The Log of a would-be War Correspondent

Fleur W Farnsworth

THE LOG OF A WOULD-BE WAR CORRESPONDENT

THE LOG OF A WOULD-BE WAR CORRESPONDENT

BY
HENRY W. FARNSWORTH
III

NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY
1913

Published, October, 1913

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

EARLY in October, the papers began to rumour of "Trouble in the Balkans," and soon it became evident that some sort of a war was about to take place between the Balkan peoples and the Turks. This news seemed to be received with calm interest by the public, but in me it started a veritable fire. The summer before I had travelled through Bulgaria and Servia on my way to Constantinople, and those two names brought a host of memories to my mind. Servia I thought of as a land of grey, rocky hills, of gorges and swift, reddish rivers. I could taste again the strongly flavoured wine of the country and see with startling exactness the flocks of goats climbing the hillsides. At night when the train stopped at a station, the air was warm, fresh and clear; and splendid, wild-looking men strutted up and down on the

platform, wearing peasant costumes and puffing long thin cigarettes. Young girls ran about with baskets of fruit and cried out laughingly to each other. Everybody carried themselves with an indescribable freedom and pride. Something in the feline poise of the men, and their bristling mustachios made me think of Dumas' stories of the Tartars of Derbend.

Bulgaria was a more complex reminiscence. I remembered a very pretty woman who came to meet a friend getting off at Sophia. The hills were more wooded and the landscape seemed larger. At that time I had written home that I wanted to go shooting in the Bulgarian Mountains. We passed many villages, dirty and crowded together. There seemed to be more cultivation; but yet the same atmosphere of health and pride and wildness prevailed. I saw several goatherds carrying guns; all wore the national costume.

Early in the morning we passed the Turkish frontier at Mustapha Pasha. Some

troops were drilling in a field beside the tracks. Two men on camels provided the music. One gave the time with a kettledrum, and the other on a shrill fife played endless variations of an eastern theme, always marking the time with emphasis and swaying about on his camel. The landscape was big, with undulating lines of green hills. There were few trees and little or no cultivation. The villages were even more dirty and crowded, with an atmosphere of picturesque calm. Just before reaching Constantinople we passed some old Byzantine fortifications, crumbling and grand.

These impressions of the different countries, although hazy, were yet very strong in my mind. They were all wide of the actual facts in many ways. Indeed, I never saw any other camels in European Turkey. But in the time that I began to read of the coming war in those regions, I was ignorant of this. One morning, going in to Boston on the train, I read that Montenegro had

declared war and that the rest were sure to follow. What meant to me the "Balkans" came surging into my mind; and there was born an irresistible impulse to be in that war myself.

GETTING UNDER WAY

CHAPTER I

GETTING UNDER WAY

I HAD not the remotest idea of how to see a war, or, what was more important at the time, of how to get the opportunity to go. As I had literary aspirations I quickly decided that I should become a correspondent, and fancied that many newspapers would be glad to pay my expenses out there. A visit to a newspaper office in Boston dashed those rosy hopes; but only served to convince me that war-corresponding was my mission in life. A trip to New York proved equally unprofitable. The next morning I appeared in my father's office and unfolded my plans to him. He was to send me out there, and once there, I was to write articles that every paper would be eager to get at any price. In two days my father was at least sure of

my earnestness and took the situation seriously. He talked with many men who all thought the thing ridiculous, and a man who knew the Balkans assured me that it would be impossible to see anything or get anywhere near the front. Yet in some way my cause gathered headway. I learned that letters of introduction to influential people were considered of assistance, and my father began to get them for me. By some tacit consent, instead of seeking advice as to whether to go or stay, I began to get tips on where to go, what sort of things to take and information about the different nations concerned.

Some six days after my own useless trip to New York, I made another with a letter from my father to a friend of his, influential in literary circles. Owing to the kindness and influence of this man, I came back armed with a magnificent letter stating that I was "writing for a well-known weekly, and any favours suitable to such a position shown

to me would be appreciated by them." I also had good assurance that an official letter to all the Consular offices and to the Diplomatic services, requesting that favour be shown me would be sent to me later. It was then assumed that I should go to the war. How, was a different matter.

I had a notion that the Greeks were the most civilised of the fighters, and that with them I should have the best chance of seeing at least something. Also I believed that with them the language would be less of a handicap, as all the educated ones spoke French and I knew that fairly well. All this, however, I considered of little importance as compared with getting started, and accordingly, I took passage to London by the next steamer, saying that I should have to go there anyway and from there could decide where to go next. I took with me a few clothes in which to present a good appearance along with my letters of introduction, some flannel shirts, riding breeches, a waterproof cloak

and ulster, two pairs of army blankets, a letter of credit, an automatic pistol, a passport and my precious letters—to missionaries, diplomats, bankers and journalists.

On the steamer I was in eager hopes of finding some professional war-correspondent, for as yet I was totally ignorant of any method of procedure. Nor could any soul that I met give me any actual information on the subject. I spent the time in reading a history of the Balkans, and metaphorically chafing the bit.

My first visit in London was to the Embassy. There for the first time, I found encouragement and advice. Here, going to the Balkans, was not looked upon as a preposterous wild-goose chase. Two men came in who expected to go themselves.

