed colonies among the Thraco-Illyrians, the Roumanians, and the Greeks. This Slav emigration went on for several centuries. In the seventh century of the Christian era a Finno-ugric tribe reached the banks of the Danube. This tribe came from the Volga, and, crossing Russia, proceeded towards ancient Moesia, where it took possession of the north-east territory of the Balkans between the Danube and the Black Sea. These were the

Bulgars or Volgars, near cousins to the Turks who were to come later. The Bulgars assumed the language of the Slavs, and some of their customs. The Serbs or Serbians, coming from the Don River district had been near neighbours of the Volgars or Bulgars (in the Slav languages "B" and "V" have a way of interchanging), and were without much doubt closely allied to them in race originally. Later, they diverged, tending more to the

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Slav type, whilst the Bulgars approached nearer to the Turk type.

There may be traced, then, in the racial history of the Balkans these race types: a Mediterranean people inhabiting the sea-coast and possessing a fairly high civilisation, the records of which are being explored now in the Cretan excavations; an aboriginal people occupying the hinterland of the coast, not so highly cultivated as the coast dwellers (who had probably been civilised by Egyptian influences) but racially akin to them; a Northern people coming from the shores of the Baltic and the North Sea before the period of written history and combining ultimately with the people of the coast to found the Grecian civilisation, leaving in the hinterland, as they passed towards the sea, detachments which formed other mixed tribes, partly aboriginal, partly Nordic; various invading peoples of Semitic type from the Levant; the Romans, the Goths and the Huns, the Slavs and the Tartars, the Bulgars and the Serbs, the Normans, Saracens, and Turks. Because the Balkan Peninsula was on the natural path to a warm-water port from the north to the south of Europe; because it was on the track of invasion and counter-invasion between Asia

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and Europe, all this mixture of races was forced upon it, and as a consequence of the mixture a constant clash of warfare. There was, too, a current of more peaceful communication for purposes of trade between the Levant and the Black Sea on the one side and the peoples of the Baltic Sea on the other side, which flowed in part along the Balkan Peninsula.

In *Italy and her Invaders* Mr. T. Hodgkin suggests:

During the interval from 540 to 480 b.c. there was a brisk commercial intercourse between the flourishing Greek colonies on the Black Sea, Odessos, Istros, Tyras, Olbia and Chersonesos—places now

approximately represented by Varna, Kustendjix, Odessa, Cherson, and Sebastopol—between these cities and the tribes to the northward (inhabiting the country which has been since known as Lithuania), all of whom at the time of Herodotus passed under the vague generic name of Scythians. By this intercourse which would naturally pass up the valleys of the great rivers, especially the Dniester and the Dnieper, and would probably again descend by the Vistula and the Niemen, the settlements of the Goths were reached, and by its means the Ionian letter-forms were communicated to the Goths, to become in due time the magical and mysterious Runes.

One fact which lends great probability to this theory is that undoubtedly, from very early times, the amber deposits of the Baltic, to which allusion has already been made, were known to the civilised world; and thus

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the presence of the trader from the South among the settlements of the Guttones or Goths is naturally accounted for. Probably also there was for centuries before the Christian Era a trade in sables, ermines, and other furs, which were a necessity in the wintry North and a luxury of kings and nobles in the wealthier South. In exchange for amber and fur, the traders brought probably not only golden staters and silver drachmas, but also bronze from Armenia with pearls, spices, rich mantles suited to the barbaric taste of the Gothic chieftains. As has been said, this commerce was most likely carried on for many centuries. Sabres of Assyrian type have been found in Sweden, and we may hence infer that there was a commercial intercourse between the Euxine and the Baltic, perhaps 1300 years before Christ.

A few leading facts with dates should give a fairly clear impression of the story of the Balkan Peninsula. About 400 b.c. the Macedonian Empire was being founded. It represented the uprise of a hinterland Greek people over the decayed greatness of the coast-dwelling Greeks. At that time the northern part of the Balkan Peninsula was occupied by the Getae or Dacians. Phillip of Macedon made an alliance with the Getae. Alexander the Great of Macedonia thrashed them to subjection and carried a great wave of invasion into Asia from the Balkan Peninsula.

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TRAJAN'S COLUMN IN ROME
Commemorates the victories which brought all the Balkan Peninsula under the Roman sway

About the year 110 b.c. the Romans first came to the Balkan Peninsula, finding it inhabited as regards the south by the Greek peoples, as regards the north by the Getae or Dacians. The southern people were quickly subdued: the northern people were never really subdued by the Romans until the time of Trajan (the first century of the Christian era). He bridged the Danube with a great military bridge at the spot now known as Turnu-Severin, and Trajan's Column in Rome commemorated the victories which brought all the Balkan Peninsula under the Roman sway. Trajan found that the manners and customs of the Dacians were similar to those of the Germans. These sturdy Dacians were conquered but not exterminated by the Romans. Dacia across the Danube was made into a Roman colony, and the present kingdom of Roumania is supposed to represent the survival of that colony, which was a mixture of Roman and Dacian blood.

In the third century of the Christian era the Goths made their first appearance in the Balkan Peninsula. The Roman Empire had then entered into its period of decline. The invasions of the Visigoths, the Huns, the Vandals, the Ostrogoths,

and the Lombards were to come in turn to overwhelm the Roman civilisation. The Gothic invasion of the Balkan Peninsula was begun in the reign of the Roman Emperor Phillip. Crossing the Danube, the Goths ravaged Thrace and laid siege to Marcianople (now Schumla) without success. In a later invasion the Goths attacked Philippopolis and captured it after a great defeat of the Roman general, Decius the younger. Then the Roman Emperor (Decius the elder) himself took the field and was defeated and killed in a great battle near the mouth of the Danube (a.d. 251). That may be called the decisive date in the history of the fall of the Roman Empire. It was destined to retrieve that defeat, and to shine with momentary glory again for brief intervals, but the destruction of the Emperor and his army by the Goths in 251 was the sure presage of the doom of the Roman Power.

One direct result of the battle in which Decius was slain was to bring the headquarters of the Roman Empire to the Balkan Peninsula. It was found that a better stand could be made against the tide of

Gothic invasion from a new capital closer to the Scythian frontier. Constantinople was planned and built, and became

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the capital of the Roman Empire (a.d. 330), and thus brought to the Balkan stage the death throes of the mightiest world-power that history has known. From that date it is wise for the sake of clearness to speak of the Roman Empire as the Greek Empire, though it was some time after its settlement in Constantinople before it became rather Greek than Roman in character.

With the issue between the Goths and the Greek Empire, in which peaceful agreements often interrupted for a while fierce campaigns, I cannot deal here at any length. It soaked the Balkan Peninsula deep in blood. But it was only the first of the horrors that were to mark the death of the Empire. Late in the fourth century of the Christian Era there burst into the Balkans from the steppes of Astrakhan and the Caucasus—from very much the same district that was afterwards to supply the Bulgars and the Serbs—the Tartar hordes of the Huns. Of these Huns there is a vivid contemporary Gothic account.

We have ascertained that the nation of the Huns, who surpassed all others in atrocity, came thus into being. When Filimer, fifth king of the Goths after their departure from Sweden, was entering Scythia, with his people, as we have before described, he found

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among them certain sorcerer-women, whom they called in their native tongue Haliorunnas (or Al-runas), whom he suspected and drove forth from the midst of his army into the wilderness. The unclean spirits that wander up and down in desert places, seeing these women, made concubines of them; and from this union sprang that most fierce people [of the Huns], who were at first little, foul, emaciated creatures, dwelling among the swamps, and possessing only the shadow of human speech by way of language.

THE WALLS OF CONSTANTINOPLE FROM THE SEVEN TOWERS

With the Alani especially, who were as good warriors as themselves, but somewhat less brutal in appearance and manner of life, they had many a struggle, but at length they wearied out and subdued them. For, in truth, they derived an unfair advantage from the intense hideousness of their countenances. Nations whom they would never have vanquished in fair fight fled horrified from those frightful—faces I can hardly call them, but rather—shapeless black collops of flesh, with little points instead of eyes. No hair on their cheeks or chins gives grace to adolescence or dignity to age, but deep furrowed scars instead, down the sides of their faces, show the impress of the iron which with characteristic ferocity they apply to every male child that is born among them, drawing blood from its cheeks before it is allowed its first taste of milk. They are little in stature, but lithe and active in their motions, and especially skilful in riding, broad-shouldered, good at the use of the bow and arrows, with sinewy necks, and always holding their heads high in their pride. To sum up, these beings under the form of man hide the fierce nature of the beast!

Not a lovable people the Huns clearly:

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and the modern peoples who have some slight ancestral kinship with them hate to be reminded of the fact. I remember the fierce indignation which a French war correspondent aroused in Bulgarian breasts by his description—which had eluded the censor—of the passage of a great Bulgarian train of ox wagons because he compared it to the passage of the Huns.

The Huns were, with the exception of the Persians who had vainly attacked the Greek States at an earlier period, the first successful Asiatic invaders of Europe. For a full century they ravaged the Empire, and the Balkan Peninsula felt the chief force of their barbarian rage. By the fifth century the waves of the Hun invasions had died away, leaving distinct traces of the Hunnish race in the Balkans. The Gepidae, the Lombards, and later the Hungarians and the Tartars then took up the task of ravaging the unhappy land which as the chief seat of power of the Greek Empire found itself the first objective of every invader because of that dignity and yet but poorly protected by that power. Constantinople was never taken by these

barbarians, but at some periods little else than its walls stood secure against their ravages.

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Meanwhile the first Saracens had appeared in the Peninsula, curiously enough not as invaders nor as enemies, but as mercenary soldiers in the army of the Greek Empire fighting against the Goths. To a Gothic chronicler we are again indebted for a vivid picture of these Saracens, "riding almost naked into battle, their long black hair streaming in the wind, wont to spring with a melancholy howl upon their chosen victim in battle and to suck his life-blood, biting at his throat." Perhaps the Gothic war correspondent of the day studied picturesqueness more than accuracy, like some of his modern successors. But, without a doubt, the first contact with Asiatics, whether Huns or Saracens, gave to the European peoples a horror and a terror which had never been inspired by their battles among themselves—battles by no means bloodless or merciful. As the Asiatic waves of invasion later developed in strength the unhappy Balkan Peninsula was doomed to feel their full force as they poured across the Bosphorus from Asia Minor, and across the Danube from the north-eastern Asiatic steppes.

It would be vain to attempt to chronicle even in the barest outline all the horrors inflicted upon

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the Balkans from the date of the first invasion of the Huns in the fourth century to the first invasion of the Turks in the fourteenth century. To say that those ten centuries were filled with bloodshed suffices. But they also saw the development of the Balkan nationalities of to-day, and cannot therefore be passed over without some attention. Let us then glance at each Balkan nation during that period.

Roumania, inhabited by the people of the old Roman-Dacian colony, stood full in the way of the Northern invasions of Goths, of Huns, of Hungarians, of Tartars. It was almost submerged. But in the thirteenth century the country benefited by the coming of Teutonic and Norman knights. The two kingdoms or principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia (which, combined, make up modern Roumania) were founded in this century.

Bulgaria.—In the seventh century Slavs had begun to settle in

Bulgaria. The Bulgars or Volgars followed. They were akin to the Tartars and the Turks. Together Slavs and Bulgars formed the Bulgarian national type and founded a very robust nation which was almost constantly at war with the Greek Empire (with its capital

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at Constantinople). At times Bulgaria seriously threatened Constantinople and the Greek Empire. A boastful inscription in the Church of the Forty Martyrs at Tirnovo, the ancient capital of Bulgaria, records:

In the year 1230, I, John Asên, Czar and Autocrat of the Bulgarians, obedient to God in Christ, son of the old Asên, have built this most worthy church from its foundations, and completely decked it with paintings in honour of the Forty holy Martyrs, by whose help, in the 12th year of my reign, when the Church had just been painted, I set out to Roumania to the war and smote the Greek army and took captive the Czar Theodore Komnenus with all his nobles. And all lands have I conquered from Adrianople to Durazzo, the Greek, the Albanian, and the Serbian land. Only the towns round Constantinople and that city itself did the Franks hold; but these too bowed themselves beneath the hand of my sovereignty, for they had no other Czar but me, and prolonged their days according to my will, as God had so ordained. For without him no word or work is accomplished. To him be honour for ever. Amen.

The wars were carried on under conditions of mutual ferocity which still rule in Bulgarian-Grecian conflicts. An incident of one campaign was that the Greek Emperor, Basil, the Bulgar-slayer, having captured a Bulgarian army, had the eyes torn out of all the men and sent them

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home blinded, leaving, however, one eye to every centurion, so that the poor mutilated wretches might have guides. In the early part of the fourteenth century a Bulgarian Czar, Michael, almost captured Constantinople. He formed a league with the Roumanians and the Greeks against the Serbs, who were at the time promising to become the paramount power of the peninsula. But Czar Michael was defeated by the Serbs and Bulgaria became dependent upon Serbia, which was the position of affairs at the time of the first serious Turkish invasion of the Balkan Peninsula.

Serbia.—Invading tribes of Don Cossacks began to come in great numbers to the Balkan Peninsula in the sixth century. In the seventh century they were encouraged by the Greek Empire to settle in Serbia, on condition of paying tribute to Constantinople. They set up a kind of aristocratic republic of a Slav type. In the ninth century they began to fight with the neighbouring and kindred Bulgarians. Early in the tenth century (a.d. 917) the Bulgarians almost effaced Serbia from the map; but the Serbs recovered after half a century, only to come shortly afterwards under the sway of the Greeks. In the eleventh

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century the Serbians held a very strong position and were able to harass the Greek Empire at Constantinople. They entered into friendly relations with the Pope of Rome, and for some time contemplated following the Roman rather than the Eastern Church. In the twelfth century King Stephen of Serbia was a valued ally of the Greek Empire against the Venetians. He established Serbia as a European "Power," and the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa visited his court at Belgrade. This king was the first of a succession of able and brave monarchs, and Serbia enjoyed a period of stable prosperity and power unusually lengthy for the Balkans. Except for the strife between the Eastern and Roman Catholic Churches for supremacy in Serbia, the nation was at peace within her own borders, and enjoyed not only a military but an economic predominance in the Balkans. Mining and handicrafts were developed, education encouraged, and the national organisation reached fully to the average standard of European civilisation at the time. By 1275 the Serbs were the chief power in the Balkans. They defeated the Greeks, marched right down to the Aegean and reached the famous monastery of Mount Athos, to which

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the first King Stephen (Nemanya) had retired in 1195 when he abdicated.

In 1303 the Serbians forgot their quarrel with the Greeks and helped them against the Turks, undertaking an invasion of Asia Minor. In 1315 they again saved the Greek Empire from the Turks. When in 1336 Stephen Dushan, the greatest of Serbian kings, who has been compared to Napoleon because of his military genius and capacity for

statesmanship, came to the throne, Bulgaria was under the suzerainty of Serbia, and the Serb monarch ruled over all that area comprised within the boundaries of Bulgaria, Serbia, Albania, Montenegro, and Greece by the recent treaty of Bucharest (1913). King Stephen Dushan was not only a great military leader, he was also a law-maker and a patron of learning. His death on December 13, 1356, at the Gates of Constantinople—he is said to have been poisoned—opened the way for the Turkish occupation of the Balkan Peninsula. That occupation was made possible in the first instance by the mutual jealousies of the Christian peoples of the Balkans. It was kept in existence for centuries by the same weaknesses arising from jealousy. In 1912 it was swept away in a month because in a spasm

of common sense the Balkan Christian peoples had united. In 1913 it was in part restored because internecine strife had broken out again among the Balkan natives recently allied. It will probably continue until the lesson of unity is learned again.

CHAPTER II

THE TURK IN THE BALKANS

It seems to be difficult to speak without violent prejudice on the subject of the Turk in the Balkans. One school of prejudice insists that the Turk is the finest gentleman in the world, who has been always

the victim and not the oppressor of the Christian peoples by whose side he lives, and whose territories he invaded with the best of motives and with the minimum of slaughter. The other school of prejudice credits the Turk with the most abominable cruelty, treachery, and lust, and will hear no good of him. In England the issue is largely a political one. A great Liberal campaign was once founded on a Turkish massacre of Bulgarians in the Balkans. That made it a party duty for Liberals to be pro-Bulgarian and anti-Turk, and almost a party duty for Conservatives to find all the

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Christian and a few ex-Christian virtues in the Turk. Before attempting to judge the Turk of to-day, let us see how he stands in the light of history. It was in the fourth century that the first Saracens came to the Balkan Peninsula as allies of the Greek Empire against the Goths. They were thus called in by a Christian Power in the first instance. It was not until the fourteenth century that the Turks made a serious attempt to occupy the Balkan Peninsula. They were helped in their campaign considerably by the Christian Crusaders, who, incidentally to their warfare against the Infidel who held the Holy Sepulchre, had made war on the Greek Empire, capturing Constantinople, and thus weakening the power of Christian Europe at its threshold. Bulgaria, too, refused help to the Greeks when the Turkish invasion had to be beaten off. The Turks' coming to the Balkans was thus largely due to Christian divisions.

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Sébah & Joaillier

SANCTA SOPHIA, CONSTANTINOPLE

Built by Justinian I, consecrated 538, converted into a Mohammedan mosque 1453. It is now thought that the design of its famous architect, Anthemius of Tralles, was never completed. The minarets and most of the erections in the foreground are Turkish

Without being able at the time to capture Constantinople, the invading Turks occupied soon a large tract of the Balkan Peninsula. By 1362 they had captured Philippopolis and Eski Zagora, two important centres of Bulgaria. It was not a violence to their conscience for some

of the Bulgarian men after this to join the Turkish army as mercenaries. When the sorely-beset Greeks sent the Emperor John Paleologos to appeal for help to the Bulgarians, he was seized by them and kept as a prisoner.

A united Balkan Peninsula would have kept off the Turks, no doubt. But a set of small nations without any faculty of permanent cohesion, and hating and distrusting one another more thoroughly than they did the Turk, could do nothing. The Balkan nations of the time, though united they would have been really powerful, allowed themselves to be taken in detail and crushed under the heels of an invader who was alien in blood and in religion. In 1366 the Bulgarians became the vassals of the Turks, and the Serbians were defeated at Kossovo. The fall of the Greek Empire and the subjugation of Roumania followed in due course, and by the seventeenth century the Turks had penetrated to the very walls of Vienna. At one time it seemed as if all Europe would fall under the sway of Islam, for, as elsewhere than in the Balkans, there were Christian States which were treacherous to their faith. But that happily was averted. For the Balkan Peninsula, however,

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there were now to be centuries of oppression and religious persecution. It will be convenient once again to set forth under three national headings the chief facts regarding the Turkish conquest of the Balkans.

Bulgaria.—By 1366 weakness in the field and civil dissensions had brought Bulgaria to the humiliation of becoming the vassal of the Turk. In 1393 the Turks, not content with mere suzerainty, occupied Bulgaria and converted it into a Turkish province. In 1398 the Hungarians and the Wallachians (Roumanians) made a gallant attempt to free Bulgaria from the Turkish yoke, but failed. Some of the Bulgarians joined in with their Turkish conquerors, abandoned the Christian religion for that of Islam, and were the ancestors of what are known to-day as the Pomaks. The rest of the people gave a reluctant obedience to the Turkish conqueror, preserving their Christian faith, their Slav tongue, and their sense of separate nationality. The Greeks, who had come to some kind of terms with the Turkish invaders, assisted to bring the Bulgarian people under subjection. The Greek church and the Greek tongue rather than the Turkish were

sought to be imposed upon the Bulgarians. The

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subject people accepted the situation with occasional revolts, but more tamely than some other Balkan nations. It was not a general meek acquiescence, though it was—possibly by chance, possibly because of the fact that a racial relationship existed between conqueror and conquered—not so fierce in protest as that of the Serbians. In writing that, I do not follow exactly the Bulgarian modern view, which represents as much more vivid the sufferings and the protests of the Bulgarian people, and ignores altogether the racial relationship which existed between Bulgarian and Turk, and enabled a section of the Bulgarian nation to fall into line with the conqueror and embrace his religion and his habits of life, a relationship which to this day shows its traces in the Bulgarian national life. But in Balkan history as written locally, there is usually a certain amount of political deflection from the facts. A modern Balkan historian, giving what may be called the official national account of the times of the Turkish domination, says (*Bulgaria of To-day*):

Had the rulers been of the same race and religion as the vanquished, the subjection might have been more tolerable. Ottoman domination was not, however, a

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simple political domination. Ottoman tyranny was social as well as political. It was keenly and painfully felt in private as well as in public life; in social liberty, manners and morals; in the free development of national feeling; in short, in the whole scope of human life. According to our present notions, political domination does not infringe upon personal liberty, which is sacred for the conqueror. This is not the case with Turkish rule. The Bulgarians, like the other Christians of the Balkan Peninsula, were, both collectively and individually, slaves. The life, possessions, and honour of private individuals were in constant peril. The bulk of the people, after several generations, calmed down to passivity and inertia. From time to time the more vigorous element, the strongest individualities, protested. Some Bulgarian whose sister had been carried off to the harem of some pasha would take to the mountains and make war on the oppressors. The haidukes and voivodes, celebrated in the national songs, kept up in mountain fastnesses that spirit of liberty which later was to serve as a cement

to unite the new Bulgarian nation.

But it is a noteworthy fact that the Osmanlis, being themselves but little civilised, did not attempt to assimilate the Bulgarians in the sense in which civilised nations try to effect the intellectual and ethnic assimilation of a subject race. Except in isolated cases, where Bulgarian girls or young men were carried off and forced to adopt Mohammedanism, the government never took any general measures to impose Mohammedanism or assimilate the Bulgarians to the Moslems. The Turks prided themselves on keeping apart from the Bulgarians, and this was fortunate for our nationality. Contented with their political supremacy and pleased to feel themselves

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masters, the Turks did not trouble about the spiritual life of the *rayas*, except to try to trample out all desires for independence. All these circumstances contributed to allow the Bulgarian people, crushed and ground down by the Turkish yoke, to concentrate and preserve its own inner spiritual life. They formed religious communities attached to the churches. These had a certain amount of autonomy, and, beside seeing after the churches, could keep schools. The national literature, full of the most poetic melancholy, handed down from generation to generation and developed by tradition, still tells us of the life of the Bulgarians under the Ottoman yoke. In these popular songs, the memory of the ancient Bulgarian kingdom is mingled with the sufferings of the present hour. The songs of this period are remarkable for the oriental character of their times, and this is almost the sole trace of Moslem influence.

In spite of the vigilance of the Turks, the religious associations served as centres to keep alive the national feeling.

A conquered people which was allowed to keep up its religious institutions (with "a certain amount of autonomy"), and later to found national schools ("to keep alive the national feeling"), was not exactly ground to the dust. And truth compels the admission that Bulgaria under Turkish rule enjoyed a certain amount of material prosperity. When the Russian liberators of the nineteenth century came to

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Bulgaria they found the peasants far more comfortable than were the Russian peasants of the day. The atrocities in Bulgaria which

shocked Europe in 1875 were not the continuance of a settled policy of cruelty and rapine. They were the ferocious reprisals chiefly of Turkish Bashi-Bazouks (irregulars) following upon a Bulgarian rising. The Turks felt that they had been making an honest effort to promote the interests of the Bulgarian province. They had just satisfied a Bulgarian aspiration by allowing of the formation of an independent Bulgarian church, though this meant giving grave offence to the Greeks. Probably they felt that they had a real grievance against the Bulgars. After the Bulgarian atrocities of 1875 there ended the Turkish domination of the country.

