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11/3

BULGARIA IN THE SECOND BALKAN WAR.

By

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(The following appreciation of the Bulgarian people and its leaders was written by Herr Harden in September 1913.)

Greeks, Serbs, Turks, Roumanians, Austrians, Germans, officials, doctors and business men, have written me or visited me. The latest were eight representatives of the city of Adrianople, Greeks and Turks, Jews and Armenians. Each one of them voiced the same note, every lip formed almost the same words, when we spoke of Bulgaria. We have been, everyone of us, deceived regarding the strength of that country, its possibilities for civilisation and the value for humanity of its people, the most contemptible simulators that ever were seen.

Since I have learned all this I understand how Stambuloff, that descendant of the Turks, ruled this horde as a terror-pasha; how the honest, physically brave but morally weak Alexander of Battenburg sought, by throwing himself at the feet of the Czar, to escape the network of assassins. I further understand why Carol of Roumania, in order to protect his kingdom against attack from these modern Huns, should have had resource to means which he would never have lowered himself to use against a civilized people. I understand why the Turks, in spite of the fact that they had signed the Treaty of London, profited by the hour of Bulgaria's helplessness to make a traitorous breach of their plighted word, in order to recapture the defenseless fortress-city of Adrianople, solemnly conceded by them, much as a duellist at the end of the combat, might attack his disarmed adversary from behind and cut him down at the moment the seconds were occupied in drawing up the protocol of the encounter.

Against this people, which has remained like Scythian beasts of prey, which is so utterly perjured and ready for any wolflike ruse or low-down treason, which with its lowering aspect looks exactly as it did in the thirteenth century, when it laid waste Thrace, against this race, this hideous product of the ancient Mongolian hordes, every weapon is lawful.

Everything that was reported to Vienna from Sofia, since the beginning of the War of the Balkan League against Turks, has been proved to be false. Everything. The Bulgarians, as they did under their John and Simeon, fought bravely, even recklessly. But their artillery, their commissariat, their sanitary corps, were completely insufficient. At Kirk-Killesse

2

411

(what was not, as they untruthfully declare, strongly fortified) and at Lule Burgas, they had opposing them the weakest Turkish contingent, men badly trained, bad shots, who went to pieces under fire.

Against better trained troops, (though two of the principal lines had been driven in by the Serbs), even before Tchataldia was reached, they could do nothing. Unless they had been supplied with Serbian munitions they could never have survived even the first quarter of the war. Without the modern heavy artillery of the Serbs they could never have taken Adrianople.

For a part of their success they have to thank the Russians, who had responded to their proclamation of a crusade against the Turks. When these left there was no more victory and glory. Their assertions that the Greeks and Serbs broke the Treaty of Alliance and plotted treason is untrue. That the Bulgarians desired to rob their allies (their helpers in time of direst necessity), of all the fruits of the War and not only plotted treason and treacherous attacks, down to the smallest detail, but also carried them out, is proved.

With the orders for a night attack in their pockets, the Bulgarian officers, on the Bregalnitzza, invited their Serbian comrades to a friendly meal, drank brotherhood with them in hypocritical celebration of the disappearance of all causes for dispute and formed groups of intimate friendship with them before the camera, and then treacherously attacked them. Not on the order of Daneff, now the scapegoat, but of Ferdinand, the all powerful.

This is unexampled in the annals of the modern European War. It was, however, the only success of the Bulgarians in the second campaign. All their other deeds of daring too, the defeats and destruction of Serbian divisions, the final splitting up of the two armies, all are impudent lies, and lies made knowingly against better knowledge. Untrue that Salonica was bought, not captured, by the Greeks, untrue that the Serbs never rendered service equal to that of the Bulgarians, untrue that a league of five nations crushed the wrecks of Ferdinand's army (which was almost annihilated before the army of King Carol crossed the Danube or Enver began his march of triumph); untrue that the Bucharest treaty of peace reduced Bulgaria and hindered her from combating the Turks (the obligation to reduce her armies in the field against Roumania, Serbia and Greece to a peace footing, did not hinder but, on the contrary, facilitated Bulgaria in concentrating all her forces against the Turks, who were not parties to that treaty.)

Roumania, which crawled like a whipped dog, was the only country against which Bulgaria had the right to be enraged and against which every Bulgar had sworn a blood feud.

But what cannot be forgiven, what can never be prescribed is the insult to humanity of such methods of warfare. That the Bulgarians destroyed with fire and sword everything they could

412

(even in Thrace where they declared they came as liberators), that they forced the inhabitants to feed them for weeks without compensation, that they stole like greedy vultures, that officers plundered the houses where they had been quartered of the most precious carpets and ornaments, that they stole the trousseaux of the young girls and carried off wood-carvings and even pianos, is the least grave. The hero Ferdinand can be forced to give up; at least the treasures stolen from the mosques.

But what about the men who were tortured and castrated, their eyes dug out, their entrails ripped from their bodies and thrust into their mouths, the mutilated and murdered children, infants and women, the ravishing of young girls and gray haired women, by six or eight armed ruffians, horrors that cannot even be imagined, perpetrated hundreds, thousands of times, crimes that can never be made good. No, those who commit such crimes have placed themselves beyond the pale of humanity.

They deny it, can they do anything else;? They demand an international committee of investigation - a clumsy subterfuge - can they in September dig up the dead bodies, hunt for the cripples and the dishonoured women? But we do not need them. We have more credible witnesses than are necessary to form a judgement. King of Greece, serious doctors of every nation, Loti and even Austrian officials. There is not the shadow of a doubt. A worthy citizen of Adrianople told me (and brought other witnesses to confirm it) that an eight year old girl belonging to his family had been ravished by three Bulgarian soldiers, and that dozens of cases could be proved in that city.

I asked the eight delegates from Adrianople, who nevertheless hate the Serbs as their enemies, if any Serbian soldiers had behaved in this infamous fashion. The answer "Not one, the behaviour and discipline of the Serbs was perfect; they paid for every single bit of food they bought."

In both wars the Serbs have held themselves the best. No lies and no boastfulness. The most rapid mobilization, the most efficient army, the most sanitary corps. How we have been deceived;