A seasoned journalist was there, and I was able to get some experienced and most useful advice. Discipline, I learned, in a beaten army is apt to be relaxed, therefore, for the

purposes of an outsider, it provides an easier chance for seeing things. This was very wise counsel and for the first time put the idea of going with the Turks into my head. A friend of my father's was good enough to give me some letters to English correspondents already in the various different lands that made up "the front." I bought a waterproof sleeping-bag to cover my blankets and left for Paris.

In Paris I met a friend who suggested, half humorously, that I go with the Turks as a sutler. He was a much-travelled and well-informed young man, and knew that the Ottoman government would not have any adequate commissariat arrangements. His theory was that by loading up some pack-horses with rice, and small necessaries, and selling them at reasonable prices to the soldiers, I would make myself persona grata with the army, and be able to travel about, unmolested by officials. I was delighted with this idea and left the same night for Vienna.

While still in America, it seemed as if Vienna were almost at the scene of action. On arrival there I found that the actual state of affairs was little different from Paris or London. Great interest was taken in the latest news from the war; but the news was no better there than elsewhere; and the "front" seemed quite as remote a place as it did in the west of Europe. Then I began to deliver my letters. At the American Embassy I found the Chargé d'Affaires greatly perplexed. A notable had just died in America and he had just received a telegram directing him to show suitable mourning. As the Embassy is in an office building, and at the back of it, it is difficult to make a very dignified display of any sort. The Chargé introduced me to the Turkish minister, the first educated Turk I had ever met. He received my scheme of camp-following with polite interest, and gravely expressed a hope that it would be successful and thanked me for wishing to aid the Otto-

man cause. Even now I cannot imagine what he really thought about the matter. I had also letters to an Austrian count and his sister. The count was also a general, but did not offer any advice to me, except to say that sometimes the life of a camp-follower is a hard one. His sister was a charmingly simple and enthusiastic lady of forty. She was wild to join the Servian Red Cross Society and work in the field. For a while I wavered in my purpose and thought seriously of joining the Red Cross Society, but by this time I had well in mind a vision of myself, armed to the teeth, attended by a similarly armed attendant, arriving with a small pack-train at a Turkish encampment, pitching a tent and, while the attendant sold cigarettes, warm gloves, etc., to the soldiers, I would be—in an undefined way—making scoops of news and hastily covering pages with valuable notes. This mental picture proved so attractive that I suddenly crammed everything into my trunk and, after an hour's

wait at the station, took an early afternoon train to Budapest.

I had meant to spend the night and the following day there, and pick up the Orient Express for Bucharest on the following night. I found the Hotel Bristol full, and as it was cold and rainy, I decided to take an evening train, a slow one, without waiting for the Express. The train was crowded, and at about ten o'clock two large, prosperous peasant women came into my compartment and began to undress as far as the decencies would allow. It was exasperating. Then a Magyar conductor appeared and looked very dubiously at my ticket. A spirited discussion arose between us, neither understanding the other, and he left, grumbling. Just then the train began to slow down, and on the spur of the moment, I grabbed my valise, and, when it stopped, got off at what proved to be a small Magyar village.

There was a small hotel and bar-room near the station. Although after twelve

o'clock, the place was blazing with light. I walked into Fairyland. Everybody who has read "The Cossacks" will have some idea of what the men and women in that place were like. A gypsy orchestra of five pieces was playing; some men were playing billiards and between shots dancing a few steps with "Merry Widow"-like girls in peasant costume. The room was dirty and smelled of garlic; but the rhythm and beauty and pride and vigour of carriage of those people were to me what Homer was to Keats. In one corner of the room alone, behind a huge, long glass of red wine, sat a tiny little man, all hunched up, with a long worm-eaten moustache, a little shabby brown overcoat and battered Derby hat. I thought at first he was asleep; but he kept puffing at a thin Hungarian cigarette and taking sips of his wine. Everything about him was insignificant and forlorn, but somehow I found that I kept watching him. There was a devil of some sort in the bedraggled little figure.

After he had finished four glasses, he suddenly rapped on the table with a coin and caught the eye of the first violin. The orchestra stopped in the middle of the Rigoletto quartette, and the violin went over and talked with him at his table. Then they began a Magyar dance, and the little man led them. All in a flash his insignificance had left him, and he became Svengali in the flesh. He used no baton, but he held them with his glittering eye, kept the time with his head and eyebrows, made grand Comédie Française gestures with his arms, and making fantastic images with his hands expressed exactly the "abandon" of the music. Nobody could paint his hands but Goya, they were beautifully shaped, and as wild and inhuman as a bird.

Although he spoke no language that I knew, my admiration was so patent that we became quite intimate and after some more wine, he produced a violin from under the table and played a concerto with the xylo-

phone. It was evidently something well known, for from time to time the women took it up and sang in a desperately mournful way, often repeating the word "Magyar."

It is some months now since I heard the man play and I am not writing in the heat of the moment; but he taught me that there is something in Tolstoi's attitude toward music. I don't suppose the man could read a note. I know that he did not seem to know the names of Wagner or Beethoven. Pure, wild folk-music, the expression of a race, expressed with no consciousness and no rules, is yet as true music as the greatest symphony.