Serbia.—In December 1356 the great Serbian king, Stephen Dushan, soldier, administrator, and economist, died before the walls of Constantinople, and the one hope of the Balkan Peninsula making a stand against the Turks was ended. Shortly after, the Turks had occupied Adrianople, their first capital in Europe, defeating heavily a combined Serbian and Greek army. Later the Serbian forces were again defeated by the great

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Turkish sultan Amurath I., and the Serbian king was killed on the battle-field. King Lazar, who succeeded to the Serbian throne, made some headway against the invaders, but in 1389, at the Battle of Kossovo, the Serbian Empire came tumbling to ruins. The Turkish leader, Amurath, was killed in the fight, but his son Bajayet proved another Amurath and pressed home the victory. Serbia became a vassal state of Turkey.

But there was to be still a period of fierce resistance to the Turk. In 1413 the Turks, dissatisfied with the attitude of the Serbs, entered upon a new invasion of the territory of Serbia. In 1440 Sultan Amurath II. again overran the country and conquered it definitely, imposing not merely vassalage but armed occupation on its people. John Hunyad, "the White Knight of Wallachia," came to the rescue of the Serbs, and Amurath II. was driven back. An alliance between Serbs and Hungarians kept the Turk at bay for a time, and in 1444 Serbia could claim to be free once again. But the respite was a brief one. In 1453 Constantinople fell to the Turks, and the full tide of their strengthened and now undivided power was turned upon Serbia. A siege of Belgrade in 1457 was repulsed, but in 1459 Serbia was conquered and annexed

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to European Turkey. Lack of unity among the Serbs themselves had contributed greatly to the national doom, but on the whole the Serbs had put up a gallant fight against the Turks. And even now a section of them, the Montenegrins, in their mountain fastnesses kept their liberty, and through all the centuries that were to follow never yielded to the Crescent.

The condition of the Serbs in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was very unhappy. They could come to no manner of contentment with Turkish rule, and sporadic revolts were frequent. At times the Hungarians from the other side of the Danube came to the aid of the revolters, but never in such strength as to shake seriously the Turkish power. Very many of the Serbs left their country in despair and sought refuge under the Austrian flag. To-day a big Serb element, under the flag of Austro-Hungaria, is one of the racial difficulties of the Dual Monarchy.

Underwood & Underwood

KING PETER OF SERBIA

The Serb exiles carried to their new homes their old sympathies, and largely because of their efforts Austria in 1788 went to the rescue of Serbia, and for a brief while the land again was free. But the Turkish power returned and

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Serbia stumbled blindly, painfully through years of reprisals, which culminated in the great massacre of Serbs by Turks in 1804, which, like the Turkish massacre of Bulgarians in 1875, really declared the doom of the Turkish power in the country. Following this massacre George Petrovic, "Black George," or "*Kara* George," as the Serbians knew him, raised the standard of revolt among his countrymen. He was a fierce blood-stained man, this first liberator of the Serbs, a man on whose head was the blood of his father and his brother. His grim character was fitted for his grim task. The story of that task will come better within the scope of a following chapter, which will tell of the liberation of the Balkans from the Turks.

Roumania.—It was not until 1391 that the Turks crossed the Danube and attacked the kingdoms of Wallachia and Moldavia, and reduced Wallachia to the position of a tributary state. King Mirtsched made a gallant fight against the invaders, but the Turks proved too strong. That was the beginning of a Turkish dominance of Roumania, which was never so complete as that exercised over Bulgaria and Serbia, but left the two Roumanian kingdoms

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of Wallachia and Moldavia as vassal states. Mutual jealousy between them prevented effective operations against the Turk, and helped to make their vassalage possible. In the fifteenth century both kingdoms had great rulers. Wallachia was ruled by Vlad the Impaler, an able but cruel man, who seems to have earned the infamy of inventing a form of torture still practised in the Balkans as a matter of religious proselytising, that of sitting the victim on a sharp stake, and leaving him to die slowly as the stake penetrated his body. Moldavia had as king Stephen the Great, who has no such ghastly reputation of cruelty. But able princes could effect little with communities weakened by the luxury of the nobles and the helpless poverty of the serfs. Still, the Roumanians had intervals of victory. In the sixteenth century Michael the Brave (whose memory is commemorated by a statue in Bucharest) drove the Turks back as far as Adrianople, liberating Roumania and Bulgaria. He annexed Moldavia and Transylvania to Wallachia, and was in a sense the founder of modern Roumania. But the union thus effected was not enduring and the Turkish ascendancy grew stronger. The Turkish suzerain forced upon the

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Roumanian peoples governors of the Greek race, who carried on the work of oppression and spoliation with an industrious effectiveness quite beyond the capacity of the Turk, who at his worst is a fitful and indolent tyrant.

In the last quarter of the seventeenth century the Russian Power began to take a close interest in Roumania. In 1711 there was a definite Russian-Roumanian alliance. By this time the Roumanians were resolutely hostile to the Turkish domination. True, they had been spared most of the cruelties which were in Servia a customary and in Bulgaria an occasional concomitant of Turkish rule. But they

were deeply injured by the corrupt, the luxurious, the exacting administration of the Greek rulers forced upon them by the Turkish government. Though they suffered little from massacre they suffered much from "squeeze." There was not only the greed of the Turk but the greed of the intermediate Greek to be satisfied. From 1711 until the final liberation of Roumania, Roumanian sympathies were generally with the Russians in the frequent wars waged by them against Turkey. In 1770 the Russians occupied Roumania and freed it for a time from the Turk, but in 1774 the

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Roumanians went back to the Turkish suzerainty. During the Napoleonic wars Russia gave Roumania some reason to doubt the disinterestedness of her friendship by annexing the rich province of Bessarabia, a part of the natural territory of the Roumanian people. The year 1821 saw the outbreak of the Greek war of independence, in which Roumania took no part, having as little love for the Greek as for the Turk. She won one advantage for herself from the war, the right to have her native rulers under Turkish suzerainty. In 1828, as a result of a Russo-Turkish war, Roumania won almost complete freedom, conditional only on tribute being continued to be paid to the Sultan. She found a new master, however, in Russia, and was forced to keep up a Russian garrison within her borders, nominally as a protection against Turkey, really as a safeguard against the growth in her own people of a spirit of national independence. The Crimean War (1853) freed Roumania from this Russian garrison, and in 1856 the Treaty of Paris declared Roumania to be an independent principality under Turkish suzerainty.

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Underwood & Underwood

KING NICOLAS OF MONTENEGRO

Montenegro.—The existence of Montenegro as a separate Balkan state dates back to the Battle of Kossovo. The Montenegrin is a Serbian Highlander, and whilst the Serbian Empire flourished, claimed for himself no separate national entity. When, however, the rest of Serbia was subjugated by the Turks, "the Black Mountain" held out, and there gathered within its little area of rocky hill fastnesses the free remnants of the Serbian race. The story of that

little nation is quite the most wonderful in all the world. It transcends Sparta, and makes the fighting record of the Swiss seem tame. At the height of its power Montenegro had a population of perhaps 8000 males, and little source of riches from mines, from trade, or even from fertile agricultural land. Yet Montenegro kept the Turks from her own territory, and was able at times to give valuable help to the rest of Europe in withstanding the invasion of Islam.

The system of government instituted was that of a theocratic despotism: the head of the nation was its chief bishop, and he had the right to nominate a nephew (not a son—as a bishop of the Greek Communion he would be celibate) to succeed him. The Montenegrin dynasty was founded in 1696 by King Danilo I., and has endured to this day, though recently the functions

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of the chief priest and king have been separated, and the present monarch is purely a civil ruler.

It is not possible here to give even the barest mention of the leading facts in the proud history of little Montenegro. In the seventeenth century she was the valued friend of Venice against the Turks; in the eighteenth century she was aided by Peter the Great of Russia; later she met without being subdued the warlike power of Napoleon. All the time, during every century, every year almost, there was constant warfare with the Turks. One campaign lasted without interruption from 1424 to 1436, and was marked by over sixty battles. The little population of the patch of rocks in the mountains was worn down by this incessant fighting, but was recruited by a steady flow of exiles from other parts of the Balkan Peninsula, anxious for freedom and for revenge on the Turk. Sometimes the tide of battle went sorely against the mountaineers, and almost all their country was put under the heel of the Moslem. But always one eyrie was kept for the free eagles, and from it they swooped down with renewed strength to send the invader once again across their borders. Repeatedly the Turk levied great armies for the conquest of Montenegro

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(once the Turkish force reached to the number of 80,000).

Repeatedly great European Powers which had proffered help or had been begged for help failed little Montenegro at a crisis. But never were the stout hearts of the Black Mountain quelled. In 1484, when Zablak had to be evacuated and the whole nation was confined to the little mountain fortress of Cettinje, Ivan the Black offered to his people the choice of ending the war and making peace with the Turks. They rejected the idea, and swore to stand by the freedom of Montenegro until the last. The oath was never broken. Right down to 1832 a free Montenegro faced Turkey. In that year the Turks, despairing of an occupation of the country, suggested that Montenegro should agree at least to pay tribute. That offer was rejected and yet another war entered upon. A war against Austria followed, in which the desperate Montenegrins used the type of their printing presses to make bullets for the soldiers.

MONTENEGRIN TROOPS

Weekly Drill and Inspection of Weapons

That there was lead type to be so used shows that the Montenegrins had not altogether neglected the arts of peace. In 1493 a printing press had been set up in Cettinje and the first Montenegrin book printed in the Cyrillic character.

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During the next century this printing press was kept busy with the issue of the Gospels and psalters under the rule of the brave Bishop Babylas. The state of Montenegro at this time aroused the admiration of the Venetians, and there is extant a book in praise of Montenegro written in 1614 by a Venetian noble, Mariano Bolizza.

When the time came for the other Balkan States to throw off the Turkish yoke Montenegro was not reluctant to join in the movement for liberation, and she was later first in the field in the campaign of 1912.

This very brief record of the leading facts of Balkan history has now brought each of the peoples up to the stage at which the final and successful effort was made with the help of Russia to drive the Turks out of Balkan territory. The story of that effort will be told in the succeeding chapter.

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CHAPTER III

THE FALL OF THE TURKISH POWER

In the nineteenth century the Turkish dominion was pushed back in all directions from the Balkan Peninsula. At the dawn of that century Montenegro was the only Balkan state entirely free from occupation, vassalage, or the duty of tribute to the Sublime Porte. At the close of that century Montenegro, Serbia, Roumania, Greece, and Bulgaria were all practically free and self-governing.

In 1804, as has been recorded, Kara George in Serbia raised the standard of revolt against Turkey. In 1806 the Serbs defeated the Turks in a pitched battle, and for a moment Serbia was free. But in 1812 when the Turkish power resolved upon a great invasion of Serbia, the heart of Kara George failed him and he left his country to its fate, taking refuge in Austria. Thus

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deserted by their leader, the Serbs did not abandon the struggle altogether. Milosh Obrenovic stepped to the front as the national champion, and though he could make no stand against the Turkish troops in the open field he kept up an active revolt from a base in the mountains. The contest for national liberty went on with varying fortune. Troubles at this time were thickening around Turkey, and whenever she was engaged in war with Russia the oppressed nationalities within her borders took the opportunity to strike a blow for liberty. By 1839—it is not possible to make a record of all the dynastic changes and revolutions which filled the years 1812-1839—Serbia was practically free, with the payment of an annual tribute to Turkey as her only bond. During the Crimean War she kept her neutrality as between Russia and Turkey. The Treaty of Paris (1856) confirmed her territorial independence, subject to the payment of a tribute to Turkey. In 1867 the Turkish garrisons were withdrawn from Serbia; but the tribute was still left in existence until the date of the Treaty of Berlin.

Exclusive News Agency

THE KING OF ROUMANIA

Roumania in 1828 (then Wallachia and Moldavia) had won her territorial independence of Turkey subject only to payment of a tribute. The Treaty of Paris (1856) left her under a nominal suzerainty to Turkey. In 1859 the two kingdoms united to form Roumania, and in 1866 the late King Charles, as the result of a revolution, was elected prince of the united kingdom.

Bulgaria had remained a fairly contented Turkish province until the rising of 1875, and its cruel suppression by the Bashi-Bazouks. As a direct consequence of that massacre European diplomacy turned its serious attention to the Balkan Peninsula, and at a Conference demands were made upon Turkey for a comprehensive reform applying to Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria. The proposed reform was particularly drastic as applied to Bulgaria, which was still in effect Turkish territory, whilst all the other districts had achieved a practical freedom. It was proposed to create two Bulgarian provinces divided into Sandjaks and Kazas as administrative units, these to be subdivided into districts. Christian and Mohammedans were to be settled homogeneously in these districts. Each district was to have at its head a mayor and a district council,

elected by universal suffrage, and was to enjoy entire autonomy in local affairs. Several districts would form a Sandjak with a prefect (*mutessarif*) at its head who was to be Christian or Mohammedan, according to the majority of the population of the Sandjak. He would be proposed by the Governor-General, and nominated by the Porte for four years. Finally, every two Sandjaks were to be administered by a Christian Governor-General nominated by the Porte for five years, with consent of the Powers. He would govern the province with the help of a provincial assembly, composed of representatives chosen by the district councils for a term of four years. This assembly would nominate an administrative council. The provincial assembly would be summoned every year to decide the budget and the redivision of taxes. The armed force was to be concentrated in the towns and

there would be local militia besides. The language of the predominant nationality was to be employed, as well as Turkish. Finally, a Commission of International Control was to supervise the execution of these reforms.

The Sublime Porte was still haggling about these reforms when Russia lost patience and

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declared war upon Turkey on April 12, 1877. Moving through the friendly territory of Roumania, Russia attacked the Turkish forces in Bulgarian territory. In that war the Russians found that the Turks were a gallant foe, and the issue seemed to hang in the balance until Roumania and Bulgaria went actively to the help of the Russian forces. The Roumanian aid was exceedingly valuable. Prince Charles crossed the Danube at the head of 28,000 foot soldiers and 4000 cavalry. He was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the forces against Plevna, and his soldiers were chiefly responsible for the taking of the Grivica Redoubt which turned the tide of victory against the Turks. The Bulgarians did but little during the campaign: it was not possible that they should do much seeing that they could only put irregulars in the field. Nevertheless some high personal reputations for courage were made. During my stay with the Bulgarian army in 1912 I noted that there were of the military officers three classes, the men who had graduated in foreign military colleges—usually Petrograd,—very smart, very insistent on their military dignity, speaking usually three or four languages; officers who had been educated

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at the Military College, Sofia; and the older Bulgarian type, dating sometimes from before the War of Liberation. Of these last the outstanding figure was General Nicolaieff, who as captain of a Bulgarian company rushed a Turkish battery beneath Shipka after the Russians had been held up so long that they were in despair. A fine stalwart figure General Nicolaieff showed when I met him at Yamboli, a hospital base town of which he was military commandant. Another

soldier of the War of Liberation, a captain in rank, I travelled with for a day once between Kirk Kilisse and Chorlu. We chummed up and shared a meal of meat balls cooked with onions, rough country wine (these from his stores), and dates and biscuits (from my stores). He spoke neither English nor French, but a Bulgarian doctor who spoke French acted as interpreter, and the old officer, who after long entreaty at last had got leave to go down to the front in spite of his age, yarned about the hardships and tragedies of the fighting around Stara Zagora and the Shipka Pass. Some of the Bulgarians, he said, took the field with no other arms than staves and knives, and got their first rifles from the dead of the battle-fields.

THE SHIPKA PASS

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Serbia took a hand in this campaign, too, though she hesitated for some time, going to the aid of Russia through fear of Austria. Beginning late, at a time when the mountains were covered in the winter snows, the Serbians suffered severely from the weather, but won notable victories at Pirot, at Nish, and at Vranga. The Turks were in full retreat on Constantinople when the armistice and Treaty of San Stefano put an end to the war.

It seems to be one of the standing rules of Balkan wars and Balkan peace treaties that those who do the work shall not reap the reward, and that a policy of standing by and waiting is the wisest and most profitable. In this Russo-Turkish war the Roumanians had done invaluable work for the Russian cause. In return the Treaty of San Stefano robbed them shamefully. The Bulgarians had done little, except to stain the arms of the allies with a series of massacres of the Turks in reprisal for the previous atrocities inflicted upon them by the Bashi-Bazouks. The Bulgarians were awarded a tremendous prize of territory. If the grant had been confirmed it would have made Bulgaria the paramount power of the Balkan Peninsula. By the Treaty

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of San Stefano, Bulgaria was made an autonomous principality subject to Turkey, with a Christian government and national militia. The Prince of Bulgaria was to be freely chosen by the people and accepted by the Sublime Porte, with the consent of the Powers. As regards internal government, it was agreed that an assembly of

notables, presided over by an Imperial Commissioner and attended by a Turkish Commissioner, should meet at Philippopolis or Tirnova before the election of the Prince to draw up a constitutional statute similar to those of the other Danubian principalities after the Treaty of Adrianople in 1830. The boundaries of Bulgaria were to include all that is now Bulgaria, and the greater part of Thrace and Macedonia.

The European Congress of Berlin which revised the Treaty of San Stefano recognised that the motive of Russia was to create in Bulgaria a vast but weak state, which would obediently serve her interests and in time fall into her hands: and that the injury proposed to be done to Roumania was inspired by a desire to limit the progress of a courageous but an unfortunately independent-minded friend. The Congress was suspicious of the Bulgarian arrangement, and

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clipped off much of the territory assigned to the new principality. The injury done to Roumania was allowed to stand. Then, as in 1912-1913, when Balkan boundaries were again under the discussion of an inter-European Conference, the vital interests of the great Powers surrounding the Balkan Peninsula were to keep its peoples divided and weak. Both Russia and Austria had more or less defined territorial ambitions in the Balkans: and it suited neither Power to see any one Balkan state rise to such a standard of greatness as would enable it to take the lead in a Balkan Union. Especially was it not the wish of Austria that any Balkan state should grow to be so strong as to kill definitely the hope she cherished of extending down the Adriatic and towards the Aegean.

By the Treaty of Berlin, which followed the Congress of Berlin, the greater part of the Balkan Peninsula was freed altogether from Turkish rule. Roumania and Serbia were relieved from all suggestion of tribute or vassalage. Bulgaria was left subject to a tribute (which was very quickly afterwards repudiated). Where the Turkish power was left in existence in European Turkey it was a threatened existence, for the

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newly freed Christian peoples began at once to conspire to help to freedom their nationals left still under Turkish rule. The war of 1912 began to be prepared in 1878.

There was, however, a period of comparative peace. Roumania, though discontented, decided to bide her time. Her prince was crowned king with a crown made from the metal of Turkish cannon taken at Plevna. That was the only hint that she gave of keeping in mind the greatness of her services which had been so poorly rewarded.

Montenegro, whilst deprived of the great and the well-deserved expansion which the Treaty of San Stefano offered, had some benefit from the Treaty of Berlin. The area of the kingdom was doubled and it won access to the Adriatic. A little later the harbour of Dulcigno was ceded to Montenegro by Turkey under pressure from the Powers, and she was left with only one notable grievance, that of being shut off from Serbia by the Sanjak of Novi-Bazar, which Austria secured for Turkey, apparently with the idea of one day seizing it on her way down to Salonica.

Chusseau Flaviens

KING FERDINAND OF BULGARIA

Serbia increased her territory by one-fourth under the Treaty of Berlin, but was not allowed to extend towards the Adriatic, and, nurturing

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as she did a dream of reviving the old Serbian Empire, was but poorly satisfied.

Bulgaria, if it had not been for the promises of the Treaty of San Stefano, might have been fairly content with the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin. She had been the first nation in the Balkans to yield to the Turks. She had allowed her sons to act as mercenary soldiers to aid the Turks against other Christians: and during the period of oppression she had suffered less than any from the rigours of the invader, had protested less than any by force of arms. Yet now she was given freedom as a gift won largely by the sacrifices of others. But, though having the most reason to be content, Bulgaria was the least contented of all the Balkan States. The restless ambition of the people guiding her destinies was manifested in an internal revolution which displaced the first prince (Alexander of Battenberg) and put on

the throne the present king (Ferdinand of Coburg). Bulgaria, too, repudiated the friendly tutelage which Russia wished to exercise over her destinies.

The territorial settlement made by the Berlin Treaty was first broken by Bulgaria. That treaty had cut the ethnological Bulgaria into two,

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leaving the southern half as a separate province under the name of Eastern Rumelia. In 1885 Eastern Rumelia was annexed to Bulgaria with the glad consent of its inhabitants, but in spite of the wishes of Russia. Serbia saw in this the threat of a Bulgarian hegemony in the Balkans, and demanded some territorial compensation for herself. This was refused. War followed. The Bulgarians were victorious at the Battle of Slivnitza, an achievement which was in great measure due to the organising ability of Prince Alexander. The victory secured Rumelia for Bulgaria. But no sense of gratitude to Prince Alexander survived, and the Russian intrigue which secured his abdication and flight was undoubtedly aided by a large section of the Bulgarian people. Stambouloff, a peasant leader of the Bulgarians and its greatest personality since the War of Liberation, was faithful to Alexander, but was not able to save him.

Underwood & Underwood

KING FERDINAND'S BODYGUARD

The Bulgarian throne after Alexander's abdication was offered to the King of Roumania. The acceptance of the offer would possibly have led to a real Balkan Federation. The united power of Roumania and Bulgaria, exercised wisely, could have gently pressed the other Balkan

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peoples into a union. That, however, would have suited the aims neither of Russia nor of Austria, the two Empires which guided the destinies of the Balkans, chiefly in the light of their own selfish ends. The Roumanian king refused the throne of Bulgaria, and in 1887

Prince Ferdinand of Coburg became Prince of the State. It was not long before he fell out with Stambouloff, the able but personally unamenable patriot who chiefly had made modern Bulgaria. In the conflict between the two Prince Ferdinand proved the stronger. Stambouloff was dismissed from office, and in 1895 was assassinated in the streets of Sofia. No attempt was made to punish his murderers.

In 1908 Bulgaria shook off the last shred of dependence to Turkey. The bold action was the crown of a clever diplomatic intrigue by Prince Ferdinand. Since the murder of Stambouloff the Prince had been sedulously cultivating in public the friendship of Russia: but that had not prevented him carrying to a great pitch of mutual confidence a secret understanding with Austria. The Austrian Empire was anxious to annex formally the districts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of which it had long been in

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occupation. Objection to this would surely have come from Russia; but Russia was impotent for the time being after the disastrous war with Japan. Just as surely it would come from Serbia which would see thus definitely pass over to the one Power, which she had reason to fear, a section of Slav-inhabited country clearly connected to the Serbs by racial ties. Serbia, it might be expected, would have the support of France and England as well as Russia. For Bulgaria the offer to neutralise Serbia made to Austria all the difference between an action which was a little risky and an action which had no risk at all. Bulgaria supported Austria in the annexation, and, as was to have been expected, Serbia found protest impossible, since Russia, France, and England swallowed the affront to treaty obligations to which they were parties. It was Bulgaria's reward to have the support of the Triple Alliance in throwing off all fealty and tribute to the Sublime Porte. Prince Ferdinand became the Czar Ferdinand of Bulgaria.

Nor was that the end of Bulgarian ambition. The "big" Bulgaria of the San Stefano treaty floated before the eyes of her rulers constantly, and she began to prepare for a war against

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Turkey, of which the prize should be Thrace and Macedonia. An obstacle in Macedonia was not only that the Turks were in

occupation, but that the Greeks considered themselves entitled to the reversion of the estate. Rivalry between the three nations was responsible for the Macedonian horrors, which went on from year to year, and made one district of the Balkans a veritable hell on earth. These horrors have been set at the door of the "Unspeakable Turk." The Turk has quite enough to answer for in the many hideous crimes which he has undoubtedly committed. It is not quite just to hold him wholly responsible for the terrible state of Macedonia during the last few years. Greek and Bulgarian were alike interested in making it appear to the world that Turkish rule in Macedonia was impossible. To effect this they insisted that rapine and massacre should become normal. If the Turk did not wish for massacres he was stirred up to massacres. Christian pastors were not prevented by their Christian faith from murders of their own people, if it could be certain that the Turks would have the discredit of them. Side by side with the atrocities which were committed by Turks against Christians and Christians

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against Turks, the two sets of warring Christians, the Bulgarian Exarchates and the Greek Patriarchates, attacked one another with a fiendish relentlessness, which equalled the most able efforts of the Turks in the way of rape, murder, and robbery.