He took some money I gave him, but would not play again. The proprietor of the place said that he was merely a travelling musician who stayed a few days in a town and then moved on. He said everybody knew him, and that he did not often play himself, although he was fond of leading the others; that he was poor and a drunkard. Yet I

noticed that everybody treated him with respect. In the morning I got another train for Bucharest and the incident was closed, but the glory can never depart.

Bucharest is a fascinating city, and one that has a strong personality of its own. Almost all the houses are white, either of stone or stucco; and the architecture, although indigenous, resembles the late renaissance chateau type of France. The best quarters have a very gala appearance, an appearance in this case which is not deceitful, for it is distinctly a "gay city."

The army is here very much in evidence. All the crack regiments are quartered in the town during the winter. The officers are chosen carefully and there is a high standard of money, birth, popularity and personal appearance. The result is a large set of very handsome, gorgeously uniformed and dashing young men who have little to do and sufficient money to demand continuous and satisfactory amusement. This in turn

results in theatres, operas, concerts, varieties and cabarets. French seems to be spoken by everybody, and altogether it is, I think, an ideal city for the tourist not solely immersed in galleries and relics of the past.

I had expected to find great Russian influence. But the contrary was the case. Only cab-drivers seem to have anything Russian about them. They wear huge coats and seem equally imbecile. The streets are named after the cabinet officers and prominent party politicians, and change with every government. Hence there is no way of giving an address as nobody tries to remember the names of any but the most important streets. You are supposed to know where you want to go and how to get there and to direct the driver by poking him on the side to which he is to turn. Another of the town oddities is the hall porter at the hotel "L'Hotel des Boulevards." When I arrived—having telegraphed three days previously—he told me that the place was full and not a room was to

be had. I happened to mention this later on in the day to the American minister who greeted the news, much to my surprise, with a laugh. He explained to me that the old porter liked to keep about half the hotel empty in case somebody of great importance, or somebody that he personally knew and approved of, might suddenly turn up. When I appeared later at the place with a man from the ministry, I found that I was, without any excuses being made, treated with great courtesy.

In one other point the city resembles Russia and that is in keeping extraordinarily late hours. While I was there a new Varieté and Cabaret combined was opened. The posters announcing the programme for the opening night are worth quoting:

"A minuit, le cabaret est ouvert et le soupé commencera a deux heures grand bal a quatre heures le second soupé—et a cinque heures grand surprises."

Here news from the war was feverishly sought after. Although the London papers had better and more recent news, yet many extras came out and the streets were filled with bawling newsboys. I was unable to get any exact information which would be of use to me in my camp-following scheme. The Turkish army seemed as much an unknown quantity here as in New York or Vienna. There was some talk of intercepting the steamer service between Constanza (the Roumanian port) and Constantinople, so I decided to push on by the next boat. The night before I left, at about midnight, a newspaper extra appeared, stating that the Turks had been defeated in a great battle at Lule Burgas. The news was received with astonishment.

The boat leaves Constanza at midnight, and the train arrives at ten-thirty. On the night I was sailing a cold rainstorm set in, making the night black as pitch. There were only a half a dozen passengers and

they all went directly to their staterooms; but I was too excited thinking of what was before me to sleep, and stayed up on deck. By the light of two flaring arc-lamps, they were hurriedly loading stacks of flour-bags on to the boat, and even piling them on the steerage deck under tarpaulins. They were behindhand with the work and officers were continually bawling at them, and the donkey-engines ran at a desperate speed. Under the conditions it was easy to put some of the drama and rush of war time into the scene. At last I seemed to have the feeling of actually getting on the outskirts of the turmoil and vortex that I imagined must be going on somewhere. Excited visions of thrilling incidents at the front, batteries coming into action at a gallop and dangerous night rides à la Kipling to be the first with the news, kept me up late, walking about the deck in the rain. I woke up late in the morning to find the weather warm and sunny, and the mouth of the Bosporus

just showing up on the horizon ahead of us.

The summer before I had taken horses and made a short trip to a reservoir which feeds one of the Byzantine aqueducts of Constantinople. The place was in the hills near the Black Sea at the mouth of the Bosporus, and the warm, pleasant air, well-grown trees and ancient, peaceful atmosphere had made a lasting impression on me. Now I found, to my surprise, nothing changed, although early in November. The sun was still hot and many fishing boats were idling along the sides of the ship-channel. The boat steamed peacefully along through the usual throng of small sail-boats with lateen sails and big clumsy row-boats with high pointed ends. On the hills small flocks could be seen grazing; in the valleys, close down by the water, the villas of the rich people seemed opened and inhabited. Nobody ignorant of the last month's events could have guessed that Turkey was at war, and had

just suffered a terrible defeat. In the harbour of Constantinople were some half dozen men-of-war, all displaying many lines of washing to the sun, and otherwise everything was as I had left it in August. There was the usual delay and clamour about landing, and if possible, more porters and dragomen and idlers and beggars had managed to get inside the custom-house gates, all dressed in their gaudy but dingy colours. Across the Golden Horn, over in Stamboul, rose the domes and white minarets of the mosques. On the Galata bridge was the usual crowd of loafers, and at the wharves under the bridge the constant turmoil of ferryboats colliding and small craft getting in everybody's way was going on with the usual accompaniment of guttural cries.

I got hold of a Pera Palace dragoman and went through the customs with little trouble. They seemed to examine the passports with less care than in peaceful times. Once clear of the crowd, the dragoman plunged into an

excited flow of talk. As the two miserable horses scrambled madly up the steep cobble-stoned hill that winds up from Galata, the Greek quarter to Pera, the European quarter, he explained that all the good horses had been taken by the government. He asked me anxiously for news and said that nothing had been announced by the Turkish and Young Turk newspapers, except that the army was retreating from Lule Burgas. Without waiting for a reply he plunged into a long account of how his cousin had talked with a soldier who had come from Kirk-Kilisseh and how he had learned from him that the Bulgarian cannon shot twice as far as those of the Turks. He was so much excited by his own talk that he had only a few minutes to tell me of his own virtues as a dragoman before we arrived at the hotel.

The Pera Palace Hotel is in many ways a remarkable place and deserves some description. It is owned and run by the "Waggon Lits Co." For some years past it has been

the only hotel in the town with any pretensions to being smart and respectable for foreigners and has accumulated something of the atmosphere of a national institution. Its own dignity weighs heavily upon it, and each servant connected with it feels some of this dignity has fallen upon his shoulders. No attempt has been made to provide "local colour" for the tourists. The restaurant is much the same as on the best Waggon Lits trains, such as the Orient Express. The servants are mostly French, Swiss and German. They all talk French and many of them dabble in English. As in all eastern hotels the hall porter is a man of much distinction. In this case he is a Greek, but apparently speaks all languages with equal ease. His information is varied, exact and all-embracing. The man who filled the place before him lost his head after the uprising of Abdul Hamid after the Constitution. He was used as a means of communication between the leaders of the insurrection. The

entrance hall is large and quietly decorated, with something dingy about it. Constantinople is the dingiest as well as one of the most magnificent cities of the world. There is a large afternoon tea-room with a table full of newspapers, two windows at one end, many lounging chairs in red morocco and decorated with Parian and black marble in stripes. Part of this room goes clear up to the roof and the bedroom floors make galleries around it. There is also a small, but very resourceful bar and another large room, hung with Oriental rugs advertising the "Maison Sadullah et Robert Levy," which serves as coffee and smoking-room. This faces the "grand rue de Pera" and it is amusing to sit in the lounging chairs by the windows and watch the extraordinary crowd of Europeans, Turks and Levantines always passing. It is customary for beggars to catch the eyes of a tourist and make beseeching faces at him and even to rap on the window until given something or chased

away by a porter. The crowd in the hotel is a very cosmopolitan gathering, English, German, French, American, Russian, Turk, Arab, Greek and rich Armenian Jews abound. They have always been very friendly with the Turk and get more tolerance here than in Europe. Living at the Pera Palace is something like being on a steamer which puts into an eastern port, a North German Lloyd steamer rather than a P. and O. There is one room and bath to be had at a prohibitive price. This occurs on the first floor, and on each of the others are two bathrooms. None of them are vulgarly ornate. The hotel is situated between the "Club," a club of all nations in which baccarat flourishes, and a large garden with open air theatre, restaurant and every opportunity for the consumption of absinthe. At the time that I arrived, posters announcing the visit of some well-known French actress were still up; but the garden was closed on account of the cold nights.

MANŒUVRING FOR A START

CHAPTER II

MANŒUVRING FOR A START

The afternoon of my arrival I went to see the American minister, fully expecting to obtain a full pass to the front. To my bitter disappointment, I was told that a notice had been sent to all the legations that no more petitions for passes to journalists or others be sent to the Ottoman government. It further stated that no more foreigners would be allowed within the lines under any conditions, whether petitions should be presented in form from the legations or no. I knew nothing of the Turks at the time, and the emphatic language of the note seemed terribly final. I thought that all my hopes and ambitions were utterly knocked on the head, and it seemed too hard to bear. The minister evidently understood my feelings, for

he very kindly explained that while he could do nothing for me, the matter was probably not so black as it looked, and suggested that a visit with an interpreter to the Ministry of War would surely result in my seeing some one of importance, possibly Nazim Pasha himself, and that some compromise might be effected. He counselled me very wisely that talk, if given in sufficient quantities, often could accomplish wonders with a Turkish official.

I dashed back to the hotel, hired a dragoman and started in a cab for the Ministry of War. It is a long drive, down the hill through Galata, across the bridge and a long climb up another series of hills to the highest point in Stamboul. The Ministry stands in a huge, bare parade ground, with cobbled roads running to the various gates, for the whole place is enclosed by a high iron fence. A slim round stone tower rises from an arbitrary spot within the enclosure and is used as a flag signal station and fire alarm. On

birthdays of the Prophet flags are displayed and when a fire is burning in Stamboul flags, apparently the same ones, are thrown out horizontally from an ugly balcony which protrudes near the top. In case of coincidence I do not know what would happen but believe that the precedence would go to the Prophet. The Ministry itself is a large yellow building in an ornate French style, with many embellishments of musty white woodwork. It is three stories high and built around a courtyard which is used as a stable for the horses of any high officers or ministers who may be in their offices. Those arriving in cabs use another entrance and leave their carriages at large in the enclosure.