In excuse for part of this, *i.e.* that part which stirred up the Turks to atrocities even when they wished to be peaceful, there could be pleaded the good object of striving for the end of all Turkish rule in Christian districts of the Balkans. The excuse will serve this far: that without a doubt a Christian community cannot be governed justly by the Turk, and the very strongest of steps are warranted to put an end to Turkish domination of a district largely inhabited by Christians. But no consideration, even that of exterminating Turkish rule, could justify all the Christian atrocities perpetrated in Macedonia: and there is certainly no shadow of an excuse for the atrocities with which Bulgarian sought to score against Greek and Greek against Bulgarian. The era of those atrocities has not yet closed. The Turk has been driven from Macedonia, but Greek and Bulgarian continue their feud. For the time the Greek is in the ascendant, whilst the Bulgarian broods over a revenge.

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BULGARIAN INFANTRY

CHAPTER IV

THE WARS OF 1912-13

By 1912, Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro had contrived, in spite of any past quarrels, in spite of the mutual jealousies even then being displayed in the recurring Macedonian massacres, of Christians by Christians as well as by Turks, to arrive at a sufficient degree of unity to allow them to make war jointly on Turkey. Bulgaria and Serbia concluded an offensive and defensive alliance, arranging for all contingencies and providing for the division of the spoils which it was hoped to win from the Turks. Between Bulgaria and Greece there was no such definite alliance, but a military convention only. The division of the spoil after the war was left to future determination, both Greek and Bulgarian probably having it clearly in his head that he would have all his own way after the war or

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fight the issue out subsequently. A later Punch cartoon put this peculiarity of a Balkan alliance with pretty satire. Greece and Serbia were discussing what they should do with the spoils they were then winning from Bulgaria. "Of course we shall fight for them. Are we not allies?" said one of the partners.

I was through the war of 1912 as war correspondent for the London *Morning Post*, and followed the fortunes of the main Bulgarian army in the Thracian campaign. In this book I do not intend to attempt a history of the war but will give some impressions of it which, whilst not neglecting any of the chief facts in any part of the theatre of operations, will naturally be mainly based on observations with the Bulgarians.

First, with regard to the political side of the war, one could not but be struck by the exceedingly careful preparation that the Bulgarians had made for the struggle. It was no unexpected or sudden war. They had known for some time that war was inevitable, having made up their minds for a considerable time that the wrongs of their fellow-nationals

in Macedonia and Thrace would have to be righted by force of arms. Attempts on the part of the Powers to enforce reforms

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in the Christian Provinces of Turkey had, in the opinion of the Bulgars, been absolute failures, and they had done their best to make them failures, wishing for a destroyed Turkey not a reformed Turkey. In their opinion there was nothing to hope for except armed intervention on their part against Turkey. And, believing that, they had made most careful preparation extending over several years for the struggle. That preparation was in every sense admirable. For instance, it had extended, so far as I could gather, from informants in Bulgaria, to this degree: that they formed military camps in winter for the training of their troops. Thus they did not train solely in the most favourable time of the year for manœuvres, but in the unfavourable weather too, in case that time should prove the best for their war. The excellence of their artillery arm, and the proof of the scientific training of their officers, prove to what extent their training beforehand had gone.

When war became inevitable, the Balkan League having been formed, and the time being ripe for the war, Bulgaria in particular, and the Balkan States in general, were quite determined

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that war should be. The Turks at this time were inclined to make reforms and concessions; they had an inclination to ease the pressure on their Christian subjects in the Christian provinces. Perhaps knowing—perhaps not knowing—that they were unready for war themselves, but feeling that the Balkan States were preparing for war, the Turks were undoubtedly willing to make great concessions. But whatever concessions the Turks might have offered, war would still have taken place. I do not think one need offer any harsh criticism about the Balkan nations for coming to that decision. If you have made your preparation for war—perhaps a very expensive preparation, perhaps a preparation which has involved very great commitments apart from expense—it is not reasonable to suppose that at the last moment you will consent to desist from making that war. The line which you may have been prepared to take before you made your preparations you may not be prepared to take after the preparations have been made. And, as the Turks found out

afterwards, the terms which were offered to them before the outbreak of the war were not the same terms as would be listened to after that event.

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To a pro-Turk it all will seem a little unscrupulous. But it is after the true fashion of diplomacy or warlike enterprise. The simple position was that Turkey was obviously a decadent Power; that her territories were envied and that if there had not been a real grievance (there was a real grievance) one would have been manufactured to justify a war of spoliation. It not being necessary to manufacture a grievance, the existing one was carefully nursed and stimulated: and when the ripe time came for war the unreal pretext that war was the alternative to reform and could be avoided by reform was put forward. No reform would have stopped the war just as no "reform" would stop, say, San Marino attacking the British Empire if she wanted something which the British Empire has got and felt that she could get it by an attack.

I do not think that the Balkan League would have withdrawn from the war supposing the Turks before the outbreak of the war had offered autonomy of the Christian provinces. I was informed in very high quarters, and I believe profoundly, that if the Turks had offered so much at that time the war would still have taken place.

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There is another interesting lesson to be gleaned from the political side of this war. At the outset, the Powers, when endeavouring to prevent hostilities, made an announcement that, whatever the result of the war, no territorial benefit would be allowed to any of the participants; that is to say, the Balkan States were informed, on the authority of all Europe, that if they did go to war, and if they won victories they would be allowed no fruits from those victories. The Balkan States recognised, as I think all sensible people must recognise, that a victorious army makes its own laws. They treated this *caveat* which was issued by the Powers of Europe as a matter to be politely set aside; and ignored it.

Political experience seems to show that if a nation, under any circumstances, wishes its international rights to be respected, it must be ready to fight for them. There is proof from contemporary history in the respective fates of Switzerland and Korea. Both nations once stood in very much the same position internationally; that their independence was, in a sense, guaranteed. Korea's independence

was guaranteed by both the United States and Great Britain. But the

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independence of Korea has now vanished. Korea could not fight for herself, and nobody was going to fight for a nation which could not fight for herself. The independence of Switzerland is maintained because Switzerland would be a very thorny problem for any Power in search of territory to tackle. In case of an attack on Switzerland, that country would be able to help herself and her friends.

On the opposite side of the argument, we see the Balkan League entering upon a desperate war, warned that they would be allowed no territorial advantage from that war, but engaging upon it because they recognised that a victorious army makes its own laws.

It was of wonderful value to the Bulgarian generals entering upon this war that the whole Bulgarian nation was filled with the martial spirit—was, in a sense, wrapped up in the colours. Every male Bulgarian citizen was trained to the use of arms. Every Bulgarian citizen of fighting age was engaged either at the front or on the lines of communication. Before the war, every Bulgarian man, being a soldier, was under a soldier's honour; and the preliminaries of the war, the preparations for mobilisation in particular,

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were carried out with a degree of secrecy that, I think, astonished every Court and every Military Department in Europe. The secret was so well kept that one of the diplomatists in Roumania left for a holiday three days before the declaration of war, feeling certain that there was to be no war. Bulgaria is not governed altogether autocratically, but is a very free democracy in some respects. It has a newspaper Press that, on ordinary matters, for delightful irresponsibility, might be matched in London. Yet not a single whisper of what the nation was designing and planning leaked abroad. Because the whole nation was a soldier, and the whole nation was under a soldier's honour, secrecy could be kept. No one abroad knew anything, either from the babbling of "Pro-Turks," or from the newspapers, that a great campaign was being designed.

Topical Press

BULGARIAN TROOPS LEAVING SOFIA

The Secret Service of Bulgaria before the war evidently had been excellent. They seemed to know all that was necessary to know about the country in which they were going to fight. This very complete knowledge of theirs was in part responsible for the arrangements which were made between the Balkan Allies for carrying on the

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war. The Bulgarian people had made up their minds to do the lion's share of the work, and to have the lion's share of the spoils. They knew quite definitely the state of corruption to which the Turkish nation had come. When I reached Sofia, the Bulgarians told me they were going to be in Constantinople three weeks after the declaration of war. That was the view that they took of the possibilities of the campaign. And they kept their programme as far as Chatalja fairly closely.

The view of the Bulgarians as to the ultimate result of the war, and what they had designed should be the division of spoil after the war, I gathered from various classes in Bulgaria, speaking not only with politicians but with bankers, trading people, and others. They concluded that the Turk was going to be driven out of Europe, at any rate, as far as Constantinople. They considered that Constantinople was too great a prize for the Bulgarian nation, or for the Balkan States, and that Constantinople would be left as an international city, to be governed by a commission of the Great Powers. Bulgaria was, then, to have practically all Turkey-in-Europe—the province of Thrace, and a large

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part of Macedonia as far as the city of Salonica. Constantinople was to be left, with a small territory, as an international city, and the Bulgarian boundary was to stretch as far as Salonica. Salonica, they admitted, was desired very much by the Bulgarians, and also very much by the Greeks; and the Bulgarian idea in regard to Salonica before the war was that it would be best to make it a free Balkan city, governed by all the Balkan States in common, and a free port for all

the Balkan States. Then the frontier of Greece was to extend very much to the north, and Greece was to be allowed all the Aegean Islands. The Serbian frontier was to extend to the eastward and the southward, and what is now the autonomous province of Albania (the creation of which has been insisted on by the Powers) was to be divided between Montenegro and Servia.

That division would have left the Bulgarians with the greatest spoil of the war. They would have had entry on to the Sea of Marmora; they would have controlled, perhaps, one side of the Dardanelles (but I believe they thought that the Dardanelles might also be left to a commission of the Powers). It needed great

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confidence and exact knowledge as to the state of the Turkish Army to allow plans of that sort to have been not only formed, but to be generally talked about.

It must be tragical now for a patriotic Bulgarian to compare these high anticipations with the actual results of the war, and to reflect that at one time he had three-fourths of his hopes secure and then sacrificed all by straining after the remainder.

The Bulgarian mobilisation—effected after lengthy preparation with perfect success and complete secrecy—was a triumph of military achievement. It emphasises a point often urged, that when a whole nation is wrapt up in the colours, when every citizen is a soldier and taught the code of patriotic honour of the soldier—then at a time of crisis, spies, grumblers, critics are impossible. Bulgaria, as I have said, is very democratic. Unlike Roumania, where a landed aristocracy survived Turkish rule, the whole nation is of peasants or the sons and grandsons of peasants. The nobles, the wealthy, the intellectuals were exterminated by the Turk. Yet the strategy of the war suffered nothing from the democracy of the people. They acted with

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a unity, a secrecy, and a loyalty to the flag that no despotism could rival.

The mobilisation was effected on very slender resources. Official statistics—perhaps for a reason—are silent regarding the growth of railway material since 1909. But in that year there were only 155

locomotives in the country. As soon as war was anticipated these provident and determined people set to amassing railway material, and one railway official, without giving exact figures, talked of locomotives being added by "fifties" at a time. I doubt that. But perhaps there were between 200 and 225 locomotives in Bulgaria in October 1912, though one military attaché gave me the figure at 193. It was a slender stock, in any case, on which to move 350,000 men and to keep them in supplies. But the people contributed all their horses, mules, and oxen to the war fund. Soldiers were willing and able to walk great distances, and within a few days all the armies were over the frontier.

The Bulgarians, by the way, began the war with a *moratorium*. (The week of the declaration of hostilities, meeting some personages notable in European finance, they ridiculed for this

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reason the idea of the war being anything but a dismal failure from the point of view of the Balkan States.) It was necessary to win in a hurry if they were to win at all. They could take the field only because of the magnificent spirit of their population. They could not keep the field indefinitely under any circumstances.

The main line of communication was through Yamboli, and here the chief force was massed whilst exploratory work was carried on towards Adrianople and Kirk Kilisse. I believe that originally the capture of Adrianople was the first grand object of the campaign, and that a modification was made later either for political or military reasons, or for a mixture of both. Up to the point at which Adrianople was invested from the north, Kirk Kilisse captured, and the cavalry sent raiding south-west to attack the Turk's lines of communication and to feel for his field army, an excellent plan of campaign was followed. If the main Bulgarian army had then swung over from Kirk Kilisse and had made a resolute—and, under the circumstances, almost certainly victorious—effort to rush Adrianople the natural course, from a military point of view, would have been followed. The

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one risk involved was that the Turkish field army would come up from the south and force a battle under the walls of Adrianople, aided by a sortie from the garrison. But the experience of Kirk Kilisse and the following battles argued against this. There would have been, one

may judge, ample time allowed to subdue Adrianople with an army flushed by its success at Kirk Kilisse, operating against a garrison thoroughly despondent at the moment.

Kirk Kilisse, it must be noted in passing, was a vastly overrated fortress. The Turks, I believe, valued it highly. The Bulgarians triumphantly quoted a German opinion that it could withstand a German army for three months. As a matter of fact, whilst it was a valuable base for an enterprising field army, surrounded as it was by natural features of great strength, it was not a real fortress at all. Still, the moral effect of its capture was great, and on the flood of that success the Bulgarian army could have entered Adrianople if it had been willing to make the necessary great sacrifice of infantry.

A second sound—and more enterprising, and therefore probably better course—was that which I thought at the time was being followed, to

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pursue the Turks fleeing from Kirk Kilisse, to search out their field army, give it a thrashing, and then swing back to subdue Adrianople. But neither of these courses was followed. Kirk Kilisse was not followed up vigorously in the first instance. After its capture the Bulgarian army rested three days. During that time the fleeing Turks had won back some of their courage, had come back in their tracks, recovered many of the guns they had abandoned, and the battles of Ivankeui and Yanina—battles in which the Bulgarian losses were very heavy—were necessary to do over again work which had been already once accomplished. This criticism must be read in the light of the fact that I am totally ignorant of the transport position in the Bulgarian Third Army at the time. General Demetrieff had made a wonderful dash over the wild country between Yamboli and Kirk Kilisse, carrying an army over a track which took a military attaché six days to traverse on horseback, and a hospital train seven days to traverse by ox wagon. He might at the time have been seriously short of ammunition, though Kirk Kilisse renewed his food and forage supplies.

After three days the Bulgarians moved on.

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Ivankeui and Yanina were won, and the pursuit continued until Lule

Burgas, where the Turkish army in the field was decisively defeated and driven with great slaughter towards Chorlu, where its second stand was expected. That expectation was not realised. The flight continued to Chatalja. This was the turning-point of the campaign. Up to now the Bulgarian success had been complete. If now Adrianople had been made the main objective, with a small "holding" force left at Chorlu, the entry into Constantinople would possibly have been realised. But the decision was made to "mask" Adrianople and to push on with all available force towards Constantinople.

In considering this decision it is easy to be misled by giving Adrianople merely the value of a fortress in the rear, holding a garrison capable of some offensive, necessitating the detachment of a large holding force. But that was not the position. Actually Adrianople straddled the only practical line of communication for effective operations against the enemy's capital. The railway from Bulgaria to Constantinople passed through Adrianople. Excepting that line of railway, there was no other railroad, and there was no other carriage road, one might say, for the Turk did not build roads. Once across the Turkish frontier there were tracks, not roads.

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GENERAL DEMETRIEFF, THE CONQUEROR AT LULE BURGAS

The effect of leaving Adrianople in the hands of the enemy was that supplies for the army in the field coming from Bulgaria could travel by one of two routes. They could come through Yamboli to Kirk Kilisse, or they could come through Novi Zagora to Mustapha Pasha by railway, and then to Kirk Kilisse around Adrianople. From Kirk Kilisse to the rail-head at Seleniki, close to Chatalja, they could come not by railway, but by a tramway, a very limited railway. If Adrianople had fallen, the railway would have been open. The Bulgarian railway services had, I think, something over 100 powerful locomotives at the outset of the war, and whilst it was a single line in places, it was an effective line right down to as near Constantinople as they could get.

But, Adrianople being in the hands of the enemy, supplies coming from Yamboli had to travel to Kirk Kilisse by track, mostly by bullock wagon, and that journey took five, six, or seven days. The British Army Medical Detachment, travelling over that road, took seven days. If

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one took the other road you got to Mustapha Pasha comfortably by railway. And then it was necessary to use bullock or horse transport from Mustapha Pasha to Kirk Kilisse. That journey I took twice; once with an ox wagon, and afterwards with a set of fast horses, and the least period for that journey was five days. From Kirk Kilisse there was a line of light railway joining the main line. But on that line the Bulgarians had only six engines, and, I think, thirty-two carriages; so that, for practical purposes, the railway was of very little use indeed past Mustapha Pasha. Whilst Adrianople was in the hands of the enemy, the Bulgarians had practically no line of communication.

My reason for believing that it was not the original plan of the generals to leave Adrianople "masked" is, that in the first instance I have a high opinion of the generals, and I do not think they could have designed that; but think rather it was forced upon them by the politicians saying, "We must hurry through, we must attempt something, no matter how desperate it is, something decisive." In the second instance, after Adrianople had been attacked in a very half-hearted way, and after the main Bulgarian army

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had pushed on to the lines of Chatalja, the Bulgarians called in the aid of a Serbian division to help them against Adrianople. I am sure they would not have done that if it had not been their wish to subdue Adrianople. To be forced to invoke Serbian aid was a serious wound to their vanity.

The position of the Bulgarian army on the lines of Chatalja, with Adrianople in the hands of the enemy, was this: that it took practically their whole transport facilities to keep the army supplied with food, and there was no possibility of keeping the army properly supplied with ammunition. So if the Bulgarian generals had really designed to carry the lines of Chatalja without first attacking Adrianople, they miscalculated seriously. But I do not think they did; I think it was a plan forced upon them by political authority, feeling that the war must be pushed to a conclusion somehow. Why the Bulgarians did not take Adrianople quickly in the first place is to be explained simply by the fact that they could not. But if their train of sappers had been of the same kind of stuff as their field artillery, they could have taken Adrianople in the first week of the war. The Bulgarians, however, had no effective siege train.

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A Press photographer at Mustapha Pasha was very much annoyed because photographs he had taken of guns passing through the town were not allowed to be sent through to his paper. He sent a humorous message to his editor, that he could not send photographs of guns, "it being a military secret that the Bulgarians had any guns." But the reason the Bulgarians did not want photographs taken was that these guns were practically useless for the purpose for which they were intended.

In short, whilst Adrianople stood it was impossible to keep 250,000 men in the field at Chatalja with the guns and ammunition necessary for their work. Therefore the taking of Adrianople should have followed the Battle of Lule Burgas.

A reservation is perhaps necessary. If after Lule Burgas the victorious Bulgarians had been able to push on at once, the fleeing Turks might have been followed to the very walls of Constantinople. If even the flower of the force to the extent of 50,000 men had gone on with all the guns, ammunition, and food possible, the enterprise would probably have succeeded. But one may judge that that too was impossible, in view

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of the transport position. There was a long pause. Then an attempt was made to do deliberately against an entrenched army what it was thought impossible to do against a fleeing rabble. Reasons of humanity were given to me to explain the hesitation to assault Adrianople. The Bulgarians shrank from the great expenditure of men necessary, from the sacrifice of the Christian population involved. Such reasons would be admirable if truthful; but they are not war.

When the action against the lines of Chatalja was at last opened the Turks had had time to entrench strongly, to recover their wind, to recognise that they had come to the last ditch. On November 17, after the artillery reconnaissance of the position by the Bulgarians, I had slight hope that success would be possible; it looked as if they were short of ammunition, and not well supplied with food. Shells were used very sparingly. When a storm was necessary there was a shower. Even on that day infantrymen were asked to do the work of shrapnel, and valuable lives paid for very slight information. Still, the Turkish artillery work was so poor; their sticking to their trenches was

so persistent, that I half anticipated that the night would

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see a big Bulgarian success on the left flank, making an effective attack on the centre possible with the morning. But by next morning little had been done. That day was spent in a heroic display of infantry courage. Men rushed out from trenches against forts the strength of which was unknown, with practically no artillery backing. Certainly the day was misty, and artillery work could not have been properly effective. If the position was—as I guess it was—that there was no adequate supply of ammunition, the choice of the day was good. If it were possible to succeed with infantry alone it would have been possible on that day and with those men. But it was impossible. That night operations were suspended, and negotiations for peace followed.

Meanwhile in other quarters of the theatre of war the Balkan Allies had been doing as well or even better. True, the Montenegrins were not very successful against Scutari (it did not fall until the second phase of the war), and the Greeks had been held up at Janina. But the Serbians had swept the Turks from Old Serbia and from Northern Macedonia in fine style, and had carried through an expedition of great gallantry over the mountains to the Adriatic.

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As the Bulgarians and Turks stood at bay on opposite ranges of hills within 25 miles of Constantinople, all that was left of Turkish territory in Europe was the little peninsula on which Constantinople stood, the peninsula of Gallipoli, and the towns of Adrianople, Scutari, and Janina. It was certainly high time for the Turk to talk of peace.

War was now interrupted for a time to allow the Balkan Allies who had shown themselves so gallant in war to show their mettle as statesmen and negotiators. It is one of the established facts of history that warlike prowess alone has never made a nation securely great. Within the Balkan Peninsula that was made plain during the invasions of the Goths and the Huns. There was now to be a melancholy modern proof. At the end of 1912 the Balkan States, united and victorious, were in the position to take the Balkan Peninsula for themselves and keep out European interference for the future. They had soon dissipated all this advantage with mutual jealousies and blundering negotiations. Already, before the Peace Conference had

actually begun its work, charges and counter-charges of atrocities were bandied about between Bulgar and Greek. A

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Greek official account set forth the following accusations:

The detailed inquiry with regard to excesses and crimes committed by the Bulgarian army shows that they constitute a cause for the disturbances reported during the first days after the surrender of Salonica. According to this inquiry, the excesses of the Bulgarians can be divided into three categories: (1) damage to property; (2) crimes against the life and honour of private persons, especially Turks; and (3) offences—and these were the less frequent—due to misconceived political interest. In the majority of cases Bulgarian soldiers and peasants gave themselves up to pillaging. At Vassilika, Agiaparaskevi, Apostola, Alihatzilar, Serres, Langada, Asvestohori, Baroritza, Tohanli, Karaburnu, Vardar, Doiran, and Salonica pillaging and thefts of all kinds were committed, the stolen articles including horses, goats, sheep, barley, hay, jewels, and other articles of value, large sums of money, carpets, furniture, clothes, and arms. Attacks were made on Austrian subjects, and the Austrian Consulate in consequence, lodged an energetic protest. Unspeakable outrages were committed at Serres and at the other towns and villages mentioned above. At Doiran, despite the protests of the municipality, the Bulgarians seized and imprisoned the rich Turkish residents, who after having secured their liberty by the payment of enormous ransoms, were ambushed by the Bulgarians and massacred, sixty of them being killed.

The political crimes were of little importance, as the greater number of the Bulgarians ardently desire the maintenance of the Balkan Alliance, especially a Greco-Bulgarian *entente*, safeguarding their political interests.

Exclusive News Agency

ADRIANOPLE

A general view, showing the Mosque of Sultan Selim on the left and the Old Mosque on the right

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On the Bulgarian side just as positive charges against the Greeks were made. It is not my province to attempt to judge as to the truth of the Salonica events, but I quote this official charge as illustrative of the spirit which had come over the Balkan League before the close of 1912.

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CHAPTER V

A CHAPTER IN BALKAN DIPLOMACY

Watching through many exciting weeks the course of a Balkan Peace Conference, I had the opportunity of seeing another phase of the Near Eastern character in its various sub-divisions—the Turkish, the Grecian, the Roumanian, the Bulgarian, and the Serbian. It was in certain general characteristics the same character with certain points of difference, ranging from almost purely Oriental through various grades until it reached to a phase which was rather more than half European. In various aspects it was naïve, wily, deceitful, vainglorious, truculent, servile, stubborn, supple. At times it was very trying. Usually it was distinctly amusing. There were some exceptions among the Balkan statesmen, but as a rule they were men of very ordinary ability and very extraordinary conceit. Close

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association with them dissipated for a time the extremely good impression that Bulgarian, Serbian, Grecian, and Roumanian peasants and officials and traders had made on me, meeting them as soldiers or as wayside hosts.

When the Bulgarian progress towards Constantinople was stopped at Chatalja, the Bulgarian authorities favoured negotiations for peace. To this Greece very strenuously, and Serbia more gently, objected. They offered as an alternative suggestion to send aid to the Chatalja lines to help Bulgaria to force things to a conclusion there. But by this

time the Balkan Allies were at least as much suspicious of one another as they were hostile to the Turk. The troubles after the fall of Salonica had given a picturesque illustration of the hollowness of the Balkan League. Greece and Bulgaria had raced armies down for the capture of that city, and the Greeks had won in the race by bribing the Turkish commander to surrender to them—the Bulgarians said sourly (an absurd accusation!). Now Bulgarian and Greek were at the point of open war in Salonica, and were doing a little odd killing of one another to keep their hands in practice. Around Adrianople Bulgarian and

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Serbian were growling at one another, the Bulgarians treating their friends rather badly, so far as I could judge. Both racial sections of the army of siege were inclined to do very little, because each was waiting for the other to begin. Bulgaria, too, was extremely anxious to have no more friendly allied troops in the areas which she had marked out for herself. She was aware that the Greek population of Thrace was agitating for an autonomous Thrace instead of a Bulgarian annexation, and feared that the presence of a Greek army in the province would strengthen this movement.

In the upshot Serbia and Montenegro supported Bulgaria in the signing of an armistice. Greece refused to sign an armistice, but joined in the negotiations for a final peace which opened at the Conference of St. James's, London, in December 1912. This Conference quickly resolved itself into a wonderful acrobatic display of ground and lofty fiction, of strange childish "bluffs," of complicated efforts at mystery which would not deceive a Punch-and-Judy show audience.

In the East and the Near East, the man who wants to buy a horse goes to the market-place

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in the first instance, and curses publicly all horses and thoughts of horses. He proclaims that he will see his father's tomb defiled before he will ever touch a horse again. Hearing of this, a man who wishes to sell a horse appears in public, and proclaims that the horse he has in his stall is the sun and the moon and the stars of his life: that sooner than part with it he would eat filth and become as a dog. At this stage the negotiations for a bargain are in fair progress. After

some days—the East and the Near East is not very thrifty with time—a satisfactory bargain is struck.

The Balkan Peace Conference was carried on very much on those lines. In a London winter atmosphere, among the unimaginative and matter-of-fact London population, the effect was strangely fantastic. In an early stage of the negotiations the Turkish delegates (who were out to gain time in the desperate hope that something would turn up) said one day that they must ask for instructions on some point, about which they were as fully instructed as it was possible to be: said the next sitting day that unfortunately their instructions had not arrived: and the next sitting day that their instructions had arrived but unfortunately they could not

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decipher some of the words, and must refer to Constantinople again! With all this it was difficult to believe that we lived in a civilised age of telegraphs and newspapers and railway trains. The mind was transported back insensibly to the times of the great Caliph of Bagdad.

Whilst the Turks dallied in the hope that something would turn up, and devoted a painstaking but painfully obvious industry to the task of trying to sow dissensions among the Balkan Allies, these Balkan Allies engaged among themselves in a vigorous Press campaign of mutual abuse and insinuation. The seeds of dissension which the Turk was scattering refused to germinate, because already the field which was sown had a full-grown crop. But the Balkan Allies had one point of elementary common sense. They were resolved to take from the Turk all that was possible before they fell out among themselves as to the division of the spoil. (As it happened, they forgot to take into account the contingency that after the division it would still be within the power of the Turk to seek some revenge if they abandoned their League of Alliance, which alone had made the humiliation of the Turkish Empire possible.)

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The first squabble between the Allies was over the appointment of a leader or chief spokesman of the Balkan delegates. If there had been a touch of imagination and real friendliness between them they would have selected the senior Montenegrin delegate in acknowledgment of the gallantry which had kept Montenegro during all the centuries

unsubdued by the Turkish invader. Or there were reasons why the chief Greek delegate should have been chosen, as he was Prime Minister in his own country, and therefore the senior delegate in official position. But there was not enough good feeling among the Allies to allow of any such settlement. The delegation was left without an official spokesman and there had to be a roster of Presidents in alphabetical order as the only way to soothe the embittered jealousies of rival allies. That was the first of a series of childish incidents.

Some of the delegates talked with the utmost freedom to the Press: and if what they told was not always accurate it was nearly always interesting. The loathsome wiles of the other Balkan fellow and his black treachery were explained at length. It seemed seriously to be thought that British and European opinion would be

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influenced by this sort of fulmination in the more irresponsible Press.

Diplomacy under these conditions was bound to fail. The Turkish position was at the time plainly desperate if only military considerations were taken into account. A united front on the part of the Balkan delegates, combining firmness with some suavity, would have convinced even the procrastinating Turkish mind that the game was up and the only thing to do was to make a peace on lines of "cutting the loss." But the constant quarrels of the Balkan States' representatives between themselves encouraged the Turks day by day to think that a definite split must come between the Allies, and with a split the chance for Turkey to find a way out of her desperate position. As it happened, Turkey played that game too long: and the war was resumed and further heavy bloodshed caused. Then the Peace Conference resumed with Turkey and Bulgaria, apparently very anxious for peace on terms dictated by the Powers: and Greece and Serbia anxious now for delays because they had made up their minds that it was necessary to defend themselves against Bulgaria, and they wished time for their preparations.

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Underwood & Underwood

ROUMANIAN SOLDIERS IN BUCHAREST

Throughout both Conferences Roumania hovered about in the offing waiting confidently for an opportunity for pickings. Roumania had learned well the lesson taught her by European diplomacy after the War of Liberation. Then she had done great work, made enormous sacrifices, and won not rewards but robberies. In the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 she stood apart, risking nothing, and waiting for the exhaustion of the combatants to put in her claims.

The second session of the Balkan Peace Conference came to an abrupt end through practically an ultimatum from the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, that peace with Turkey on the lines determined by the Powers must be signed at once. The Grecian and Serbian delegates saw then that the game of delay could no longer be played, signed the Peace of London, and hurried away to their homes expecting an attack from Bulgaria.

Some strange infatuation drove the Bulgarian leaders at that time to a fit of madness. They had just wrung the last atom of concession from Turkey, and had an enormous undisputed access of territory in Thrace and in eastern Macedonia, with a good coastal frontage on the Aegean.

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True, they were faced with a demand for a small territorial concession by Roumania, and Greece disputed the right of Bulgaria to an area of northern Macedonia, and Serbia disputed with her over her Macedonian area. It would have been quite within the rules of Balkan diplomacy for Bulgaria to have sought the help of one of her neighbours, so that she might withstand the others. With proper adroitness she might have robbed each in turn with the help of the others. But Bulgaria elected to fight all of them at once. To Roumania she was rude, to Serbia stiff, to Greece provocative. By joining hands with Serbia, which had helped her very gallantly at Adrianople, and was now much injured by the decision of the Powers that she was not to keep the Adriatic territory which she had won in the war, Bulgaria might have coerced Greece and Turkey at least, and perhaps have struck a better bargain with Roumania. But she had conciliation for none.

The events that followed are as tragical as any that I can recall in history. Bulgaria had within a few weeks raised herself to a position which promised her headship of a Balkan Confederation. She might

have been the Prussia of

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a new Empire. Within a few days her blunders, her intolerance, and her bad faith had humbled her to the dust. As soon as she attacked Greece and Serbia—to attack such a combination was absurd—Roumania moved down upon her northern frontier, and the Turk moved up from the south. Neither Roumanian nor Turk were opposed. The whole Bulgarian strength was kept for her late Allies: and yet the Bulgarian forces were decisively routed by both Serbians and Greeks.

Of the dark incidents of that fratricidal war no history will ever tell the truth. No war correspondents nor military *attachés* accompanied the forces. From the accusations and counter-accusations of the combatants, from the eloquent absence of prisoners, from the ghastly gaps in the ranks of the armies when they returned from the field, it is clear that the war was carried on as a rule without mercy and without chivalry. There was no very plentiful supply of ammunition on either side. That fact enabled the combatants to approach one another more closely and to inflict more savage slaughter. During the course of the war with Turkey the Balkan Allies lost 75,000 slain. During the war between themselves,

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though it lasted only a few days, it is said that this number was exceeded.

Roumania, whose army though invading Bulgaria engaged in no battle, finally dictated terms of peace. The Peace of Bucharest supplanted the Peace of London. Bulgaria, beaten to the ground, had to give up all that Roumania demanded, and practically all that Greece and Serbia demanded. It was a characteristic incident of Balkan diplomacy that the unhappy Bulgarians, having the idea of conciliating Roumania, conveyed the territory to that state with expressions of joy and gratitude, to which expressions the wily Roumanians gave exactly their true value.

ADRIANOPLE

View looking across the Great Bridge

Turkey, meanwhile, had taken full advantage of the opportunity given to her by Bulgaria. Beaten decisively she had had to agree to give up all her European possessions with the exception of those beyond a line drawn from Enos on the Black Sea to Midia on the Aegean. She saw now Bulgaria powerless and calmly marched back, and seized again practically all Thrace, including Adrianople, over which had been fought such great battles, and Kirk Kilisse. The Bulgarians protested, appealed to Europe, to

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Roumania in vain, then accepted the situation and professed a warm friendship for Turkey. There seemed to be a movement for a joint Turkish-Bulgarian attack upon Greece, which would have put the last touch upon this tragic comedy of the Balkans. But the Powers vetoed this enterprise if ever it were contemplated, and the Balkans for a while, except for a little massacring in Macedonia and Albania, enjoyed an unquiet peace. But the forces of hate and revenge waited latent.

The city which figured most prominently in the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 and the intervening diplomacy was Adrianople, the city founded by the Emperor Adrian. It has seen more bloodshed probably than any other city of the world. It was before Adrianople that the Roman Emperor Valerius and his army were destroyed by the Goths, and the fate of the Roman Empire sealed (a.d. 378). It was Adrianople that was first captured by the Turkish invaders of the Balkans to serve as their capital until they could at a later date capture Constantinople. Many sieges and battles it saw until 1912, when the Bulgarians and Serbians gathered around its marshy plains, and after several months of siege finally carried

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it by assault. Finally it was re-captured by a mere cavalry patrol of the Turks.

Adrianople has its beauties seen from afar. The great mosque with four slender minarets shines out from the midst of gardens and picturesque villas over the wide plain which marks the confluence of the Maritza and the Tchundra Rivers. But on nearer examination

Adrianople, like all other Turkish towns, is dirty, unkempt, squalid. Most Turkish towns in the Balkans—Mustapha Pasha on the Maritza was an exception, looking dirty and unattractive from any point of view—have a certain enchantment when they first catch the eye of the traveller. It is the custom of the richer Turks to build their villas on the high ground around a town if there is any, and to surround them with gardens. These embowered houses and the slender fingers pointing skyward of the minarets, give a first impression of ample space, of delicacy in architecture. Closer knowledge discloses the town as a herd of hovels, irregularly set in a sea of mud (in dry weather a dirty heap of dust), with the hilly outskirts alone tolerable.

I regret the wild Balkan diplomacy which doomed that Adrianople should go back to the

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Turks. The Bulgarians would have made a fine clean city of it: and had a project to canalise the Maritza and bring to the old city of Adrian all the advantages of a seaport. Possibly, that will come in the near future if, in renewing their strength, the Bulgarian nation learn also some sense of diplomacy and moderation in using it.

Now the position is that for the first time for very many years the old principle has been broken that the Turkish tide may retreat but must never advance in Europe. During the negotiations of the first session of the Balkan Peace Conference, the Balkan Committee—a London organisation which exists to befriend the Balkan States—urged:

Any district which should be restored to Turkish rule would be not only beyond the possibility of rehabilitation, but would suffer the second scourge of vengeance.... It would be intolerable that any such districts should meet the fate meted out to Macedonia in 1878. There is no ground for such restoration except the claim arising from the continued Turkish possessions of Adrianople. But compensation for the brief period during which Adrianople may still be defended would be represented by a district adjoining Chatalja, not exceeding, at all events, the vilayet of Constantinople....

It is clearly our duty to call attention to the governing

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principle laid down by Lord Salisbury that any district liberated from Turkish rule should not be restored to misgovernment.... The

ostensible ground for the action of Europe, and particularly of England in 1878, was that the Powers themselves undertook the reform of Turkish government in the restored provinces. They have since that day persistently restrained the small States from undertaking reform or liberation, while notoriously neglecting the task themselves. The promise to undertake reform was regarded in 1878 in many quarters as sincere. But renewed restoration of Christian districts to Turkey to-day would, after the experiences of the past, be devoid of any shred of sincerity....

The restoration of European and civilised populations to Turkish rule would be resented now, not merely by those who have sympathised with the Balkan Committee, but by the entire public, which recognises that the Allies have achieved a feat of arms of which even the greatest Power would be proud.

In 1914 no more was heard of "Lord Salisbury's principle," and in public repute the Balkan States were in a position worse than any they had occupied for half a century. Coming after a successful war such a result condemns most strongly Balkan statesmen and diplomats.

Exclusive News Agency

GENERAL VIEW OF STARA ZAGORA, BULGARIA

Roumanian diplomacy during 1912-13 was subtle, wily, and unscrupulous, enough to delight a Machiavelli. With all its ethical wickedness it was the most stable element in the wild disorders of 1913; was efficacious in insisting upon

peace: and imposed a sort of rough justice on all parties. Grecian diplomacy was of the same character as the Roumanian, but not so supremely able. The difference, it appeared to me, was that the Roumanian sought a grand advantage with a humble air: the Greek would seek an advantage, even a humble one, with a grand air. A lofty dignity sits well on the diplomacy which is backed by great force:

there should be something more humble in the bearing of the diplomat relying upon subtle wiles. The Greek is a little too conscious of his heroic past not to spoil a little the working of his otherwise very pliant diplomacy. The Serbian in diplomacy was not so childish as the Bulgarian and a great deal more amiable and modest. Europe has long given the Serbian a bad reputation for bounce and bluster. In the events of 1912-13 he did nothing to earn such ill-repute. His work in the field was done excellently and with little *réclame*. In Conference he was not aggressive, but moderate, and, in my experience, more truthful than other Balkan types.

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CHAPTER VI

THE TROUBLES OF A WAR CORRESPONDENT IN THE BALKANS

Being a war correspondent with the Bulgarian army gave one far better opportunities of studying Balkan scenery and natural characteristics than war operations. After getting through to Staff headquarters at Stara Zagora and to Mustapha Pasha, which was about twelve miles from the operations against Adrianople, I found myself a kind of prisoner of the censor, and recall putting my complaint into writing on November 7:

It is the dullest of posts, this, at the tail of an army which is moving forward and doing brave deeds whilst we are cooped up by the censor, thirsting for news, and given an occasional bulletin which tells us just what it is thought that we should be told. True, we are not prisoners exactly. We may go out within a mile radius. That is the rule which must be faithfully kept under pain of being sent back to headquarters. Perhaps, now and again, a desperate correspondent, thinking that it

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would not be such a sad thing after all to be sent back to

headquarters, takes a generous view of what a mile is. (Perhaps he has been used to Irish miles, which are of the elastic kind; short when you pay a car fare, long, very long, at other times.) But, supposing, with great energy and at dread risk of being sent back to headquarters a correspondent *has* walked one mile and one yard; or his horse, which cannot read notices, has unwittingly carried him on; and supposing that he has made all kinds of brilliant observations, analysing a speck of shining metal showing there, a puff of smoke elsewhere, a flash, or a scar on the earth, still there remains the censor. A courteous gentleman is the censor, with a manner even deferential. He cuts off the head of your news with the most malignant courtesy. "I am sorry, my dear sir, but that refers to movements of troops; it is forbidden. And that might be useful to the enemy. Ah, that observation is excellent; but it cannot go."

Afterwards, there remains in your mind an impression of your wickedness in having troubled so amiable a gentleman, and on your telegraph form nothing, just nothing. Of course, if you like, you can pass along the camp chatter, the stories brought in by Greeks anxious to curry favour, the descriptions of the capture of Constantinople by peasants whose first cousins were staying at the Pera Hotel the day it happened. The censor is too wise a gentleman to interfere with the harmless amusement of sending that on. It does not harm; it may entertain somebody.

So at the rear of the army, which is making the Christian arm more respected than it has been for some time in this Balkan Peninsula, we sit and growl. Those of us who are convinced that we possess that supreme

capacity of a general "to see what is going on behind the next hill" are particularly sad. There are so many precious observations being wasted, theories which cannot be expressed, sagacious "I told you so's" which are smothered. We are at the rear of an army, and endless trains of transport move on; and if we can by chance catch the sound of a distant gun we are happy for a day, since it suggests the real thing. Some of us are optimists, and feel sure that we shall go forward in a day or two; that we shall be allowed to see the bombardment of Adrianople; if not that, then its capture; if not that, then something. Others are pessimists, and have gone home.

It is easy to understand the anxiety of the Bulgarians. They are engaged in a big war. They know that some of the Great Powers are watching its progress with something more than interest and something less than sympathy. It is their impression that they can beat the Turks; but that afterwards they may have to meet an attempt to neutralise their victory. So they are anxious to mask every detail of their organisation. Secrecy applies to the past as well as to the present and the future. But it is very irritating; and one goes home, or holds on in the hope that something better will come after a time.

Meanwhile one may learn a little of the country and its people—this country which has been riven by many wars. The map—with its names in several languages—gives indications of the wounds they inflicted. In Bulgaria, too, it shows how determined is the nationality of the people who have within a generation reasserted their right to be a nation. They permit no Turkish names to remain on their maps. Not only do the Arabic characters go, but also the Turkish names. Eski

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Sagrah, for example, gives place to the title it has on the best English maps. "Sagrah" means in Turkish a "dell," a place sheltered by a wood. "Eski" means "old." The Bulgarian has changed that to Stara Zagora, Bulgarian words with exactly the same significance. He wishes to wipe away all traces of the defiling hand of the Turk from his country, though tolerant of his Turkish fellow-subjects.

Almost completely he succeeds, but not quite completely. The Turkish sweetmeats, the Turkish coffee keep their hold on the taste of the people, and away from the towns, among the peasants who till rich fields with wooden ploughs, there remain traces of the Eastern disregard for time. But even in the country the people are waking up to modern ideas, aroused in part by the American "drummer" selling agricultural machinery. But in his city of Sofia, "the little Paris," as he likes to hear it called, and in his towns the Bulgarian has become keen and bustling. He rather aspires to be thought Parisian in manner. A "middle class" begins to grow up. The Bulgarian prospers mightily as a trader, and when he makes money he devotes his son to a profession, to the staff of the army, the law, to public life. Also the Bulgarian is keen to add manufacturing industries to his agricultural resources, and there are cotton mills and other factories springing up in different places. The Bulgarian has a great faith in himself.

Thinking over what he has done within forty years, it is easy to share that belief and to think of him one day with a great seaport on the Mediterranean aspiring to a place in the family council of Europe.

Afterwards, when by dint of hard begging,

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hard travelling, hard living, and some hard swearing, I had forced my way through to the front, I concluded that with the exception of Mustapha Pasha—where the Second Army had failed at its task and was set to work on a dull siege, and was consequently very bad-tempered—the famous censorship of the Bulgarian Army was not so vexatious to the correspondents as to their editors. The censors were usually polite, and tried to make a difficult position agreeable.

When the correspondents were despatched it was thought that the Balkan States, needing a "good Press," would be fairly kind. The expectation was realised in the case of the Montenegrins and the Greeks. The Serbians allowed the correspondents to see nothing. The Bulgarian idea was to allow nothing to be seen and nothing to be despatched except the "Te Deums." It was an aggravation of the Japanese censorship, and if it is accepted as a model for future combatant States the "war correspondent" will become extinct. I am not disposed to claim that an army in the field should carry on its operations under the eyes of newspaper correspondents; and there were special circumstances in regard to the campaign of the Bulgarian

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army (which was a desperate rush against a big people of a little people operating with the slenderest of resources) that made a severe censorship absolutely necessary. But, that allowed, there are still some points of criticism justified.

One correspondent, and one only, was exempted from censorship, and he was not at the front but at Sofia. His special position as an informal member of the Cabinet led to a concession which, to a man of honour, was more of a responsibility than a privilege. At the outset the Russian and French correspondents were highly favoured, and two English correspondents—who were working jointly—were granted passes of credit to all the armies. That privilege was afterwards granted to me towards the end of the war. It should have

been granted to all or none. A censorship which is harsh but has no favouritism may be criticised, but it cannot be held suspect. Throughout the campaign there was some favouritism, the Russians having first place, the French next, the English and Americans next, the Italians, Germans, Austrians, and others coming last. The differentiation between nations was comprehensible enough, in view of the

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political situation in Europe, but differentiations between different papers of equal standing of the same country cannot be defended. As I ended the campaign one of the three favoured English correspondents, I speak on this point without bitterness. Indeed, I found no valid grounds for abusing the censorship until just as I was leaving Sofia, when I found that some of my messages from Kirk Kilisse to the *Morning Post* had been seriously (and, it would seem, deliberately) mutilated *after* they had passed the censor. They were of some importance as sent—one the first account from the Bulgarian side of the battle of Chatalja, the other a frank statement of the position following that battle, which I did not submit to the censor until after close consultation with high authority, and which was passed then with some modifications, and, after being passed, was mutilated until it had little or no meaning.

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Exclusive News Agency

SOFIA

Commercial Road from Commercial Square

In lighter vein I may record some of the humours of the censorship, mostly from Mustapha Pasha, where the Second Army was held up and everybody was in the worst of tempers. Mustapha Pasha would not allow ox wagons to be mentioned, would not allow photographs of reservists to be sent forward because they were not in full uniform, would not allow the fact that Serbian troops were before Adrianople to be recorded. Indeed, the censorship there was full of strange prohibitions. Going down to Mustapha Pasha I noticed aeroplane equipment. The censor objected to that being recorded then, though two days after the official bulletin trumpeted the fact.

At Mustapha Pasha the custom was after the war correspondent had written a despatch to bring it to the censor, who held his court in a room surrounded by a crowd of correspondents. The censor insisted that the correspondent should read the despatch aloud to him. Then the censor read it over again aloud to him to make sure that all heard. Thus we all learned how the other man's imagination was working, and telegraphing was reduced to a complete farce. Private letters had to pass through the same ordeal, and one correspondent, with a turn of humour, wrote an imaginary private letter full of the most fervent love messages, which was read out to a furiously blushing censor and to a batch of journalists, who at first did not see the joke and tried to look as if they were not listening. I have described

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the early days of Mustapha Pasha. Later, when most of the men had gone away, conditions improved.

The "second censorship"—the most disingenuous and condemnable part of the Bulgarian system—was applied with full force to Mustapha Pasha. After correspondents, who were forbidden to go a mile out of the town and forbidden to talk with soldiers, had passed their pitiful little messages through the censor, those messages were not telegraphed, but posted on to the Staff headquarters and then censored again, sometimes stopped. Certes, the treasures of strategical observation and vivid description thus lost were not very great, but the whole proceeding was unfair and underhand. The censor's seal once affixed a message should go unchanged. Otherwise it might be twisted into actual false information.