Any foreigner whose dreams of "Oriental magnificence" should survive the exterior of the Ministry would get a rude shock on entering. Apparently there are no rooms on the ground floor and there is nothing for it but to go up a wide, muddy, much-worn wooden staircase. The first floor contains a great

number of rooms opening off a wide square gallery which runs about the courtyard. Unkempt, slovenly soldiers are always standing about, and a sprinkling of officers, always very smart and dressy, are apt to be strolling up and down in the gallery, smoking cigarettes. My dragoman seemed utterly helpless, and so, making every form of salute that I could think of, I accosted a young officer in French and told him what I wanted, which was to see somebody who might be persuaded to give me a pass to the front. The man was exceptionally polite, intelligent and attractive, and told me that I should have to have a pass signed by Nazim Pasha himself; that he was not in; but that I could see his first secretary, and very kindly took me in to him. The first secretary turned out to be a dignified, portly looking man, dressed by a London tailor, and wearing a very magnificent fez. In utter silence he shook my hand and motioned me to a seat. A servant appeared and gave me a cigarette and held

a match. When it was lighted, the dignitary began to speak in excellent English, though slowly. He said that the Ottoman government, having suffered unprecedented defeats, had now "To save our face before Europe," and that the work would be hard and desperate. That they had no time to waste in looking after the safety of foreigners who came to look on at this struggle which meant so much to them. That there was little or no food at the front and every form of inconvenience, and that I would be silly to go. I replied that I had come all the way from America to see the war, that I sympathised with the Turks, and that if they would like to have me I should like to fight in their army. He thanked me for my sentiments and said he was sorry that the authority did not rest with him to let me go; but that he would give me a letter to the Governor of Constantinople province, and it was possible that he would do something for me. He wrote the letter, holding the paper in his

left hand close up to his face, and dried the ink with sand. It gave me a strange impression to see this dignified, conventional looking gentleman writing in so weird a way.

After this interview it was too late for the Governor of Constantinople to be in, so I walked slowly towards the Pera Palace and drove the dragoman half mad with a continuous flow of questions of the "Why, mother, why?" variety.

Although often thought of solely as the Turkish capital, Constantinople is still the largest Greek city in the world, except Athens, and yet retains much of the spirit of its Byzantine days. I think much more idea of life in the Roman period can be gathered here than in any other place, if the tourist will walk about the city a great deal —not in sight-seeing trips—but as he would walk about in his native city, and ask questions about the most ordinary things, and especially about the nationalities of every different costume seen. Persians, Kurds,

Albanians, Circassians, Mohammedan Bulgarians, Arabs, Negroes, Greeks, Jews and Hindus are all to be seen and can be distinguished by their different costumes and racial traits. Something about the opinions and social position of the bona-fide Turk may be deduced from his manner of wearing the fez. A very large, deep-red, well-ironed fez, with the tassel sewed so as to fall directly at the back and worn well down over the eyes denotes invariably a rich man, a partisan of the Young Turk constitutional movement. The tassel worn at the left shows reactionary opinions and possibly a partisan of Abdul Hamid and the "good old days." A poor man can never be induced to wear his fez over his eyes, and insists on having it pushed back at a rakish angle. The Arabs often tilt it to one side and wind a gaudy piece of cloth about the head like a turban as well. A white cloth may only be worn by a priest, and a green one by a man who has been to Mecca. Of the actual city of

Constantinople I shall not try to give you any picture; as Stephane Lausanne remarks, Pierre Loti has painted it for our eyes in a way that should suffice for a century at least.

The city was under strict marshal law at this time,—for some reason or other Constantinople usually is,—and the streets of Stamboul had to be cleared at nine o'clock. Galata and Pera were given until one. After that, anybody caught in the streets was arrested and sometimes kept all night at the police-station. Small squads of soldiers, with bayonets on their rifles, trooped slowly along the main streets, making a dull clatter with their boots on the pointed cobble-stones. Gendarmes by twos and threes, armed with bayonets and automatic pistols, patrolled the smaller streets, and in the alleys and numerous unlighted impasses, skulked the typical night-guard of the Mohammedan East. These are wild-looking, dilapidated fellows, clad in robes of dark brown burlap, and

armed with heavy, rough-hewn cudgels. A new arrival, in some city of Turkey or Africa, stumbling on one of these night-guards, would surely take him for a desperate bandit. They roam about alone in dark places and call out in a wonderful guttural singsong to each other, and drop their heavy sticks on the stones so that they ring out from distant quarters of the city.

Early in the morning, I went to the Governor of Constantinople and presented my letter. This office was in an even bleaker place than the Ministry of War. The interview was just as formal and quite as fruitless. He ended by giving me a letter to some man at the Club of Young Turks. This proved to be a large place opposite the old Persian Embassy. In the courtyard some bewildered looking peasants were being taught to stand in line by a German drill-master, who roared at them like a bull. Officers, mostly young and dudish, with clanking sabres, were walking about everywhere.