In almost all cases the individual censors were gentlemen, and personally I never had trouble with any of them; but the system was faulty at the outset, inasmuch as it was not frank, and was made worse when it became necessary to change the plan of campaign and abandon the idea of capturing Adrianople. Then the Press correspondents who had been allowed down to

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Mustapha Pasha in the expectation that after two days they would be permitted to follow the victorious army into Adrianople, had to be kept in that town, and had to be prevented from knowing anything of what was going on. The courageous course would have been to have put them under a definite embargo for a period. That was not followed,

and the same end was sought by a series of irritating tricks and evasions. The facts argue against the continuance of the war correspondent. An army really can never be sure of its victory until the battle is over. If it allows the journalists to come forward to see an expected victory and the victory does not come, then awkward facts are necessarily disclosed, and the moving back of those correspondents is tantamount to a confession of a movement of retreat. If I were a general in the field I should allow no war correspondents with the troops except reliable men, who would agree to see the war out, to send no despatches until the conclusion of an operation, and to observe any interdiction which might be necessary then. Under these circumstances there would be very few correspondents, but there would be no deceit and no ill-feeling.

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The holding up of practically all private telegraphic messages by the authorities at the front was a real grievance. It was impossible to communicate with one's office to get instructions. One correspondent, arriving at Sofia at the end of the campaign, found that he had been recalled a full month before. The unnecessary mystery about the locality of Staff headquarters added to the difficulty of keeping in touch with one's office.

The Bulgarian people made some "bad friends" on the Press because of the censorship; but the sore feeling was not always justifiable. The worst that can be said is that the military authorities did in rather a weak and disingenuous way what they should have had the moral courage to do in a firm way at the outset. The Bulgarian enterprise against the Turks was so audacious, the need of secrecy in regard to equipment was so pressing, that there was no place for the journalist. Under the circumstances a nation with more experience of affairs and more confidence in herself would have accredited no correspondents. Bulgaria sought the same end as that which would have served secrecy by an evasive way. Englishmen, with centuries of

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greatness to give moral courage, may not complain too harshly when the circumstances of this new-come nation are considered.

When the army of Press correspondents were gathered, it was seen that there were several Austrians and Roumanians, and these

countries were at the time threatening mobilisation against the Balkan States. It was impossible to expect that the Bulgarian forces should allow Roumanian journalists and Austrian journalists to see anything of their operations which might be useful to Austria or Roumania in a future campaign. Yet it would not have been proper to have allowed correspondents other than the Austrians and Roumanians to go to the front, because that would perhaps have created a diplomatic question, which would have increased the tension. It certainly would have given offence to Austria and to Roumania. It would have been said that there was an idea that war was intended against those nations; and diplomacy was anxious to avoid giving expression to any such idea. The military attachés were in exactly the same position.

There were the Austrian attaché and the Roumanian attaché, and their duty was to

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report to their Governments all they could find out that would be to the advantage of the military forces of their Governments. The Bulgarians naturally would not allow the Roumanian nor the Austrian attaché to see anything of what went on. The attachés were even worse treated than the correspondents, because, as the campaign developed, the Bulgarians got to understand that some of us were trustworthy, and we were given certain facilities for seeing. But we were still without facilities for the despatch of what we had seen. But the military attachés were kept right in the rear all the time. They were taken over the battle-fields after the battles had been fought, so that they might see what victories had been gained by the Bulgarians.

The Bulgarians were much strengthened in their attitude towards the war correspondents by the fact that they admitted receiving much help in their operations from the news published in London and in French newspapers from the Turkish side. The Turkish army, when the period of rout began, was in the position that it was able to exercise little check on its war correspondents; and the Bulgarians had everything which was recorded as being done in the Turkish army

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sent on to them. They said it was a great help to them. I think the outlook for war correspondents in the future is a gloomy one, and the outlook for the military attaché also. In the future, no army carrying on

anything except minor operations with savage nations, no army whose interests might be vitally affected by information leaking out, is likely to allow military attachés or war correspondents to see anything at all.

The Balkan War probably will close the book of the war correspondent. It was in the wars of the "Near East" that that book was first opened in the modern sense. Some of the greatest achievements of the craft were in the Crimean War, the various Turco-Russian wars, and the Greco-Turkish struggle. It is an incidental proof of the popularity of the Balkan Peninsula as a war theatre that the history of the profession of the war correspondent would be a record almost wholly of wars in the Near East.

Certainly if the "war correspondent" is to survive he will need to be of a new type. I came to that conclusion when I returned to Kirk Kilisse from the Bulgarian lines at Chatalja, and had amused myself in an odd hour with

burrowing among a great pile of newspapers in the censor's office, and reading here and there the war news from English, French, and Belgian papers.

Dazed, dismayed, I recognised that I had altogether mistaken the duties of a war correspondent. For some six weeks I had been following an army in breathless anxious chase of facts: wheedling censors to get some few of those facts into a telegraph office; learning then, perhaps, that the custom at that particular telegraph office was to forward telegrams to Sofia, a ten days' journey, by bullock wagon and railway, to give them time to mature. Now here, piping hot, were the stories of the war. There was the touching prose poem about King Ferdinand following his troops to the front in a military train, which was his temporary palace. One part of the carriage, serving as his bed-chamber, was taken up with a portrait of his mother, and to that picture he looked ever for encouragement, for advice, for praise. Had there been that day a "Te Deum" for a great victory? He looked at the picture and added, "Te Matrem."

BUCHAREST

The Roumanian House of Representatives

It was a beautiful story, and why should any one let loose a brutal bulldog of a fact and point

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out that King Ferdinand during the campaign lived in temporary palaces at Stara Zagora and Kirk Kilisse, and when he travelled on a visit to some point near the front it was usually by motor-car?

In a paper of another nationality there was a vivid story of the battle of Chatalja. This story started the battle seven days too soon; had the positions and the armies all wrong; the result all wrong; and the picturesque details were in harmony. But for the purposes of the public it was a very good story of a battle. Those men who, after great hardships, were enabled to see the actual battle found that the poor messages which the censor permitted them to send took ten days or more in transmission to London. Why have taken all the trouble and expense of going to the front? Buda-Pest, on the way there, is a lovely city; Bucharest also; and charming Vienna was not at all too far away if you had a good staff map and a lively military imagination.

In yet another paper there was a vivid picture—scenery, date, Greenwich time, and all to give an air of artistic verisimilitude—of the signing of the Peace armistice. The armistice had not

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been signed at the time, was not signed for some days after. But it would have been absurd to have waited, since "our special correspondent" had seen it all in advance, right down to the embrace of the Turkish delegate and the Bulgarian delegate, and knew that some of the conditions were that the Turkish commissariat was to feed the Bulgarian troops at Chatalja and the Bulgarian commissariat the Turkish troops in Adrianople. If his paper had waited for the truth that most charming story would never have seen the light.

So, in a little book I shall one day bring out in the "Attractive Occupations" series on "How to be a War Correspondent," I shall give this general advice:

1. Before operations begin, visit the army to which you are accredited, and take notes of the general appearance of officers and

men. Also learn a few military phrases of their language. Ascertain all possible particulars of a personal character concerning the generals and chief officers.

2. Return then to a base outside the country. It must have good telegraph communication with your newspaper. For the rest you may decide

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its locality by the quality of the wine, or the beer, or the cooking.

3. Secure a set of good maps of the scene of operations. It will be handy also to have any books which have been published describing campaigns over the same *terrain*.

4. Keep in touch with the official bulletins issued by the military authorities from the scene of operations. But be on guard not to become enslaved by them. If, for instance, you wait for official notices of battles, you will be much hampered in your picturesque work. Fight battles when they ought to be fought and how they ought to be fought. The story's the thing.

5. A little sprinkling of personal experience is wise: for example, a bivouac on the battle-field, toasting your bacon at a fire made of a broken-down gun carriage with a bayonet taken from a dead soldier. Mention the nationality of the bacon. You cannot be too precise in details.

Ko-Ko's account of the execution of Nankipoo is, in short, the model for the future war correspondent. The other sort of war correspondent, who patiently studied and recorded operations, seems to be doomed. In the nature of things it must be so. The more competent and the more

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accurate he is, the greater the danger he is to the army which he accompanies. His despatches, published in his newspaper and telegraphed promptly to the other side, give to them at a cheap cost that information of what is going on *behind* their enemy's screen of scouts which is so vital to tactical, and sometimes to strategical, dispositions. To try to obtain that information an army pours out much blood and treasure; to guard that information an army will consume a full third of its energies in an elaborate system of mystification. A modern army must either banish the war correspondent altogether or

subject him to such restrictions of censorship as to veto honest, accurate, and prompt criticism or record of operations.

Some of the correspondents—one in particular—overcame a secretive military system and a harsh censorship by the use of a skilled imagination, and of a friendly telegraph line outside the area of censorship. At the Staff headquarters at Stara Zagora during the early days of the campaign, when we were all straining at the leash to get to the front, waiting and fussing, he was working, reconstructing the operations with maps and a fine imagination, and never allowing his

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paper to want for news. I think that he was quite prepared to have taken pupils for his new school of war correspondents. Often he would come to me for a yarn—in halting French on both sides—and would explain the campaign as it was being carried on. One eloquent gesture he habitually had—a sweeping motion which brought his arms together as though they were gathering up a bundle of spears, then the hands would meet in an expressive squeeze. "It is that," he said, "it is Napoleonic."

Probably the censor at this stage did not interfere much with his activities, content enough to allow fanciful descriptions of Napoleonic strategy to go to the outer world. But, in my experience, facts, if one ascertained something independently, were not treated kindly.

"Why not?" I asked the censor vexedly about one message he had stopped. "It is true."

"Yes, that is the trouble," he said,—the nearest approach to a joke I ever got out of a Bulgarian, for they are a sober, God-fearing, and humour-fearing race.

The idea of the Bulgarian censorship in regard to the privileges and duties of the war correspondent

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was further illustrated to me on another occasion when a harmless map of a past phase of the campaign was stopped.

"Then what am I to send?" I asked.

"There are the bulletins," he said.

"Yes, the bulletins which are just your bald official account of week-

old happenings which are sent to every news agency in Europe before we see them!"

"But you are a war correspondent. You can add to them in your own language."

Remembering that conversation, I suspect that at first the Bulgarian censorship did not object to fairy tales passing over the wires, though the way was blocked for exact observation. An enterprising story-maker had not very serious difficulties at the outset. Afterwards there was a change, and even the writer of fairy stories had to work outside the range of the censor.

The Mustapha Pasha censorship would not allow ox wagons, reservists, or Serbians to be mentioned, nor officers' names. The censorship objected, too, for a long time to any mention of the all-pervading mud which was the chief item of interest in the town's life. Yet you might have lost an army division in some of the puddles.

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(But stop, I am lapsing into the picturesque ways of the new school of correspondents. Actually you could not have lost more than a regiment in the largest mud puddle.)

Let the position be frankly faced that if one is with an army in modern warfare, common sense prohibits the authorities from allowing you to see anything, and suggests the further precautions of a strict censorship and a general hold-up of wires until their military value (and therefore their "news" value) has passed. If your paper wants picturesque stories hot off the grill it is much better not to be with the army (which means in effect in the rear of the army), but to write about its deeds from outside the radius of the censorship.

Perhaps, though, your paper has old-fashioned prejudices in favour of veracity, and will be annoyed if your imagination leads you too palpably astray? In that case do not venture to be a war correspondent at all. If you do not invent, you will send nothing of value. If you invent you will be reprimanded.

Here is my personal record of "getting to the front" and the net result of the trouble and the expense. I went down to Mustapha Pasha with

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the great body of war correspondents and soon recognised that there

was no hope of useful work there. The attacking army was at a stand-still, and a long, wearisome siege—its operations strictly guarded from inspection—was in prospect. I decided to get back to Staff headquarters (then at Stara Zagora) and just managed to catch the Staff before it moved on to Kirk Kilisse. By threatening to return to London at once I got a promise of leave to join the Third Army and to "see some fighting."

The promise anticipated the actual granting of leave by two days. It would be tedious to record all the little and big difficulties that were then encountered through the reluctance of the military authorities to allow one to get transport or help of any kind. But four days later I was marching out of Mustapha Pasha on the way to Kirk Kilisse by way of Adrianople, a bullock wagon carrying my baggage, an interpreter trundling my bicycle, I riding a small pony. The interpreter was gloomy and disinclined to face the hardships and dangers (mostly fancied) of the journey. Beside the driver (a Macedonian) marched a soldier with fixed bayonet. Persuasion was necessary to force the driver to undertake the journey and a friendly transport officer had, with more or less legality, put at my command this means of argument. A mile outside Mustapha Pasha the soldier turned back and I was left to coax my unwilling helpers on a four days' journey across a war-stricken countryside, swept of all supplies, infested with savage dogs (fortunately well-fed by the harvest of the battle-fields), liable to ravage by roving bands.

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GENERAL SAVOFF

That night I gave the Macedonian driver some jam and some meat to eke out his bread and cheese.

"That is better than having a bayonet poked into your inside," I said, by pantomime. He understood, grinned, and gave no great trouble thereafter, though he was always in a state of pitiable funk when I left the wagon to take a trip within the lines of the besieging forces.

So to Kirk Kilisse. There I got to General Savoff himself and won not only leave, but a letter of aid to go down to the Third Army at the lines of Chatalja. But by then what must be the final battle of the war was imminent. Every hour of delay was dangerous. To go by cart meant a journey of several days. A military

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train was available part of the way if I were content to drop interpreter, horse, and baggage, and travel with a soldier's load.

That decision was easy enough at the moment—though I sometimes regretted it afterwards when the only pair of riding breeches I had with me gave out at the knees and I had to walk the earth ragged—and by train I got to Chorlu. There a friendly artillery officer helped me to get a cart (springless) and two fast horses. He insisted also on giving me a patrol, a single Bulgarian soldier, with 200 rounds of ammunition, as Bashi-Bazouks were ranging the country.

It was an unnecessary precaution, though the presence of the soldier was comforting as we entered Silviri at night, the outskirts of the town deserted, the chattering of the driver's teeth audible over the clamour of the cart, the gutted houses ideal refuges for prowling bands. From Silviri to Chatalja there was again no appearance of Bashi-Bazouks. But thought of another danger obtruded as we came near the lines and encountered men from the Bulgarian army suffering from the choleraic dysentery which had then begun its ravages. To one dying soldier by the roadside I gave brandy; and then had to leave

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him with his mates, who were trying to get him to a hospital. They were sorely puzzled by his cries, his pitiful grimaces. Wounds they knew and the pain of them they despised. They could not comprehend this disease which took away all the manhood of a stoic peasant and made him weak in spirit as an ailing child.

From Chatalja, the right flank of the Bulgarian position, I passed along the front to Ermenikioi ("the village of Armenians"), passing the night at Arjenli, near the centre and the headquarters of the ammunition park. That night at Arjenli seemed to make a rough and sometimes perilous journey, which had extended over seven days, worth while. The Commander, an artillery officer, welcomed me to a little mess which the Bulgarian officers and non-commissioned officers (six in all) had set up in a clean room of a village house. We had dinner, "Turkish fashion," squatting round a dish of stewed goat and rice, and then smoked excellent cigarettes through the evening hours as we looked out on the Chatalja lines.

Arjenli is perched on a high hill, to the west of Ermenikioi. It gave a view of all the Chatalja position—the range of hills stretching from the

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Black Sea to the Sea of Marmora, along which the Bulgarians were entrenched, and, beyond the invisible valley, the second range which held the Turkish defence. Over the Turkish lines, like a standard, shone in the clear sky a crescent moon, within its tip a bright star. It seemed an omen, an omen of good to the Turks. My Australian eye instinctively sought for the Southern Cross ranged against it in the sky in sign that the Christian standard held the Heavens too. I sought in vain in those northern latitudes, shivered a little and, as though arguing against a superstitious thought, said to myself: "But there is the Great Bear."

Now there had been "good copy" in the journey. At Arjenli I happened to be the witness of a vivid dramatic scene (more stirring than any battle incident). It was a splendid incident, showing the high courage and *moral* of these peasant soldiers at an anxious time. To have witnessed it, participated in it, was personal reward sufficient for a week of toil and anxiety. To my paper, too, the reader might say, it was of some value, if properly told and given to the London reader the next morning, the day before the battle of Chatalja.

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Yes. But it was the next afternoon before I could get to a telegraph office within the Bulgarian lines. Then the censor said any long message was hopeless. I was allowed to send a bare 100 words. They reached London eight days later, a week after the battle had been fought, when London was interested no longer in anything but the armistice negotiations. The reason was that the single telegraph line was monopolised for military business. My account of the battle of Chatalja reached London a full fortnight after the event, though I had the advantage of the highest influence to expedite the message.

Thus from a daily-newspaper point of view all the expense, toil, danger were wasted.

Summing up, an accurate and prompt Press service as war correspondent with the Bulgarian army was impossible, because—

1. The Bulgarian authorities were keen that correspondents should see nothing.

2. A rigid first censorship checked a full record of what little was seen.

3. The first censorship being passed, despatches often had still to

pass a second censorship at Staff headquarters, a third censorship at Sofia.

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4. Despatches passing through Roumania underwent another censorship there, and yet another in Austria, possibly yet others in other European countries.

5. In addition to these censorship delays the Bulgarian authorities made newspaper messages yield precedence to military messages, and at the front this meant that Press messages were sent on by mail (ox transport most of the way) to the Staff headquarters or the capital.

6. In the meanwhile the imaginative accounts written nearer Fleet Street had been published, and the accurate news was "dead" from a point of public interest.

Most of these conditions will rule over all future wars. Therefore I conclude that the day of the war correspondent—in the sense of a truthful observer of a campaign—has gone, and he died with the Balkan War. He can only survive if newspapers are willing to incur the very great expense of sending out war correspondents not for the news, day by day, but for what observation and criticism they could supply after the campaign was over. To a daily newspaper such matter is almost valueless, especially as during the progress of the campaign the correspondents

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of the "new" school would be at work with their many inventions, raising the hair of the public and the circulation of their journals with bright feats of imagination.

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CHAPTER VII

JOTTINGS FROM MY BALKAN TRAVEL BOOK

These observations I will quote from my diary during 1912 in illustration of phases of Balkan character, dating them at the time and place that they were made.

Belgrade, *October 21*.—The declaration of war has not set the Serbians singing in the streets. In the chief café there is displayed a great war map. Young soldiers not yet sent to the front lounge about in all the cafés and are lionised by the older men. They are the only signs of war.

Underwood & Underwood

BULGARIAN INFANTRY

The patriotic Serbian illustrates his case against the Turk by taking you for a ramble around his capital. The old Turkish quarters of the town are made up of narrow unpaved muddy lanes lined with low hovels. The modern Serbian town has handsome buildings markedly

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Russian in architecture, electric trams, and wood-blocked pavements. Near the railway station one side of a street is as the Turks left it and shows a row of hovels: the other side is occupied by a great school. The shops, because it is war-time and business is largely suspended, are mostly closed. But a few remain open with reduced staffs. The goods displayed are as a rule woefully expensive when they are not of local origin. Landlocked Serbia, surrounded by commercially hostile countries, finds imports expensive. British goods are very much favoured, but are hard to obtain.

The Serbians speak bitterly of the efforts of Austria "to strangle them commercially." "Whenever they wish to put diplomatic pressure upon us," said one Serbian to me, "they discover that swine fever has broken out in our country and stop our exports of pigs and bacon—our chief lines of export. What can we do? Once, in retaliation, we found that we suspected a consignment of Austrian linen goods of carrying swine fever and stopped it on the frontier. It almost caused war."

Nish (Serbia), *October 22*.—A military train carrying some members

of the army and Staff

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has brought also a band of war correspondents this far. We were a merry but rather a hungry lot. The train has been sixteen hours on the journey, and as we started at 6 a.m. most of us did not bring any stores of food except such as were packed away and inaccessible in the big baggage. The wayside refreshment rooms are swept clean of all food. Finally we manage to obtain some bread, and five hungry correspondents in one carriage eat at it without enthusiasm, whilst in a corner sits a Serbian officer having a good meal of sausage and onions and bread. We make remarks, a little envious, a little jocose, in English, on his selfishness. "He is a greedy pig, anyhow," said one, putting the final cap on our grumbles. The Serbian officer had not betrayed by a smile or a frown that he understood but now in good English he remarked: "Perhaps you gentlemen will be so kind as to share this with me." We all laughed and he laughed then: and we took a little of the sausage, and liked that Serbian rather well: and no reference was made to what had gone before. At nightfall we stop at Nish and all my Press comrades leave the train to go on in the rear of the Serbian army. I push on to Sofia. Clearly these Balkan

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peoples are not quite so savage as I had thought once.

Sofia, *October 24*.—The position of the Bulgarian nation towards its Government on the outbreak of the war is, I think, extremely interesting as a lesson in patriotism. Every man has gone to fight who could fight. But further, every family has put its surplus of goods into the war-chest. The men marched away to the front; and the women of the house loaded up the surplus goods which they had in the house, and brought them for the use of the military authorities on the ox wagons, which also went to the military authorities to be used on requisition. A Bulgarian law, not one which was passed on the outbreak of the war—they were far too clever for that,—but a law which was part of the organic law of the country, allowed the military authorities to requisition all surplus food and all surplus goods which could be of value to the army on the outbreak of hostilities.

The whole machinery for that had been provided beforehand. But so great was the voluntary patriotism of the people that this machinery practically has not had to be used in any compulsory form. Goods

were brought in voluntarily,

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wagons, cart-horses and oxen, and all the surplus flour and wheat, and—I have the official figures from the Bulgarian Treasurer—those goods which were obtained in this way totalled in value some six million pounds. That represented the surplus goods, beyond those necessary for consumption by the Bulgarian people, at the outset of the war. The numbers of the Bulgarian people represent half the population of London. The peasant population is very poor. Their national existence dates back only half a century. But they are very frugal and saving; that six millions which the Government signed for represented practically all the savings which the Bulgarian people had at the outbreak of the war. I am told that the gold supply in the Bulgarian Treasury at the declaration of war was only three million pounds. So that there was an army of 350,000 men put into the field, and only three million pounds as the gold supply.

Kirk Kilisse, *November 7*.—The extraordinary simplicity of the commissariat has helped the Bulgarian generals a great deal. The men have had bread and cheese, sometimes even bread alone; and that was accounted a satisfactory ration. When meat and other things could be

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obtained, they were obtained; but there were long periods when the Bulgarian soldier had nothing but bread and water. The water, unfortunately, he took wherever he could get it, by the side of the route at any stream he could find. There was no attempt to ensure a pure water supply for the army. I do not think that, without that simplicity of commissariat, it would have been possible for the Bulgarian forces to have got as far as they did. There was an entire absence of tinned foods. As I travelled in the trail of the Bulgarian army, I found it impossible to imagine that an army had passed that way, because there was none of the litter which is usually left by an army. It was not that they cleared away their rubbish with them; it simply did not exist. Their bread and cheese seems to be a good fighting diet.

Seleniki, *November 13*.—The transport was, naturally, the great problem which faced the generals. I have seen here (Seleniki, which is the point at which the rail-head is), within 30 miles of

Constantinople as the crow flies, ox wagons which have come from the Shipka Pass in the north of Bulgaria. I asked one driver how long it had been on the road; he told me

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three weeks. He was carrying food down to the front. The way the ox wagons were used for transport was a marvel of organisation. A transport officer at Mustapha Pasha, with whom I became very friendly, was lyrical in his praise of the ox wagon. It was, he said, the only thing that stuck to him during the war. The railway got choked, and even the horse failed, but the ox never failed. There were thousands of ox wagons crawling across the country. They do not walk, they crawl, like an insect, with an irresistible crawl. It reminds you of those armies of soldier ants which move across Africa, eating everything which they come across, and stopping at nothing. I had an ox wagon coming from Mustapha Pasha to Kirk Kilisse, and we went over the hills and down through the valleys, and stopped for nothing—we never had to unload once. And one could sleep in those ox wagons. There is no jolting and pulling at the traces, such as you get with a harnessed horse. The ox wagon moved slowly; but it always moved. If the ox transport had not been as perfectly organised, and if the oxen had not been as patiently enduring as they proved to be, the Bulgarian army must have perished by starvation. And yet, at

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Mustapha Pasha, a censor would not allow us to send anything about the ox wagons. That officer thought the ox cart was derogatory to the dignity of the army. If we had been able to say that they had such things as motor transport or steam wagons, he would have cheerfully allowed us to send it.

But after Lule Burgas, the ox transport has had to do the impossible. It is impossible for it to maintain the food and the ammunition supply of the army at the front, which I suppose must number 250,000 to 300,000 men. That army has got right away from its base, with the one line of railway straddled by the enemy, and with the ox as practically the only means of transport.

Arjenli (Turkey), *November 15, 1912*.—It is Friday, and we expect to-morrow the Battle of Chatalja. In the little Turkish village of Arjenli, situated on a high hill a little to the rear of the Bulgarian lines, is the

ammunition park of the artillery, guarded by a small body of troops under Lieutenant-Colonel Tchobanoff. Coming towards the front from Chorlu, the fall of night and the weariness of my horses have compelled me to halt at Arjenli, and this officer and Dr. Neytchef give me a warm welcome to

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their little mess. There are six members, and for all, to sleep and to eat, one room. Three are officers, three have no commissions. With this nation in arms that is not an objection to a common table. Discipline is strict, but officers and soldiers are men and brothers when out of the ranks. Social position does not govern military position. I found sometimes the University professor and the bank manager without commissions, the peasant proprietor an officer. The whole nation has poured out its manhood for the war, from farm, field, factory, shop, bank, university, and consulting-room.

Here, at Arjenli, on the eve of the decisive battle, I think over early incidents of the campaign. It is a curious fact that in all Bulgaria I have met but one man who was young enough and well enough to fight and who had not enlisted. He had become an American subject, I believe, and so could not be compelled to serve. In America he had learned to be an "International Socialist," and so he did not volunteer. I believe he was unique. With half the population of London, Bulgaria had put 350,000 trained men under arms. But there was in the nation one good Socialist who knew that war was an evil thing, and that it was better to sit down meekly under tyranny than to take up arms.

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Underwood & Underwood

OX TRANSPORT IN THE BALKANS

I followed in the track of the victorious Third Army as it came down through the border mountains on to Kirk Kilisse, then to Lule Burgas, then past Chorlu to the Chatalja lines. At Arjenli I had overtaken them in time to see the final battle, and now sat looking out on the entrenched armies, talking over the position with a serene and cheerful artillery officer. The past week had been one of hardship and horrors. From Chorlu the road was lined with the bodies of the Turkish dead, still awaiting burial. Entering the Bulgarian lines on their

right flank that morning, I had tried in vain to succour a soldier dying of the choleraic dysentery which had begun its ravages. But here in the middle of the battle line the atmosphere of noble confidence is inspiriting. The horrors of war vanish; only its glory shows. The men around me feel that they are engaged in a just war. They know that everything that man can do has been done. Proudly, cheerfully, they await the issue.

During the evening, a Turk suspected of being a spy is brought in for trial. He had attempted to rush past one of the sentries guarding the

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ammunition wagons. He is given a patient hearing, is able to establish his innocence, and is allowed to go. There is no feeling of panic or injustice among these Bulgarians. I see the trial and its end (having been asked to act as friend of the accused).

It is to-day forty days since the mobilisation. At the call this trained nation was in arms in a day. The citizen soldiers hurried to the depots for their arms and uniforms. In one district the rumour that mobilisation had been authorised was bruited abroad a day before the actual issue of the orders, and the depot was besieged by the peasants who had rushed in from their farms. The officer in charge could not give out the rifles, so the men lit fires, got food from the neighbours, and camped around the depot until they were armed. Some navvies received their mobilisation orders on returning to their camp after ten hours' work at railway-building. They had supper and marched through the night to their respective headquarters. For one soldier the march was twenty-four miles. The railway carriages were not adequate to bring all the men to their assigned centres. Some rode on the steps, on the roofs of carriages, on the buffers even.

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At Stara Zagora, early in November, I noted a mother of the people who had come to see some Turkish prisoners just brought in from Mustapha Pasha. To one she gave a cake. "They are hungry," she said. This woman had five men at the war—her four sons in the fighting line, her husband under arms guarding a line of communication. She had sent them proudly. It was the boast of the Bulgarian women that not a tear was shed at the going away of the soldiers.

Later, at a little village outside Kirk Kilisse, a young civil servant, an

official of the Foreign Office, spoke of the war whilst we ate a dish of cheese and eggs. "It is a war," he said, "of the peasants and the intellectuals. It is not a war made by the politicians or the soldiers of the Staff. That would be impossible. In our nation every soldier is a citizen and every citizen a soldier. There could not be a war unless it were a war desired by the people. In my office it was with rage that some of the clerks heard that they must stay at Sofia, and not go to the front. We were all eager to take arms."

At Nova Zagora, travelling by a troop train carrying reserves to the front, I crossed a train bringing wounded from the battle-fields. For some hours both trains were delayed. The men going to the front were decorated with flowers as though going to a feast. They filled the waiting time by dancing to the music of the national bagpipes, and there joined in the dance such of the wounded as could stand on their feet. There was no daunting these trained patriots.

These and a score of other pictures pass through my mind and explain Kirk Kilisse and Lule Burgas, and give confidence for the battle to come. Here was a people ranged for battle with the steady nerves and the stolid courage that come from tilling the soil, with the skill and the discipline that come from adequate training, with the fervent faith of a great patriotism. I have talked with Turkish prisoners and found infantrymen who had been sent to the front after two days' training, gunners who had been drafted into a battery after ten days' drill. Such soldiers can only march to defeat.

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A BALKAN PEASANT WOMAN

Ermenikioi (Headquarters of the Third Bulgarian Army), *November 17 (Sunday)*.—The Battle of Chatalja has been opened. To-day, General Demetrieff rode out with his Staff to the battle-field whilst the bells of a Christian church in this little village rang. The day was spent

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in artillery reconnaissance, the Bulgarian guns searching the Turkish entrenchments to discover their real strength. Only once during the day was the infantry employed; and then it was rather to take the place of artillery than to complete work begun by artillery. It seems to me that the Bulgarian forces have not enough big gun ammunition at the front. They are ten days from their base, and shells must come up by ox wagon the greater part of the way.

Ermenikioi, *November 18*.—This was a wild day on the Chatalja hills. Driving rain and mist swept over from the Black Sea, and at times obscured all the valley across which the battle raged. With but slight support from the artillery, the Bulgarian infantry was sent again and again up to the Turkish entrenchments. Once a fort was taken but had to be abandoned again. The result of the day's fighting is indecisive. The Bulgarian forces have driven in the Turkish right flank a little, but have effected nothing against the central positions which bar the road to Constantinople. It is clear that the artillery is not well enough supplied with ammunition. There is a sprinkle of shells when there should be a flood. Gallant as is the infantry, it cannot win

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much ground faced by conditions such as the Light Brigade met at Balaclava.

Ermenikioi, *November 19*.—Operations have been suspended. Yesterday's cold and bitter weather has fanned to an epidemic the choleraic dysentery which had been creeping through the trenches. The casualties in the fighting had been heavy. "But for every wounded man who comes to the hospitals," Colonel Jostoff, the Chief of the Staff, tells me, "there are ten who say 'I am ill.'" The Bulgarians recognise bitterly that in their otherwise fine organisation there has been one flaw, the medical service. Among this nation of peasant proprietors—sturdy, abstemious, moral, living in the main on whole-meal bread and water—illness was so rare that the medical service was but little regarded. Up to Chatalja confidence in the rude health of the peasants was justified. They passed through cold, hunger, fatigue, and kept healthy. But ignorant of sanitary discipline, camped among the filthy Turkish villages, the choleraic dysentery passed from the Turkish trenches to theirs. There are 30,000 cases of illness, and the healthy for the first time feel fear as they see the torments of the sick. The Bulgarians recognise that there

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must be a pause in the fighting whilst the hospital and sanitary service is reorganised.

Kirk Kilisse, *December 1*.—It seems certain now that peace must be declared, and that the dream of driving the Turk right out of Europe must be abandoned. These peasant peoples of the Balkans have done wonderful things, but they have stumbled on one point—the

want of knowledge of sanitary science. I have seen only one attempt at a clean camp since I have been in the field, and that was a Serbian camp, north of Adrianople.

With the Bulgarian army there was not, at any stage of the campaign up to the Battle of Chatalja—that is, until after the outbreak of cholera—any precaution, to my knowledge, taken to secure a clean water supply, or clean camping-grounds, or to take the most elementary precautions against the outbreak of disease in the army. The medical service was almost as bad. I have seen much of the hospital work at Kirk Kilisse after the armistice; and it has been deplorable to see the fine fellows whose lives were sacrificed, or whose limbs were sacrificed, through neglect of medical knowledge. I am sure the Bulgarians would have saved many hundreds of

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lives if there had been anything like a proper medical service at the front.

At Chatalja the chief reason given for the stoppage of operations was the ravages of disease in the Bulgarian lines. The illness was of a choleraic type; it had, as usual, a profound moral as well as physical effect. The courage of the men broke down before this visitation. The victims howled with pain and terror, though the same men would withstand serious wounds without a complaint or a wincing.

The Turks are blamed for the outbreak in the Bulgarian lines. It is more than probable that their villages, inexpressibly filthy; the prisoners taken from their ranks; the infection of the soil abandoned by them, were contributing causes.

A BAGPIPER

But it must be stated frankly that the almost complete absence of any sanitary discipline or precaution in the Bulgarian lines at this place earned for them all the diseases that afflict mankind. So far as I can ascertain after careful investigation, there were no sanitary police; no attempts to secure and safeguard a pure water supply; no latrine regulations. I have seen the Bulgarian soldiers drinking from streams running through battle-fields, though a few feet away were

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swollen carcases. I have seen no attempt in the field at a proper

latrine service. Some hundreds of thousands of peasant soldiers, accustomed to the simplest life on their own farms, were collected together and left practically without sanitary discipline. The details can be filled in without my setting them forth in print. There is one fact, however, to be recorded of a pleasant character. In all investigations of the hospital services I never found a case of any malady arising from vice. There was also a complete absence of drunkenness. This might be ascribed to the want of means to obtain alcohol. But in Turkey there was an abundance of wines and spirits, and some beer in the captured villages and towns; it led, however, to no orgies.

Naturally, the Bulgarian peasant is wonderfully healthy. His food is rough whole-meal bread and cheese; his occasional luxuries, a dish of the sour milk which is so well known in London, a little alcohol on Sunday, some sweet stuff, and, rarely, grilled meat or meat soup with vegetables. It is possible to judge that his alimentary tract differs widely from that of the Western European. I should say he was almost

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immune from enteric, unless attacked by a very virulent infection. He can live on bread and water alone without serious inconvenience for lengthy periods. His blood is very pure, and ordinarily heals in a way that astonished the British surgeons.

Here, then, was the best of material from an army medical point of view. Given the roughest food, the simplest sanitary precautions, and ordinarily good field dressing, and the army would have marched without disease and the wounded would have dropped out of the firing line for a few days only. But there were no sanitary precautions; hence disease. The hospital service as regards the first aid in the field was pitiably deficient; hence serious and unnecessary losses of wounded. Without seeking to pile up a record of horrors, I cite a few individual instances to illustrate bad methods. At the front, punctured bayonet wounds were closely bandaged—in some cases stitched up—without provision for irrigation, without even proper cleansing. This led to gangrene and often caused the sacrifice of a life or of a limb (which, to these peasants, was almost as great a loss as that of life: their feeling against amputations was very

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strong, and if they understood that amputation was intended, they sometimes begged to be "killed instead"). Bullet wounds also were often plugged up on the field. When proper treatment was at last available, it was sometimes too late to avoid death or amputation. No treatment at all on the field would have been preferable to this well-intentioned but shocking ignorance.

Of the purely Bulgarian hospitals those at Kirk Kilisse are very deficient: at Philippopolis, however, there were excellent Bulgarian hospitals, and also at Sofia. The Russian hospital at Kirk Kilisse is very good. The British Red Cross Hospital, under Major E. T. F. Birrell, of the R.A.M.C., is excellently organised, has the fullest possible equipment, and tries to specialise in serious cases. It is subjected locally (as is the Russian hospital) to the criticism that by insisting on perfection of system it unduly restricts its salvage work: that, in short, it could deal with far more patients if it consented to more "rough-and-ready" methods. I record this criticism, and acknowledge that it is based on facts. Yet it may be urged on the other side that it was ultimately far more useful to have a model

hospital to show how things should be done than to sacrifice that valuable lesson for the sake of striving to cope in rough-and-ready fashion with the flood of wounded. This hospital gives interesting proof that Great Britain is an Empire, not an island nation. I first encountered three of its doctors in a café. One was from the Mother Country, one from the West Indies, one an Australian friend, who set at once to talking of gum trees and of Melbourne University. Then a non-commissioned officer attached to the hospital—most of its Staff are army men—is a Canadian, who had had war experience in South Africa. His comments on the Bulgarian wounded are full of sympathy. "These chaps," he said, "take their gruel better even than the Tommies. The Tommy takes his all right, but he 'grouses' about it. These chaps never grumble. One of them had to have a very painful dressing. He winced a little. A comrade at once laughed at him. 'Ah,' he said, 'you learn new kinds of dancing here.'" Nurses endorse this evidence about the Bulgarian soldiers' patience, though one stated that she found the officers sometimes to be rather neurasthenic.

On the whole, the Bulgarian army is not strong

on science. In spade work it was not good. I saw no perfect trenches—never a drained trench. Undrained trenches caused some increase of mortality and of sickness. It is uncomfortable to stay for days, or even hours, in a trench which the rain has partly filled with water. In no case that I saw were there trenches with overhead protection against howitzer fire. Except at the Chatalja lines and around Adrianople the trenches were, of course, intended to be of a very temporary use, and would naturally not be elaborate. Gun-pits and emplacements were usually fairly good. It was the custom to dig a pit, or to put up a little sod wall for the gun-limber (most of the artillery work was from concealed and prepared positions). At Chatalja the trenches were masked with the stalks of the Turkish tobacco plants—about the only instance I saw of masking. It was rare to see a trench zigzagged as a precaution against enfilading fire. The Turkish trenches I saw were hopelessly bad.

Sofia, *December 6, 1912*.—Sofia, in spite of the great victories which have been won, is neither joyous nor contented. The failure of the siege of Adrianople seems to rest heavy upon the people: and there are gloomy stories of the

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extent of the losses of the nation's manhood. So far no lists of killed and wounded have been published. "The Mass at St. Sofia," which was the battle-cry of the first days of the war, is clearly not a possibility now. Some mystery attaches to the movements of the king. It is said that he had made a vow that he would not return to Sofia until a victorious peace was signed. The embittered relations with the Greeks, the signs of disagreement with the Serbians, suggest gloomy possibilities of future troubles.

Belgrade, *December 8, 1912*.—With the exception of the army before Adrianople, the Serbians have finished their share of the war with Turkey. Belgrade is satisfied, but not over-elated. Across the Danube, a broad gloomy waste of dun waters under the winter mists, a division of the Austrian army is mobilised. There is a fear, almost an expectation, that Austria will make war. But there seems neither panic nor war-fever in the city.

Business is creeping back to the normal state. At the Ministry for War there are to be seen pathetic scenes as parents and other relatives seek tidings of the soldiers. An old father, himself a captain of

reserves, hears that his only son, a

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lieutenant, has been killed, and bursts into tears and tells to all around his sorrow. But generally tragic news is received stoically. Amid the congratulations on the results of the Allies' efforts there is an under-current of resolution to make a better bargain with Bulgaria than the *ante bellum* partition treaty proposed. Reports of envious and rude treatment of the Serbian army before Adrianople are current in the street: and there is some talk of recalling the men. This is the irresponsible talk of men in the street only: the authorities are very correct in their attitude towards "our friend and ally," and express themselves as confident that Bulgaria of her own volition will suggest better terms for her partner in the war.

A Serbian politician, who patiently endures my bad French or makes a brave effort to talk in English, a tongue which he is learning to speak and can read quite well, politely excuses the English for being such bad linguists. "For you English who have all the poetry, all the romance, all the science, all the philosophy a man may want in your own language, it is not necessary to learn any other. For us in the Balkans, we must learn other languages or remain ignorant of much that goes on in the world."

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In truth the Balkan peoples are astonishing linguists. It is not at all a rare thing to find that a man can speak Bulgarian, Serbian, Greek, Turkish, and French. Often he adds either English or German to this list. Bulgarian and Serbian, of course, are but differing dialects of Russian—a Russian can make himself understood in both tongues though he knows only Russian. But the grammar of one differs from that of the other, and many of the words are different. The Balkan people who know Turkish know it usually in its colloquial and spoken form and not the literary language, which is very difficult to understand thoroughly because it is really a blending of three languages.

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Underwood & Underwood

SOME SERBIAN PEASANTS

CHAPTER VIII

THE PICTURESQUE BALKANS

It is difficult to dissociate the Balkans with bloodshed and disorder. Insensibly the mind is tempted at every turn to direct attention to the last battle or the future campaign which can be seen threatening. But if the storm-racked peninsula could be granted a term of peaceful development, there is no doubt at all but that it would be much favoured by voyagers seeking picturesque beauty and wishing to go over the fields which have been the scenes of some of the greatest events in history. Mountain resorts to rival those of Switzerland, spas to match those of Germany and Austria, autumn and winter seaside beaches of great beauty and fine sunny climate—all these exist in the Balkan Peninsula, and need only to be known, and to be known as peaceful, to attract tourists.

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The Adriatic coast has charms of rugged coast-lines and bright waters; the Black Sea littoral, though flat and sandy, has a warm sunny summer or autumn climate; the Aegean is a sea of brilliant purples and rosy mists, in which air, rock, and water mingle to greet the eye with a great opal jewel. A November sunset on the Sea of Marmora gave to my eyes such a feast of suffused colour as I had not seen since I left the shores of the southern Pacific. The rocky hills had the rich red of the Jersey cliffs, but the sea and sky were incomparably warmer and deeper in tone. Across the sea the shores of distant Asia shone dimly through two veils of mist, one of the tenderest rose, the other of the palest gold. The greater part of the Greek coast has the same deliciousness of colour in autumn and in summer.

A few travellers bolder than the ordinary search out nowadays the shores of the Adriatic, the beautiful coast of Greece, and even the margin of the Sea of Marmora in quest of beauty and relief from the tedium of civilisation. But they must face poor means of communication (though to Constantinople and to Trieste there is an

excellent train service) and scanty accommodation of any kind—almost none of good quality.

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Within a very few years, if the Balkans could settle down to peace and the legalised plunder of foreign visitors—a pursuit which is as profitable as brigandage and far more comfortable,—the seaside resorts that would spring up within Balkan territories would of themselves provide a handsome revenue. The shores of the Aegean and of the Sea of Marmora in particular would attract tourists wearied of the air of hackneyed sameness which comes after a while to pervade seaside haunts in Italy and France.

From another attraction the Balkan States could hope for a great tourist traffic. I have caught but fleeting glimpses of the Balkan range and of the Rhodopes and the Serbian mountains, but have seen enough to know that they offer boundless delights to the climber, to the seeker after winter sports, and to the lover of the picturesque; and the Swiss Alps in these days are overcrowded, and the Tyrolean mountains and the Carpathians begin to receive a big overflow of people who have a taste for heights that are not covered with hotels and funicular railways. But the mountains of the Balkan Peninsula offer prospects, I believe, of greater beauty, certainly of greater wildness, than any other

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ranges of Europe. Of the Rhodope mountains, in particular, one gets the most alluring accounts from the rare travellers who have explored them. Seen by the passing voyager as they stand guard with their farthest spurs over Philippopolis, they suggest that no account of their charm could be too glowing. I have promised myself one autumn or summer a month in this range, exploring its flower-filled valleys and its wild cliffs, shining through an air which seems now of rose and now of violet.

For winter sports the Serbian, Montenegrin, and Albanian mountains, as well as the chief Balkan range, promise well. I believe that it was part of the plan of Bulgarian reorganisation after the war, which King Ferdinand had in his mind, to set up great winter hotels in the mountains of his kingdom. The other Balkan States could with advantage give hospitality to similar plans. Provided that security is assured—and the Balkan peasant is in my experience the gentlest-

mannered kind who ever cut throats in a wholesale way at the call of a mischief-maker—visitors to the mountains of the Balkan Peninsula would find the wildness, the uncouthness of the surrounding national life, very attractive. The picturesque

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national costumes, the national music, wild and uncanny, the strange national dances, all add to the fascination of the savage scenery. In an age when a fog of dreary sameness comes over all the civilised world, the Balkans have a great asset in their primitivism. Theirs is not a wholly European civilisation; indeed, except in the capital cities, it is not chiefly a European civilisation. Everywhere there is a touch of the mystery, the fatalism, the desert-bred wildness of the Asiatic steppes. For centuries the hand of the Turk has been heavy on the land, and a strong stream of his blood courses still through the veins of most of the Balkan peoples. It is not the East this Balkan Peninsula, but it is not the West, nor will be for some generations.

There is yet another possible means of attracting great streams of visitors to the Balkan regions. Throughout the mountains there are numberless medicinal springs. In Serbia and Bulgaria the water of two springs is being exploited for table use, and in Bulgaria the warm medicinal springs are being developed for bathing resorts. At Sofia there are now in course of erection great public baths which will be equal to any in Europe when they are completed. In the mountains

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above Sofia warm springs are being utilised, and quite a large spa village has grown up. King Ferdinand, who has a fine commercial instinct whatever the failures of his war diplomacy, has done good service to his kingdom by developing its baths and springs.

The plain country of the Balkan Peninsula is but little attractive. Under the Turkish rule nearly all plantations of trees were destroyed, and a general air of desolation was maintained. Since the Turk left, cultivation and development have been on strictly utilitarian lines, and there has been little chance for gardens or woods. The eye of the voyager misses them, and misses also the sight of castles, churches, or great buildings. The dreariness of the plain is unrelieved by forests. The rivers flow sullenly along without a bordering of trees. The Thracian plain—the greater part of which has now gone back to Turkey and thus lost hope of a redemption of its really fertile soil—is

in particular desolate and forbidding. But even there, and more frequently in the plain country of Bulgaria and Serbia, there is now and again a charming village in some dell with adornment of trees and gardens. The average village, however, is a collection of hovels,

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their roofs lying so close to the ground that they seem to be rather burrows than huts, their aspect suggesting that they are hiding themselves and their inhabitants from the eye of a possible ravager.

Desolate as this plain country is, it has its attractions at dawn and sunset in the clear colourfull air of the Balkan Peninsula; and where the hill slopes, denuded of their forests, have been covered over by a dense oak scrub the autumn aspect of the plain at sunset is incomparably lovely. The scrub, when the first of the autumn frosts come, blazes out in such scarlet and gold as cannot be imagined in the moist and soft climate of England. With the setting of the sun and the coming of the violet night the earth's carpet seems to be here smouldering, there burning, a sea of lambent fire so bright that you look to see its burgeoning reflected in the sky.

I should advise the tourist wishing to see the Balkan Peninsula at its best to choose the fall of the year for a visit. In the summer there is great heat and dust and plague of flies. In the winter travel is impossible with any comfort except along the railway lines, and the whole Peninsula is frost-bound. The spring is a beautiful

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season at its later end, but not at the time of the thaw.

As to the route for a voyage there are several alternatives. One may take the Oriental Express through to Constantinople and work a way up the Balkan Peninsula from there: or take train to Trieste and approach the Balkans by the Adriatic side: or, taking the Oriental Express, leave it at Bucharest and journey from there to Sofia: or, taking the Oriental Express, leave it at Belgrade, making that the starting-point for a riding trip. Certainly to enjoy the country one must leave the railways and journey on horseback or by cart over the wilder tracks. An interpreter who speaks English can be engaged in any one of the capitals. The hire of horses, oxen, and carts is very cheap, if you are properly advised by your interpreter and pay the local rates only. Forage, too, is cheap: and so is "the food of the

country," i.e. bread, cheese, bacon, and goat and sheep flesh. Most civilised luxuries of food can be obtained in the capitals and bigger towns, but they are dear.