The place seemed to be nothing more than an office building and a headquarters for the "political" portion of the army. The man I came to see was older and stouter than the rest of them. He seemed to be an old campaigner, and did not speak anything but Turkish. Through an interpreter, he told me with politeness but no circumlocution, that no more foreigners were wanted at the front and that he could do nothing for me and wished me good day. I went to the Ministry of War and asked everybody I saw how to get to Nazim Pasha. I was told unanimously that he was at Hardemkeni, but was expected back some time within a week, and that I could see him then. These endless delays, for I was no farther ahead in any way, made me so furious that I decided to do something that seemed like the making of progress, and that was to get a horse and be at least ready to go if anything turned up.

I made inquiries of the hotel porter and

learned of a man, an old Turk by the name of Mustafa who had four horses to sell and got hold of a Greek boy who spoke French and was known to Mustafa. The boy was despatched in search of the Turk, and after staying away two or three hours he returned and said that he had made an appointment for me to come to the stable at ten the next morning. Mustafa lived in Taxim, a poor quarter on the outskirts of the city beyond Pera. On the way out I asked the boy something about him and was told with much enthusiasm that he was a very holy man, a Turk of the old school, one of the sort that the Prophet loved and had conquered so much in his name. He turned out to look more like a monkey than any man I ever saw, old and bowed and wrinkled in villainy. He wore the traditional Turkish trousers and a dirty yellow turban. Of course he spoke no French, but he grinned and mouthed at me in a perfectly delightful way. There was something so debonair and fascinating about the old

boy, that despite our not having a common language, I was strongly tempted to take him as my servant. Later on I wished heartily that I had. His horses were miserable looking specimens with the exception of a tiny little grey stallion who turned out to be only three years old. He was only some thirteen hands high and lightly built, but he had a very gallant eye and winsome, though austere manners. Mustafa swore by the head of the Prophet and other sacred objects, and expressed a wish that the reputation of his mother and grandmother might be tarnished if he lied, that the horse was a thoroughbred Arab and truly a bright jewel among horses. After an hour's desperate haggling I bought the little horse and a wretched animal to serve as pack-horse, for a sum ten times their value in ordinary times, but as it turned out not a bad bargain as horses were selling at the time. Mustafa led the horses home for me, and on the way, having more money left than I expected, I

bought a very handsome donkey of the trotting variety which a man was leading about in the streets for hire. I also engaged the Greek boy, who was half Jew, as a servant. He told me so many times that he was a lion among men for bravery, and seemed so anxious to see the most terrible sights of war, that he completely fooled me. By the time my three animals and one servant had all got established at the Pera Palace stable and saddles and bridles had been bought, I was no longer a sane man, and secretly determined that after one more try at the War Office, I should make an attempt of some sort to get forward. That night, about sundown, two correspondents came back from the front. They had four servants, mounted and rode fine horses themselves, a light wagon with hay in the bottom and a low canvas top of the prairie-schooner type, carried their baggage and was apparently used for sleeping. The horses were all dead beat and everything was plastered in mud to a degree I believe

impossible in any place but European Turkey. Both the men wore fezzes and seemed as wearied and mud-bespattered as the rest of their belongings. It was very romantic to see them get down stiffly from their saddles and come in to the ostentatious Pera Palace as honoured guests. It really made the war seem near and real. It added fuel to my cravings to be off, and if opportunity had offered, I think I would have committed crime to steal one of the white cloths with Turkish characters printed in red on them that they each wore about the arm. They were two of the original thirty passes given to the early birds who got to the scene of action at the very start.

The next morning I went for the last time to the War Office and of course accomplished nothing. I saw the man I had seen first of all. I seemed to be coming around again on an endless chain. Outside on the parade ground a large number of peasants were being got ready to go to the front. They

were all of them volunteers, some of them from Asia Minor, and a few Albanians, always conspicuous by their white fezzes. They seemed about as ignorant and heavy-minded as bullocks, and had some difficulty in learning to lie down on their stomachs in a position suitable for shooting. They were poorly dressed, stolid and reserved. I made my servant question a number of them and they all expressed a desire to fight against the Bulgars, and contempt for those who had run away and deserted. The Turks of this class are almost universally brave, patient and honest in dealing with each other. They have wonderful power of endurance and capacity for braving the most frightful hardships. I do not think any one coming in contact with these country-bred Turkish peasants could do anything but admire and respect them. The Albanians are a different lot. They have a terrible reputation among the Christian population and the low-bred city Turks for brigandage and general law-

lessness. My Greek-Jewish boy, for instance, never failed to point out an Albanian to me, and always seemed afraid of him and made some remarks about what terrible fellows they were. There is a very strongly felt hierarchy of races among the Levantine people of Turkey. Bulgarian, Servian and Montenegrin, especially the latter, are little known to the people of Constantinople, and are regarded by them with a sort of superstitious fear. They feel that they are capable of almost anything. The Albanian is common in Constantinople and is very much the cock of the walk. They are almost always employed as night-watchmen, shepherds or anything likely to have to resist assault. A Greek, Jew or Armenian simply cringes before them but yet in an admiring way. They usually carry a knife and a huge old-fashioned revolver. I talked with several on different occasions, always through an interpreter, and always found them light-hearted, simple and friendly, and always very

conscious of their reputation for being lawless and desperate.