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SOFIA

General view, looking towards the Djumala Pass (45 miles away). Taken from the front of Parliament House, showing monument of Alexander II, known in Bulgaria as the "Tsar Liberator"

Let me suggest a few typical Balkan tours.

Take train to Belgrade: then go by Danube steamer to Widdin. From Widdin to Sofia go

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by rail, and then back to Belgrade on horseback, sending on heavy luggage by rail, but making at Nish on the way a depot of provisions and linen.

Take train to Bucharest. Go from there to Stara Zagora on horseback, crossing the Roumanian frontier at Roustchouk, going over the trail of the Russian Army of Liberation and seeing the Balkan mountain passes.

Take train to Sofia, and from there to Yamboli. At Yamboli go on horseback (in the track of the Bulgarian Third Army of 1912) to Kirk Kilisse, Lule Burgas, Chorlu, Silivri (on the Sea of Marmora), and Constantinople. A somewhat wild trip this would be, but quite practicable. The most comfortable way to travel would be to take ox wagons for the luggage and the camping outfit. That would restrict the day's march to twenty miles. The horses—(diverging to look at scenery and battle-fields)—would do about thirty miles a day.

Take train to Constantinople, and from there boat to Salonica. Go on horseback from Salonica to Belgrade. This would show the most disturbed part of the Balkan Peninsula and some of its wildest scenery.

Take train to Philippopolis, and from there go

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on horseback and with ox wagons for a tour of the Rhodope mountains.

Of course it is possible to take much tamer tours of the Balkans. Practically all the big towns are connected with the European railway systems. But you would see, thus, towns and not the country. The Balkan towns are to my eye very dreary. There are practically no fine old buildings, for in the Turkish occupation the greater number of these were destroyed. The modern buildings have rarely any character. The churches, usually of the Slav school of architecture, alone relieve the monotony of economical imitations of French and British buildings. In Belgrade, it is true, there has been an effort to carry the Slav note farther, and some of the commercial and public buildings show a Moscow influence.

Mr. Noel Buxton, M.P., that most enthusiastic admirer of the Bulgarians, can carry his enthusiasm so far as to admire Sofia. He wrote recently (*With the Bulgarian Staff*):

Few sights can be more inspiring to the lover of liberty and national progress than a view of Sofia from the hill where the great seminary of the national church overlooks the plain. There at your feet is spread out

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the unpretentious seat of a government which stands for the advance of European order in lands long blighted with barbarism. Here resides, and is centred, the virile force of a people which has advanced the bounds of liberty. From here, symbolised by the rivers and roads running down on each side, has extended, and will further extend, the power of modern education, of unhampered ideas, of science, and of humanity. From this magnificent view-point Sofia stretches along the low hill with the dark background of the Balkan beyond. Against that background now stands out the new embodiment of Bulgarian and Slavonic energy, genius, and freedom of mind, the great cathedral, with its vast golden domes brilliantly standing out from the shade behind them. In no other capital is a great church shown to such effect, viewed from one range of hills against the mountainous slopes of another. It is a building which, with its marvellous mural paintings, would in any capital form an object of world interest, but which, in the capital of a tiny peasant State, supremely embodies that breadth of mind which

... rejects the lore Of nicely calculated less or more.

But I think that that is a too kindly view. What makes the Balkan capitals additionally dreary is that there is no "society" in the European sense. The Turkish idea of keeping the womenfolk in the harem survives to the extent that woman is not supposed to frequent places of entertainment, to receive or to pay

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visits. In Bulgaria the women are secluded with an almost Turkish strictness: in Serbia, not quite so strictly, but still strictly.

Bucharest is quite another story; but Bucharest would rather resent being called a Balkan city. There is no seclusion of the very charming Roumanian women, and the atmosphere of the city is a little more than gay. Plant a section of Paris, a section including Montmartre, into the middle of an enlargement of the old quarter of Belgrade, and that is Bucharest. It is the one Balkan city which has a luxurious and to an extent polished aristocracy.

Some of the smaller towns are slightly more interesting—Philippopolis, for instance, in a position of great natural beauty—but the average Balkan town must be set down as squalid. Its centres of social interest are the cafés, where men who have the leisure assemble to drink coffee made in the Turkish fashion, tea made in the Russian fashion, and occasionally *vodka*, which is the usual alcoholic stimulant. Tobacco is smoked mostly in the form of cigarettes. Excellent (and cheap) cigarettes are supplied by the government *Régies* in Serbia and Bulgaria.

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Exclusive News Agency

BUCHAREST

The wise tourist will keep clear of the Balkan towns apart from the actual capitals, and will carry his food and lodging with him. Under these circumstances a good standard of ease can be maintained if a train of ox wagons sufficient to the size of the party is enlisted. Ladies can travel with fair comfort in an ox wagon. As regards the danger of Balkan travel, in my experience—and that was during war-time—there is none. Serbian peasant, Bulgarian peasant, Greek peasant, Turkish peasant, alike are amiable and obliging fellows, if they do not

feel in duty bound to cut your throat on some theological or political point. Being strangers, tourists would have no theology and no politics. So much for the inhabitants. The officials, provided passports are clear and the precaution is taken of getting letters at the capital from the authorities of the country you are travelling through, will be helpful. The one district that might be a little dangerous is that corner of Macedonia where Greek and Bulgar are always playing against one another the old game of massacre.

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CHAPTER IX

THE BALKAN PEOPLES IN ART AND INDUSTRY

The five centuries of Turkish domination, during which all the arts and most of the crafts were neglected in the Balkan Peninsula, killed nearly completely the ancient civilisations of the Greeks, the Serbs, and the Bulgars. But a few traces of the old culture survive to this day as mournful and tattered relics of the greatness of those departed Empires. The old Bulgarian Empire, combining a Slav with a Turconian element; the old Serbian Empire, almost purely Slav but influenced a little by Italian and Grecian influence, evolved in the days of its greatness the beginnings of a national literature and national architecture. In Serbia particularly was there a strong and promising growth of humane culture, and the greatest of the Serbian rulers, Stephen Dushan (14th century), whose death before the walls of

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Constantinople at the beginning of the Turkish invasions gave up the Balkan Peninsula to the Crescent, left as one monument to his name a well-reasoned code of laws. He was throughout his reign a sincere friend of learning. In Bulgaria during the 10th century, under the Czar Simeon, there was a brief efflorescence of learning. Montenegro, which alone of the Balkan States kept its head unbowed before the Turk, was a busy centre of literary effort in the 16th century. Under the stress of constant war, however, the arts of peace died down almost completely in the Balkans until the Liberation of the peoples in

the 19th century. During the interval, however, the peasants in their homes kept up some little knowledge of the traditions of their forefathers' greatness. Legends were passed down from father to son in chants set to a rough music. In these chants, too, were recorded the deeds of heroism which marked the ever-recurring revolts against the Turk.

What survives to-day from this period of oppression is a very characteristic national music, melancholy usually, as might be expected, but of arresting sweetness; and an art of peasant-applied decoration, which recalls the earlier and

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more primitive forms of Byzantine Art. Balkan tapestries, Balkan carpets, Balkan embroideries, woven or stitched by the peasant women, have a note of barbaric boldness in design and colour which distinguishes them at once from the peasant work of other countries.

This applied art in decoration is wisely fostered by the various governments, and there is liberal encouragement also given to modern art. Especially is this the case in Bulgaria. The impression I have got from seeing picture collections in the Balkans is that the local artists have learned foreign methods without adding any national bent of their own, and contrive to give a native character to their pictures only when they make the choice of some particularly horrible subject. Yet there should come a vigorous art as well as a vigorous literature one day from these Balkan States. There the mysticism, the melancholy, the transcendentalism of the Slav is mixed with the fatalism of the Turk, and the vivacity of the Greek and the Roumanian in the national types. Byzantine traditions, Slav traditions, classic Greek traditions, Roman traditions mingle to influence this composite character, the two former predominating, but the two latter

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having a very definite power. It should be rich soil for talent, even for genius.

Interesting opportunities were given in the Southern Slav Art Exhibitions of 1904 and 1906 (the first at Belgrade, the second at Sofia) to note the trend of art in the Balkans. At those Exhibitions Bulgarian, Serbian, Croatian, and Slavonian arts were represented.

The Croatian pictures—I follow a trustworthy guide in stating this—showed a high degree of technical skill, not distinguishable from Austrian art in character: the Slavonian pictures were also technically good, but of a more impressionist character: the Serbian pictures imitated in technique the Old Masters, but took their subjects almost exclusively from Serbian history: the Bulgarian pictures had no national characteristic in style, but usually sought to be transcriptions of some form of Bulgarian life of the day.

Summing up the art position in the Balkans, it can be fairly said that before the outbreak of the last great war very good progress had been made for the few years since the Liberation from the Turks. A wise policy for the future would be to encourage as much as possible the peasant arts and crafts which are distinctive, and not to seek to impose too much of modern art education, which may stifle national influences and inflict a sterile sameness.

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A BULGARIAN FARM

Balkan industry varies greatly with the height of the country, as well as with the racial type. The mountaineers are usually lacking in steady industry: the peoples of the plain are usually exceptionally hard workers. Very many emigrants from the Balkans go to the United States to work there in the mines, and on works of railway construction, for a term of years. The Bulgarian will come back from the United States with £300 saved up, and settle down in his native village as farmer or trader. The Serbian will come back with £200 saved up, but with a wider knowledge of United States life, and he will settle down as pastoralist or farmer, but not as trader. The Albanian or Montenegrin will come back with little or no money, but with a wonderful armoury of silver-adorned weapons and much other personal decoration. So graced, the mountaineer will have no difficulty in marrying the girl of his choice, and she will do most of the work that is needed thereafter, whilst he attends to the hunting and the fighting. The Greek and the Roumanian go abroad, preferably as traders, and afterwards elect to

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stay abroad, though it is to be recorded in proof of modern Greek patriotism that in 1912 there was a steady flow of Greeks from all parts of the world coming back to their native land to fight in the army.

Considered industrially the Bulgarian is the best type in the Balkans. He is a steady, tireless worker on the soil; takes to factory life amiably; and has in a very strongly marked degree "the road-making talent."

A very valuable index to national character is provided by a people's roads. The most successful Imperial governors, the Romans, were also builders of the finest roads the world has known. The British people have been good road-builders as well as good Empire-makers; the French people, too, and every other people who at any time have done big enduring work in the government of the world. If a nation is not a good road-building nation it will not go far: and the converse is probably true. On this road-building test the Bulgarians have a prosperous future indicated, for they are very pertinacious and skilful road-builders. During the 1912 war I noticed that despite all other pre-occupations they were pushing roads forward at every possible

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opportunity. The Turks going back to Adrianople and Kirk Kilisse found a great number of roads built or building—the first serious efforts in that direction since the downfall of the Roman Empire.

The Bulgarian's chief occupation is agriculture. The system of land tenures is that of peasant ownership. There are no large estates and very few non-occupying landlords. The chief crops are wheat, barley, maize, rice (around Philippopolis), tobacco, and roses. The tobacco is of as good quality, almost, as that of Turkey. The Bulgarian Government encourages the culture of tobacco by distributing seed, free of cost, among the planters, by setting a bounty on the export tariff, and by authorising the Bulgarian National Bank to consent to loans on the surety of certificates granted to the planters until they are able to dispose of their crops advantageously.

Tobacco culture is carried on chiefly in the south and in the provinces of Silistria and Kustendil. The area of the plantations is estimated at 3000 hectares. The province of Haskovo has the greatest yield; then follows Philippopolis, with 300,000 kilograms; Kustendil and Silistria, 210,000 kilograms. According to

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approximate calculations based on various statistics, three-fourths of

the tobacco crop of Bulgaria is consumed by the inhabitants and only a quarter is exported.

The rose crop is next in importance after tobacco. The roses are used exclusively for the distilling of attar of roses. The rose gardens are limited to 148 parishes of the provinces of Philippopolis and Stara Zagora, and occupy a total area of 5094 hectares. The quantity and quality of the attar depend very much on the weather at the time of bloom and gathering. The roses most cultivated in Bulgaria are the red rose (*Rosa damascena*) and the white rose (*Rosa alba*). The best gardens are at Kazanlik, Karlovo, Klissoura, and Stara Zagora. The distilling of the attar is now a Government monopoly. The cultivation of beetroot has been introduced recently and is confined to the province of Sofia. The sugar refinery near Sofia utilises the whole crop for local consumption.

It is interesting to note in connection with Balkan agriculture that as far back as 1863 the much-abused Turk had actually adopted the very modern idea of an agricultural *Credit Foncier* system in the Balkans! In that year Midhat

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Pasha, Governor of the Danubian Vilayet, prepared a scheme for the creation of banks, to assist the rural population. The scheme having been approved by the Turkish Government, several of these banks were established. The peasants were allowed to repay in kind the loans which were advanced to them, the banks themselves selling the agricultural products. With the object of increasing the capital of the banks, a special tax was introduced obliging the farmers to hand every year to these institutions part of their produce in kind.

When it was realised that these banks were of great service to the rural population, to which they advanced money at 12 per cent interest—instead of 30-100 per cent, as the usurers generally did—the Turkish Government extended the reform to the whole Turkish Empire, and obliged the peasants to create similar banks in all the district centres. According to their statutes one-third of the net profits of these banks was destined for works of public utility, such as bridges, roads, fountains, schools, etc., while the remaining two-thirds went to increase the capital of the banks.

During the Russo-Turkish war several of

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these banks lost their funds, the functionaries of the Turkish Government having carried away all the cash, as well as the securities and other property belonging to the banks' clients. After the war the debtors refused to pay, and only part of the property of the banks was restored, by means of the issue of new bonds. For that unfortunate end the war is rather to be blamed than the Turk. This *Credit Foncier* system is pretty clear proof that the Turkish power was not always cruel and rapacious, since so sensible a reform was set on foot in one of the Christian provinces under the Sublime Porte.

Apart from the industries of the soil, Bulgaria has a small mining population and an increasing factory population. The Protective tariff is used freely to encourage young industries, and there is an effort just now to set up cotton-spinning as a national enterprise.

Serbia had a mixed pastoral and agricultural population up to the outbreak of the war of 1912, with pig-raising as the greatest of the national industries. By the Treaty of Bucharest she has, however, acquired much new territory, and is now probably predominantly an agricultural country. She has, too, great mineral

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resources at present, but they are little developed, and fine forests which only need an improvement of the means of communication to be commercially a big asset. The Serbian is not so steadily devoted to his work as the Bulgarian: his is the pastoral as opposed to the agricultural character. Nevertheless he has a reasonable faculty of industry. As is the case in Bulgaria the bulk of the land is held by peasant proprietors. These are organised into communes very much on the Russian system. It is an interesting fact that though in Serbia there is almost the same degree as in Bulgaria of seclusion of the women of the nation, a Serbian woman may be the head of the village commune, and, as such, exercise a very real authority.

Both in Bulgaria and Serbia the rights of the commune are very jealously safeguarded. The central government must take no part in the administration of the communes, or maintain any agents of its own to interfere with their affairs. The commune forms the basis of the State fabric and enjoys a complete autonomy. It is the smallest unit in the administrative organisation of the country. Every district is subdivided into communes, which are either

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urban or rural. The commune is a corporation. Every subject must belong to a commune and figure in its registers, the laws not tolerating the state of vagrancy. The members of the Commune Council are elected by universal suffrage, in the same way and subject to the same precautions as the members of the National Assembly. In passing it may be observed that theoretically the governments of the Balkan States are free democracies. Practically they are oligarchies tempered by assassination, which is still a favoured political weapon.

The Serbian has not much of the commercial faculty: and people of other nations manage very many of the businesses in Serbia.

The Montenegrin is willing to be a worker if it does not interfere with his manly amusements of warfare. His occupations are pastoral and agricultural pursuits and the chase. The Albanian is not content to be a worker at all under any conditions. His occupations are dancing and swaggering whilst his womenfolk carry on the bulk of the primitive pastoral and agricultural work.

It is not possible to hope for much industrial or commercial progress in Albania. But in Serbia

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and Bulgaria there are rich opportunities for enterprise and capital provided that an era of peace could be reckoned upon. It is the uncertainty on that point that will stand in the way of future Balkan development. When after the Treaty of London the Balkan League fell to pieces there was incurred, in addition to other sacrifices, a serious loss of confidence on the part of European capital.

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CHAPTER X

THE FUTURE OF THE BALKANS

We have seen that a blood-mist has hung over the Balkans during all the centuries that history knows. Nature set up there lists for the great contests of races—on the path from the cold north of Europe to the warm south; on the path from Asia to Europe; and each great campaign left behind it shreds of devastated peoples. These shreds of peoples dwelling in the Balkans to-day have a blood-thirst as an inescapable heritage. Turk, Bulgar, Serb, Roumanian, Greek—they may hold the peace for a time, and some may try to think that they are friends with others; but all have something of hate or fear or contempt for the others, and all prepare in peace for the next fight.

The Fates making the Balkan Peninsula the battle-ground of empires and races, the field of

last stands, the refuge of residual fragments of peoples, imposed upon it its bloody tradition. Under other conditions, Serb or Bulgar or Greek or Turk or Roumanian left to themselves might have made happier history. For all these races can be human, reasonable, companionable. I have seen something of all of them in following a Balkan campaign as a war correspondent (not following always as the sheltered guest of an army, but forcing a solitary path through the peasant population), and in watching the wonderful acrobatic lying of a Balkan Peace Conference have seen thus the best and the worst of them. I have been an unofficial member of a Bulgarian court-martial; the guest of a dozen and more Bulgarian and Serbian army outposts, dependent often for food and shelter on the kindness of peasant soldiers; for days have held at the mercy of Balkan peasants my life and my property; have been mistaken for a wandering Turk twice, and have never suffered violence, rudeness, or the loss of a pennyworth. For the peasants, the commonfolk of all the Balkan peoples, I have come thus to a hearty liking; their priests and politicians (with a few exceptions), a different feeling. Knowing that the massacre is the

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national sport in many districts of the Balkans; that at the outbreak of the 1912 war the death-rate by violence actually decreased in some quarters because the killing was systematised a little and put under a sort of regulation; that always Turks and Exarchate Christians and Patriarchate Christians are plotting against one another new raids and murders, still I maintain that, if left to themselves, if freed from the prompting of priests and politicians the Balkan peasants of any race are quite decent folk. So I wish heartily that there was fair reason to hope for peace and happiness for them. Is there fair reason? To that question a study of the races and the personalities can give clues for an answer.

Underwood & Underwood

ALBANIAN TRIBESMEN

The Bulgarian is dour, dull, a little greedy, honest, very industrious. He is almost as much a Turk as a Slav. (I was told that during the Turkish occupation a Bulgarian mother finding herself with child after violence by a Turk brought up the child with her family, whilst a Serbian mother under the same circumstances killed the infant at birth.) The Bulgarian is very moral, marrying at an early age.

The Bulgarian peasant soldiers were very honest and loyal. At Mustapha Pasha one

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night, being short of food, I tried to get bread at the military bakery (all bread and flour having been requisitioned for the army). I offered a soldier up to five francs for a loaf without tempting him to sell it. Finally I had to get bread as a charity by declaring that I was actually in want of it for food. Later, travelling between Silivri and Chatalja, I encountered four Bulgarian foot soldiers who had become separated from their regiment and were starving. They asked for food and I gave them all I could spare, enough for two meals. One of the men produced a purse and took out some coppers wishing to pay.

Travelling across Thrace (then in Bulgarian occupation), I often put

up at some military post, being invited to become a member of the little mess—usually an official or two and four or five non-commissioned officers. Nearly always I had the same experience, that I was made free of the stewed goat and rice, or the dish of eggs and flour, or the bread and cheese of the Bulgarians, and when I wished to add from my stores chocolate and biscuits and dates, just a scrap or two would be taken. I could see the men's eyes hungering for the delicacies, but nothing would induce them to take anything material from my stores.

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The Bulgarian peasant soldier and officer I found, in short, to be a gentleman. Yet nationally Bulgaria is not "a gentleman," and has come to its present sorry state, I believe, largely on that account. The old Bulgarian aristocracy was exterminated by the Turks. The surviving Bulgarian peasantry has not yet been able to produce another aristocracy. It is the more cunning rather than the more worthy son of the peasant who wins to a sort of an education—often abroad—and becomes the lawyer, politician, official. In very many cases he carries with him into a higher stratum of society few of his peasant virtues and all of his peasant faults. He gets an overweening pride in his own acuteness. He becomes arrogant, "too-clever-by-half," and intrigue teaches him cruelty. I can contrast vividly two Bulgarian types in a noted diplomat, who fancied himself a Bismarck and had about the wits of an office boy, and an old peasant captain with whom I travelled from Kirk Kilisse to Chorlu. Generalising, the "leading men" in Bulgaria are of a poor type (there are exceptions), the leading priests of a still poorer type; the people themselves are a sound people, and when the ambitious among them contrive to

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preserve their peasant virtues through the ordeal of education they will become a great people.

The Bulgarian did not seem to me naturally cruel. All the time that I was with the main army I saw no trace of outrage or cruelty. I did see several instances of curt and merciful justice.

I arrived one night at the Tchundra River alone, having gone forward from my ox cart because the miserable Macedonian driver and the still more miserable Bulgarian servant I had (I suspect he was in training for the diplomatic service) could not be induced to do a fair

day's march. A vedette outpost of five men held the bridge. They took me—as I judged from their gestures rather than from their language, of which I understood only one word, "Turc"—for a Turk. But they let me stay unmolested at their camp fire for an hour until an officer who spoke French appeared. I could give several similar instances. Never did I feel nervous in the least when making my way alone through the country in Bulgarian occupation (most of the time I was alone, for after a while I dropped my Macedonian and my Bulgarian servant).

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GREEK INFANTRY

The Turk I found disappointing. I had pictured a romantic individual with a Circassian harem, a stable of Arab steeds, and a fierce and warlike manner. I found the Turk to be rather a shabby individual; monogamous usually (but with the free and easy ideas as to his rights over Christian women which are almost consequent upon his philosophy of life, and cause most of the trouble when the Turk lives by the side of a Christian population); much addicted to sweetmeats—his shops were full of Scotch lollies and English biscuits. Certainly most of the Turks I have encountered were prisoners or dwelling in conquered country. But, making all allowance for that, the traditional fiery Turk of martial fame no longer exists, I should say, in European Turkey. The Turkish prisoners in the hands of the Bulgarians seemed to be glad to have arrived at a fate which meant regular food. In old Bulgaria I found Turks living quite contentedly under Christian rule, and in many cases following menial occupations. The boot-blacks in the streets were Turks, the porters were Turks.

I had a Turkish driver for five days once from Kirk Kilisse to Mustapha Pasha. The first hour

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of our acquaintance he won my heart by telling me (through an interpreter) that since his horses had been requisitioned by the Bulgarians, he had not been able to get proper food for them, and he embraced his ponies, which were really in rather good condition. I applauded the noble Turk and his love for horses, and bought

tobacco for him which he welcomed with tears of joy, as he had been without it for long. The horses carried the cart a gallant thirty miles that day, and we camped at a burned-out village. Mr. Turk set himself to enjoy a smoke over the fire. My own supper I prepared, and gave him some to eke out his bread and cheese, and then told him to water and feed the horses. Because the well was 400 yards away and the tobacco was sweet and the fire comforting, the Turk had no wish to do this, but was ready to let them go through the night without food or water. I had to threaten to flog him (and to start to do it) before he would attend to the horses. Yet after that incident I slept in the cart without a thought that the Turk would consider himself offended and cut my throat. As a matter of fact the touch of the whip did not rankle with him, and at Mustapha Pasha when, the journey

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ended, I gave him a little money for himself, Mr. Turk prostrated himself in gratitude.

I believe that the warlike virtues have died out of the Turk in Europe. Of other nation-making and nation-maintaining qualities he has none. In all Turkey from the borders of Bulgaria to the lines of Chatalja, I found no roads, no street lamps, no drainage, no water supply (I was not in Adrianople). Except for a few agricultural peasants I found nowhere the Turk doing any useful work. In a characteristic Turkish town the shops were kept by Greeks, the industries carried on by Greeks, Macedonians, and Bulgarians. The Turk was the tax-collector, the official, the soldier, and did none of these things well. That acute observer of the Turkish character, Mr. L. March Phillips, in his book *In the Desert* upholds that the Turk is impossible as a civilising force:

Or, for a third example, come to the craggy hills of Southern Albania, and mix, if but for half an hour, with the armed shepherds, as wild and intractable as their own crags, or as the gaunt dogs which guard their flocks from the wolves, and whose attentions to strangers you are apt to find such a nuisance. You will understand from the first glance at the men more of the interminable Balkan difficulty than newspapers and books can ever

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teach you. These are the fellows who swoop down from their peaks on the mixed races of the plains and carry fire and slaughter through

village and valley. Their natural aptitude for fighting and foraging, for bearing things with a strong hand, for cowing the weak and feeble, for vindicating the old "might is right" theory, is written all over them. You see it in their gait, glance, walk, and manner, you hear it in every accent of their voice, you feel it in their individuality and presence.

These are specimens of the Moslem type, the type that stops short at the virile virtues, that makes the best host and worst neighbour in the world, that has many splendid qualities to recommend it, but to which all that makes life profound and inexhaustible is a dead letter. It is the most strongly marked and salient type I have ever met with. There is the Moslem walk, the Moslem scowl, the Moslem courtesy, the Moslem dignity, the Moslem carriage and attitudes and features, the Moslem composure, and the Moslem fury. All these traits and characteristics, inspired by the same temper, expressing the same ideal, conspire to depict a figure so notable that you must be a dull observer indeed if you cannot pick him out from a mixed crowd as you would pick out a Chinaman in the London streets.

Some people say it is the religion that creates the type. "There," they say of Mohammedanism, "is a religion that breeds men." It would be truer, I think, to say that Mohammedanism recommends itself to men at a certain stage of their development, and has for that stage a natural affinity. Every race goes through a time when the virile estimate of life and the splendour of self-assertion seem the finest things possible. It is at this time it is open to the attack of El Islam. The

Moslem religion answers all its needs at this stage, and lays good hold of it, and having once laid hold of it, it sanctifies the ideas belonging to this stage, and so tends to restrict the race to it. There is no instance on record of a people having embraced Mohammedanism and afterwards achieving a complete, or what gives promise of ever becoming a complete, civilisation.

During my stay in the Balkans I found no certain evidence of Turkish cruelty. There was plenty of evidence offered by the Bulgarians, but it usually smelt of the lamp of some patriotic journalist of Sofia. Once near Mustapha Pasha—when all the war correspondents were cooped up under strict censorship, prevented from seeing any of the operations around Adrianople—the Bulgarians found it necessary to

burn a village for strategic reasons. The chance was offered to the Press photographers of seeing this, if it were represented in their pictures as the atrocious burning of a village by the Turks. I believe that the offer was accepted by some. The "atrocities" by Turks, regularly recorded by the Bulgarian Press Bureau were, as far as the main theatre of operations was concerned, founded on similar evidence. During its first phase I believe that the war was very humanely conducted on all sides. In Macedonia, of course, there were

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some deplorable atrocities, but I believe the normal massacre conditions there were rather bettered than otherwise by the outbreak of war.

To sum up the Turk, I do not think he will survive for long in Europe. As a matter of hard fact there really are not many real Turks left in Europe.

The Serbian, with his highlander the Montenegrin, is a far more engaging personality than the Bulgarian. He lacks the stubborn, dour courage of his neighbour, but he has more *élan*. In military life the Bulgarian would supply incomparable infantry, the Serbians be superior in artillery and cavalry. In social life the Serbian is convivial and hospitable. Whilst the Bulgarian wishes to go to bed early that he may get up early and push the road he is making along a little farther, the Serbian will keep you at his dinner-table drinking and singing until far into the morning. He is not troubling about a road.

When the Serbian army came to help the Bulgarians in the siege of Adrianople, the contrast between the two armies and the two camps was great. The Serbian men were smarter, better equipped, their quarters cleaner, and from their

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mess tents would come by night the sound of revelry. One might imagine Roundheads and Cavaliers camping side by side.

The Allies did not fraternise. For that I blamed the Bulgarians. The positions in regard to the Serbian aid at Adrianople, as I understood it, was this: that originally the Bulgarians engaged to help the Serbians in their campaign, but this was found not to be necessary: that the Bulgarians, later, asked for aid against Adrianople, and it was

promptly given without any conditions being imposed, though there then already existed in the Serbian mind a desire to modify the territorial partition arrangement they had with Bulgaria and this request for aid might have been taken as a good opportunity for raising that question. I believe those to be the facts, but since in Balkan diplomacy it is always a matter of finding out the truth of comparing and weighing and deducing from a series of lies, I cannot state them with absolute certainty. If they are true, the Serbians behaved like gentlemen in not raising against an ally an awkward question at a time when help was asked. Quite certainly the Bulgarian authorities behaved like boors to their Serbian friends. Things were made as

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unpleasant as was reasonably possible for them in all kinds of niggling ways around Adrianople. The Serbians behaved well under great provocation.

During the first sessions of the Balkan Peace Conference I had opportunities of observing the same good behaviour on the part of the Serbians. Bulgarian diplomacy was, as usual, very exasperating. It was not only that Bulgaria was insisting on having the hide, horn, and hoofs of Turkey, but also on rubbing salt into her bare carcase. The Turkish delegates approached the Serbians—whose territorial demands as far as Turkey was concerned were satisfied, but who had a pending controversy with the Bulgarians—hoping to get some moral support against Bulgaria and being prepared to offer something in return. The Serbian attitude was sharply loyal, to stand by Bulgaria absolutely in regard to the Turkish frontier. Serbians have not been always popular in Great Britain, I know; but I am not alone among those who have come into recent contact with Balkan affairs who found them to be the best of the Balkan peoples.

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PODGORICA, UPON THE ALBANIAN FRONTIER

The Greek is even more engaging and hospitable than the Serbian; but his fluent, flexible,

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subtle nature does not inspire full confidence. At the outset of the last Balkan war there was one thing that all were sure of: that the Greeks would not fight. All were wrong. The Greeks did exceedingly well in the field, even allowing that they sometimes shaped their campaign quite as much by considerations of jealousy of their allies as of hostility to the common enemy. But it is a fact that the Greek has usually more stomach for politics than for fighting, and that his subtle nature allows him to live comfortably in a state of subjection, which would irk a more robust mind. He is by instinct a trader: and a trader is not an uncompromising patriot as a rule.

The Greeks live side by side with the Turks in Turkey with fair comfort. At Kirk Kilisse, after the Bulgarian occupation, a deputation came to me from the Greeks to assure me that they would much prefer to live under the Turk than under the Bulgar: and asking that England should be urged to support autonomy for Thrace. Well, the Turks are back at Kirk Kilisse, and I suppose my Greek friends are happy. Eloquent, courteous, kind folk they were. I stayed in the house of one for some days, and will remember always the gracious kindness of the man and his

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wife. I had to leave one morning at four to catch a troop train which would carry me a few miles towards the front. The couple were up and had a fire and tea ready for me. As I had a fever at the time, and a long laborious journey ahead, the whole Greek race seemed good that morning.

Later at Chorlu after I had got permission from the military commandant to go forward to Chatalja, and he had helped me to hire a cart and horses and to stock up my provisions, the permission was withdrawn because Bashi-Bazouks were raiding along the line of communication. I might go later, he said, when a body of troops was moving. I objected that time was precious; and I had my revolver, and there was the driver.

"Ah," he said sweetly, "he is a Greek. He will run away."

After that manner the Bulgarians always spoke of the Greeks. In this case the Bulgarian was possibly right. I finally coaxed permission to go forward, on condition that I took a patrol of one Bulgarian soldier, and I was allowed to borrow a rifle and some ammunition. We met no Bashi-Bazouks: but whilst the Bulgarian palpably was quite content to

enter into a plan to give the Bashi-Bazouks a chance of showing

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themselves at nightfall, the Greek liked the adventure not at all. (Perhaps on the whole he was justified. But I was desperately eager for a "story," and with the Turkish regulars running away so consistently, to encounter irregulars suggested no real danger.)

On that journey, at a little village which I cannot name between Silivri and Chatalja, the population was largely Greek. Some of the Greeks, after the Turks had fled before the Bulgarians, had discarded the fez and were wearing Bulgarian caps. Others held to the fez, but had marked on it with white chalk a cross. I formed the opinion that if by the fortune of war the Turks came back, those crosses would be rubbed out. The Greek can be very pliant undoubtedly, when he is in contact with a dominant people. The other side to his character—that of a hot-headed, argumentative, boisterous Donnybrook Fair patriotism—is developed in his own country where it is fed with memories of the historic greatness of his race.

The Roumanian—the fourth national type in the Balkans to which I shall refer—very closely resembles the Greek in most respects.

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Like the Greeks the Roumanians are subtle, flexible, engaging. They are a singularly good-looking race, and Roumanian girls are sought after in marriage a great deal. A Serbian politician explaining to me what he called "a nice national balance," pointed out that the Serbians rather despised trade and finance. The Roumanian, therefore, came into Serbia to make money as shopkeeper and financier. Then the young Serbian man married the rich Roumanian's daughter and thus the Serbian money was still kept in the country.

The instinct for trade has a very marked effect on the politics of the Balkans. The Serbian has no love for trade: the Montenegrin despises it quite. The Greek and the Roumanian are very keen traders with an inclination to escape from manual work as soon as they can. The Bulgarian is a trader and also fond of productive industry. So "as two of a trade never agree," neither Greek nor Roumanian can get on as well with the Bulgarian as with the Serbian.

The Roumanian national polity differs greatly from the Greek, though the two racial types are very similar. Whilst Greece has a stormy and

disorderly democracy, Roumania is ruled practically

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by an oligarchy—an oligarchy which during the past twelve months has won to an achievement which would have delighted the old Florentine Republic. Without losing a soldier, almost without spending a crown, Roumania has won a great tract of territory and established herself as the paramount power of the Balkans. It was a victory of unscrupulous and patient resoluteness which is a classic of its kind, and it was made possible by the oligarchic system of Roumania. The Montenegrin does not need to be considered separately: he is the "Highlander" of the Serbian and shares Serbian language, customs, and character with such modifications as the conditions of his mountain life impose. But the Albanian, the largely Mohammedan mountain type to which the jealousies of Europe have agreed to give a separate nationality and a separate kingdom, calls for some attention. The Albanian is the wildest of the Balkan types, and his country the most primitive. It has had no period of civilisation, and can hardly be said to promise to have. Its existence as a nation in 1914 was due to the fact that the German Powers wished to have a footing in the Balkans for intrigue. "The creation of Albania dealt a death-blow

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to the Balkan League," said a cynical Austrian diplomatist recently. He was right: and the creation of Albania undertaken at the instance of Austria had no other purpose from the first, though it was disguised under the plea of anxiety for the national rights of the Albanians, wild catamarans of the hills, odd specimens of whom one may encounter in many parts of the Balkans acting as dragomans. The Albanian has many savage virtues. He is a picturesque fellow as he swaggers about with a silver-decorated armoury stuck in his waist-belt: and he is truly faithful to a master. But he has not the barest elements of a national organisation; and the Austrian Prince of Albania did not find a single house within all his dominion which would satisfy the housing needs of a respectable London clerk.

Describing the march across Albania to the Adriatic coast during the recent war a Serbian officer wrote:

It is only by travelling as we did that real facts can be learned. We who had only known the Turks by hearsay had a certain respect for

them. At present I feel but contempt and disgust. To think that they should have held these lands for five hundred years, and kept them absolutely wild and uncultivated! Prishtina, Jakovitsa, and Prizrend are in every respect

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behind Mirigevo [a village some miles outside Belgrade]. There are neither bridges nor roads, nor decent dwellings to be met with in the Sanjak. Of the dirt I cannot trust myself to speak. The "Ujumat" (Prefecture) of Prizrend, residence of the Mutessarif, is in such a filthy condition that I could not sit there for more than five minutes together. All around the sofras (tables) were rags, remnants of food, tufts of dogs' hair, etc., for these ate and slept with their masters....

The people are humble, cowed, moving out-of-doors rarely, and then huddled together like a herd of cattle.... The peasants run to kiss our hands, and bow down to the ground, but they are too frightened to give a sensible answer to a plain question. They speak Serbian, it is true, and cross themselves as Christians, but otherwise bear little resemblance to our peasant folk. They have lived no better than their masters, for themselves and their pigs share the same apartment! If the pigs were let loose the Turks were sure to kill them, so they were hidden indoors. The first use they made of the liberty we gave them was to hunt the pigs into the open air, and how the poor beasts enjoyed it! One could not help laughing at their antics as they chased each other, while the children ran to keep them from escaping to the woods. But the cows and oxen defy description. They are like our calves, only the shape is queer. I saw no vegetables anywhere. The staple diet is maize. From our frontier to the sea it is the same tale of misery, helplessness, and dirt. In Prizrend, after every rainfall, the people drink muddy water in which none of our soldiers would care to wash. When we boiled it a thick scum came on the top, which we skimmed off! This is the water used by a town of 40,000 citizens; and really one felt that authorities like the

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Turks should not be allowed to live any longer. Now we feel that it is a disgrace to us to have delayed so long in coming to the deliverance of our brothers in bondage just outside our doors. Better late than never.

As for the independence of Albania, it would be a comical, if it were

not a sinister, idea. Whoever speaks of a national sense in these savage hordes is either untruthful or ignorant. The Serbians of this region make no distinction, as we do, between the Turks and the Mohammedan Albanians. I could not get them to understand that the latter were in reality brethren of the Christian Albanians with whom they live in amity. I pointed out that these Mohammedans could not speak a word of Turkish, but that did not help. The Serbians insist that they are Turks all the same. And for all practical purposes they are right. The Christian Albanians are called by their race brethren "Catholics," and are hated and persecuted by them just as the Serbians are hated and persecuted. The "Catholics" loathe the Mohammedans and deny that they are of the same nationality. But the fact remains that they speak the same language. The Catholics welcomed us with joy, rendered us every possible service, and often refused to accept payment. They are eager to assist in our operations, acted as scouts for us, and brought us precious information. Sometimes they acted on their own initiative, captured, and killed their Mohammedan co-nationalists without first consulting us.... The priests are the most embittered. These jealous "fratres" told us they longed for a Christian Government, and that the project of a united Albania was insensate.... Ismail Kemal's proclamation has irritated the priests about here. They will not for a moment consider a union with the Mohammedan tribes or submission to

a Moslem leader like Ismail. On the other hand, if we evacuate this country, a terrible fate awaits the Catholics....

Here I have made acquaintance with the Montenegrin troops, rather different from ours! They get leave to go home and see after their wives and children whenever they ask it, and lax discipline does not seem to affect their heroism. They fight like lions, but do nothing else except shoot birds and fish in the interval. Every ship that touches here is greeted with a volley, though ammunition is sometimes scarce, but the Montenegrin can better spare bread than shot. He will do nothing but fight, and ships often remain unladen here for days, because there are few Albanians in the place to do the work. My soldiers carry sacks and burdens of all kinds to and from the ships, and the Montenegrins laugh at them and say: "Is that how you fight, Brother Shumadinats?" [Shumadia is a forest in the centre of the Kingdom of Serbia.] They are amused to see our men one day

unshaven; they are most particular themselves to shave each day whatever happens. The priests alone wear a beard, for they are not supposed to fight.... The Montenegrin soldiers' wives come once a week to look after their husbands, wash the linen, and help to clean up....

There is, of course, a certain amount of Serb intolerance in that letter, but it represents on the whole the truth.

So much for the different nations of the Balkans. The personalities of the Peninsula might provide a happy solution for the problems

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which the conflict of these mutually antipathetic racial elements create: for there is no fact more clear than that the general interest of the countries could best be served by a wise policy of compromise and co-operation, bringing its different elements together as the Swiss were brought together by a geographical rather than a racial reason. But unfortunately there are no personalities alike honest in outlook and great in power.

Four able and far-seeing men I have met in the Balkans: M. Nikolitch, President of the Serbian Parliament; General Demetrieff, Commander of the Third Army (which won the most notable Bulgarian victories), now commanding a Russian army; M. Venizuelos, Prime Minister of Greece; M. Take Jonescu, of the Roumanian Cabinet. All men of power, none seemingly has sufficient strength to impose his will not alone on his own country, but on the other Balkan States, and weld them into a Confederation which would be held together by a sense of common interests and common dangers.

King Ferdinand of Bulgaria has kept for years the centre of the Balkan stage to the European onlooker; and is still a great enough figure to give pause to those Bulgarian Nationalists who

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would exact from him reprisal for the terrible misfortunes of their country. But he is a man of audacity rather than of courage, and his ambition has been always more personal than national—to be Czar of the Balkans rather than to be the maker of a Balkan nation. Gifted with a great deal of diplomatic ability and with a soaring imagination, King Ferdinand has a serious obstacle in his personal timidity. To play a gambler's game one must be prepared at times to take the

great risk. But King Ferdinand has many fears. He fears, for instance, infectious diseases morbidly, and the thought of a germ in the track could turn him from the highest of enterprises. Perhaps it was the fear of disease rather than of wounds that kept him so much in the rear of his army during the 1912 campaign against Turkey. But whatever the cause, his absence from the front showed a serious weakness of character in a man who aspired to carve out an empire for himself. The Bulgarian authorities, deceiving the Press almost as assiduously for the purpose as for the false representation that all the destruction of the Turkish forces was ascribable to the Bulgarian arms, gave to Europe inspiriting pictures of His Majesty following

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close on the heels of his soldiers in a military train which served him as a palace. The fact was that the ambitious but timid king kept very well to the rear, at Stara Zagora first and afterwards at Kirk Kilisse, with a great entourage of secret police. And when armistice negotiations were in progress he kept separate from his Cabinet as well as from his army. Affable in manner, industrious, pertinacious, well aware of the advantage of advertisement (my first meeting with His Majesty was due to the fact that he mistook my map case for a camera, and sent for me to photograph him while he stood on the bridge over the Maritza at Mustapha Pasha), of high ability, King Ferdinand did great things for his adopted country, but showed a fatal weakness of character when he had drunk deep of the wine of success. It is the fashion to blame him wholly now for the wild attack on Serbia and Greece. He may have been in part the victim of his advisers' folly in that. But without much doubt he could have vetoed the fatal move, if he had known his army from personal observation, if he had been down to the lines at Chatalja, and had looked closely into the besieging forces around Adrianople. Common sense would

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have told him that the attack on his allies was hopeless, if strength of character had not told him that it was wicked. But he neither knew the facts nor understood the ethics of the position.

General Demetrieff, Commander of the Third Bulgarian Army, the victor of Kirk Kilisse and of Lule Burgas, the reluctant attacker at Chatalja, impressed me as a man of fine character. For some few days I was a member of the officers' mess at Erminekioi, which was

the headquarters of the Staff before the lines of Chatalja, and had the chance of seeing much of the general. He struck one as a frank, courageous man. He answered questions truthfully or not at all, and was notably kind to the very small group of correspondents who had got through to the front. His personal staff worshipped him, and told with pride that most of the staff work with him on the battle-field was under fire. When it was clear that the attack at Chatalja had failed, General Demetrieff neither attempted to tell falsehoods nor shut himself off from visitors. He ascribed the cessation of the attack to the outbreak of cholera in the Bulgarian lines (and the statement was probably in his mind not only the truth but all the truth: in any case one could

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not expect him to disclose the shortage of big gun ammunition): was avowedly disconsolate but not in the least discouraged. I cannot imagine General Demetrieff having any hand in the making of the second Balkan war against the Serbians and Greeks, and think that the Bulgarians had in him a man of honesty and courage as well as of great military skill. No other general of the Bulgarian Army impressed me in the same way, certainly not General Savoff.

Of the Bulgarian politicians, M. Gueshoff, Prime Minister at the outbreak of the first war, and M. Daneff, chief Bulgarian delegate at the Peace Conference and Prime Minister at the outbreak of the second war, had the chief parts in the glories and tragedies of 1912-13. M. Gueshoff seemed a well-meaning but weak man. He was fond of insisting upon his English education and of advancing that as a proof of his complete candour. I imagine that he played no directing part in the drama of his country's sudden rise to power and more sudden fall, but did just as his king directed, sometimes probably under protest. M. Daneff was a more virile man, and his force of character, with little guidance from experience, of liberal education, or from

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wise purpose, had much to do with the downfall of Bulgaria. Of the Balkan Peace Conference which met first in London in December 1912, M. Daneff attempted from the outset to be dictator. He never lost a chance of being rude to an opponent or fulsome to a supporter. He diplomatised by pronunciamento and made a vigorous use of the

minor newspaper Press with the idea of overawing the chancelleries of Europe. I am sure that the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, had nearly as much amusement as chagrin from the incidents of the Conference. Just when the Turkish delegates were being gently coaxed up to drink the hemlock, Bulgaria would publicly dance a wild triumph of joy, and announce that the very last drop had to be absorbed or Bulgaria would not be satisfied. When the Turkish delegates were thus startled away and all the pressure of European diplomacy was being brought to bear upon the Turkish Government to bring them back to the point, Bulgaria threatened publicly to break up the Conference and resume the war. Europe was given a short time-limit in which to act.

M. Venizuelos, Prime Minister of Greece, has proved in his own country a great capacity

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for good government and wise diplomacy. There was a strong movement made at the outset of the Balkan Peace Conference to have him appointed head of the Balkan delegation. Success in that would have made the chances of peace better; and probably he had an expectation of being chosen as being the senior in official rank of all those present. But the jealousy and distrust of Greece was great: and M. Venizuelos did not prove himself the man of genius who could overcome the handicap which his nationality imposed. True, the task was almost impossible. But still nearer to the impossible would it be now to unite again the warring factions in the Balkans. M. Venizuelos, of the highest talent though he be, will not be the maker of a Balkan Confederation.

M. Nikolitch, President of the Serbian Parliament, is an amiable and clever man with far more culture than is usual in the Balkans. He has translated English classics into the Serbian tongue, and is an industrious student of social and political philosophy. But he has nothing of the brute force that is needed to control the warring passions of the Balkan States. As the Minister of a Balkan Union to a great Power he

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would be admirable, for he has tact and wit, and a knowledge of the value of truth. When it was made plain that Austria was to have her way and Serbia no territory on the Adriatic, the disappointment of

Serbia was bitter: and there was some special blame of Great Britain that she "had not considered her obvious interests," and brought this friendly little state to the sea. M. Nikolitch had the diplomat's faculty of taking a defeat smilingly. "The most unhappy thing about it," he said to me, "is that now Serbia will not have England on her frontier." It was a neat touch to speak of the sea as British territory.

There remains to be considered M. Take Jonescu, who is credited with the chief share in the unscrupulous diplomacy which has made Roumania for the while paramount in the Balkans. It was certainly a masterpiece of Machiavellianism, applying the tenets of "The Prince" with cold precision, and marks its author as the master mind of the Balkans to-day. Give such a man a good soldier people to follow him and an honest purpose, and a Balkan Confederation might be achieved, with some further blood-letting perhaps. But it is not possible to believe that the

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Roumanians, frivolous, pleasure-loving, untenacious, could impose their will for long upon the coarser-fibred but more virile Slavs of the Peninsula.

No, there is not a personality in the Balkans to-day at once forceful enough, honest enough, and skilful enough to give the Peninsula a union which would enable it by means of a bold decision now to ensure internal peace and freedom from outside interference. A great man could build up a greater Switzerland, perhaps, of the Slavs, the Greeks, and the Roumanians in the Balkan Peninsula with Great Britain, Russia, and France as joint sponsors for the freedom of the new Federation. But one hardly dares to hope for such a happy ending to the long miserable story of the Balkans.

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