The Kurd comes next. These people are notable brigands in their native Kurdistan and have something of the mountaineer lithe-ness and wildness of the Albanians. They are heavier built and more reserved with strangers, in fact a little more of the traditional Turk. After these two comes the ordinary full-blooded Turk, stolid but unafraid, and capable of being roused to anger and deeds of violence. The Greeks, Armenians and Jews all cringe, more or less, before these Mohammedans, who are in fact far sturdier and more admirable men, though nothing like as nimble-witted. Greeks are all fearful talkers and boasters; but all the myriad words forever pouring out of them avail them nothing and they are universally despised by the Musselmen.

I found out somewhere that a large number of Asia Minor troops had just arrived in the city and that some four thousand of

them were quartered in the San Sophia Mosque. I dashed off and bought a fez, a cheap coloured waistcoat and went in to see them, hoping to pass off for a rich and modernised "Young Turk." Of course the mosques are usually open to all, but these Asia Minor troops were supposed to be of fanatical tendencies and not to like the idea of having Christians in the mosques. I went in by the back entrance, attended by the Greek boy, and took off my shoes in a way I tried to make a matter of course. The huge area under the dome was entirely given over to the soldiers. Rifles were stacked up in rows, making the place look like an encampment of small tents. Ammunition boxes were piled up against the wall. The soldiers were all dressed in new uniforms and many of them wore turbans made of grey woollen cloth. They were big, moustachioed, fierce-looking men, all very dark and with piercing eyes. They were supposed to be the best Turkish troops, of the sort that had been

invincible in the old days. A priest came up hurriedly to us and after speaking excitedly to the boy, this latter told me that I must go out. In the courtyard outside were many more soldiers, squatting about a very handsome fountain that is there. I must admit that they did not seem to relish my presence. On the opposite side of the street from the mosque is a very large café with many little tables on the street in the shade of some large trees. These too were all crowded with soldiers, drinking coffee and smoking water-pipes. I did not see a single officer. The men seemed very quiet and well-behaved and there was none of the noise and rowdiness that would accompany so crowded a camp of Europeans.

TAKING TO THE ROAD

CHAPTER III

TAKING TO THE ROAD

After this I got up at eight-thirty in the morning, very early indeed for Constantinople, and began the task of getting my equipment ready and overcoming the objections which the Greek began to put in the way of making a start. The equipment was very much of the Spartan order, as I knew that thieves abounded in Turkey even in times of peace. On the pack-horse I put a bag of rice, some bread, a sort of Turko-Italian sausage that passed for salami, some tins of sardines and a bottle of duzico. This latter is the Turkish national drink and roguish Mohammedans will tell you that while the Prophet forbade the drinking of wine to his followers, he commended duzico and claimed for it a heavenly origin. I believe this is

untrue; but it is a very serviceable liquor, being cheap and notably warming. It is water-colour and tastes not unlike sweetened vodka. It is not very strong. I took for myself some clean underclothes in a canvas bag, a couple of army blankets rolled up in a waterproof sheet and provided a blanket bought in the bazaar for the Greek. I also presented him with a pair of puttees by way of uniform. My pockets were stuffed with camera films, boxes of cigarettes, cartridges, knives, etc. I carried a 9 mm. Parabellum automatic pistol and gave the Greek a dagger very much at his own request.

By ten o'clock I was under way, my miniature stallion, newly shod, carrying me with apparent ease, the Greek riding the trotting donkey and leading the miserable pack-horse. It was a glorious, warm autumn morning. I had no idea whatever of the roads, the conditions of the country, even the distance to the front; and the delightful part was that all this made no difference. I carried

a money-belt full of gold and had all the necessaries of life with me. To the north lay a district from which emanated wild rumours of defeat, rout and disaster. I had only to ride steadily along and adventure was bound to await me in the path. I have never felt so much a free unit in the world as on that morning. I felt that I had suddenly become a full-fledged adventurer and glowed with enthusiasm and whistled loudly the Eroica Symphony and bawled at the slow-moving Turks in the road and pushed my horse through the crowds with unwonted rudeness and confidence. For six miles the road led through small huddled villages beside the Sea of Marmora, and then passing under the ancient Byzantine aqueduct at Heptopolis, you come out suddenly on to a broad rolling landscape of green hills running in ridges east and west, the "Turkey" that I had remembered from the summer before. A good road stretched out before us with the sea on one hand and the railroad track on

the other. Pretty soon a long train came slowly by. It was mostly made up of freight cars, and it was full of soldiers, many of them showing bloody bandages, and looking pitifully ill and dazed with suffering. They were crowded in on top of each other in a shocking way, and I did not hear a single voice. They were all silent. My Greek was very much impressed by the sight. He had been rather dour all the morning as he did not approve of starting alone and without numerous passes. He now became suddenly disgustingly voluble and began to relate, or rather invent, frightful stories of brigands that overran this part of the country. He began a dissertation on the latent savagery of the Turkish mind, and claimed that every one of them was a cold-blooded murderer at bottom, and that they detested Christians and more especially English and American Christians. I knew very well that this was the exact opposite of the truth, for it was Austrians and Russians that they feared and

rather looked toward England as a possible ally. I reminded him of his glowing description of the excessive holiness of old Mustafa, hoping to confound him with his own words. I ought to have known that this was a futile effort in dealing with a Greek Jew, or in fact any Oriental, and he was not in the least abashed, but replied brazenly that old Mustafa was little better than a brigand. On being questioned he explained that his piety was of the old sort, a piety of outward symbols and inward wickedness. When times were hard and he had no horses to sell, the old wretch would take a rifle which he had stolen from an English gentleman that hired him as horseman on a trip and go up on "the mountain over by the sweet waters of Europe," and that there he would sometimes "catch a rich man and rob him whether he were a Mohammedan or not." His political views also were of the worst sort, and he spoke with regret of the fine days before the Constitution when a Turk

was really free. He was even believed to have fought for Abdul Hamid during the short insurrection at the time when Mahmout Chefket Pasha marched on the city at the head of the army of Macedonia.

While still on this subject we came upon an encampment of refugee peasants. The wagons were formed in a circle, the bullocks were grazing a short distance away, a flock of goats and sheep was near at hand. There were six wagons, each one of them belonging to a separate family. I saw only three or four men, but women and children of all ages were plentiful and the latter played noisily among the carts. The little girls were very pretty and some of the younger women, carefully veiled, were handsome and fine looking. Nobody seemed especially downcast and some of the party were about the sort of work that usually has to be done in camps. They said that they came from Kirk-Kilisseh and that there was no food at all "up there," pointing to the north, and that

the Bulgarians were terrible. None of them had actually seen any Bulgarians at all; but that is what some deserting soldiers had told them.

By the right road it is only twelve miles to San Stefano, where I had meant to stop for lunch and to decide then how best to go on. But my Greek, Roberto by name, was soon discovered to know nothing of the roads and it was four o'clock before we got there. San Stefano is a fairly large Greek town with a church and a school. In summer it is sort of a cheap resort on Sunday, and in the spring and fall there is snipe shooting to be had, and quantities of ducks. There is a small harbour and a long pier. At the shore end of the pier is the "Grand-Palace" hotel, a two-story affair, painted white and surrounded by a meagre garden and a high, well-constructed wall. In the rear is a stable that is more fit for a hen house. The façade is about twenty feet from the water, a cobble-stone street running along

the very edge of the sea in the manner of the main street of Smyrna. A Greek owns and runs the hotel, and is a man of some intelligence. From him I learned that Kutchuk-Chekmendje was the next village on the way to the front, distant some four miles. He said he thought it quite possible that I would be stopped there, as a bridge must be crossed and this was patrolled. I was in no mood to stay at San Stefano merely because the day was closing and the hotel looked fairly comfortable, so,—much to the chagrin of Roberto, who groaned with every move and said his donkey would surely kill him,—on we started. The sun set in a glorious red blaze, lighting up the islands on the horizon, and a little crescent moon came into view. In fifteen minutes it was dark and Roberto began to get seriously frightened; although he struggled to put his fears into a convincing and logical shape, he could not find any adequate reason except the dark for his terror. The horses were tired and walked

along with their heads down. On both sides of the road fires showed where peasants, coming into Constantinople, were encamped. After a while we came to an encampment of soldiers on the side of the road, and suddenly a man stepped out in front of us with his rifle levelled full at us. I had been studying Turkish all day and hastily called out "Muk pir gazetas," which means "I am a correspondent." This did not change the situation a particle, so we all stayed perfectly still for some seconds. Then another man appeared and began talking to Roberto. I caught Roberto using the two words "Americale," American, and "Dehli," which means "fool," so I began repeating my phrase about being a correspondent. He bowed very politely and when I said "Good-evening" in Turkish, he smiled as if delighted, saluted and made a long speech. Roberto then told me that he was the commander of the place and that we should have to go up to his tent. The sentry held the

horses and we went in. It was a large tent, lighted by a lantern. A sabre and pistol and epaulettes were the decorations, and articles of clothing were scattered about. He sat on a box of cartridges and I sat on the camp bed and Roberto stood between us and interpreted. I admit I was prepared to become a prisoner or even taken for a spy and began to present an American passport, which as it had taken me to Turkey once before and through Russia was literally covered with visé stamps and looked very impressive. It did not interest him at all and he made a very long speech to Roberto and kept smiling apologetically at me. It turned out that he was very sorry to incommode me, that he held all Americans in only high esteem, but that his orders were strict that none should pass without a pass signed by the Minister of War. He had a high regard for the duties of hospitality and felt very nervous about asking me a favour, coffee was to be brought immediately, war times were

not like those of peace and exceptions must be made even in the sacred rights of hospitality—would I give him a cigarette? I could hardly believe my ears; apparently that was the chief reason for my arrest. I had a box of twenty good ones and presented them with a deep bow. He pressed my hand tenderly and gurgled with joy. He was an officer, risen from the ranks by prowess on the field, a Kurd, six feet tall, bristling with hair and a regular picture of the "Terrible Turk." His gratitude for that box of cigarettes lasted something over six weeks. I saw him several times later on and we always met like brothers. Coffee came and after drinking it, it was decided that a soldier should take me back to San Stefano. Roberto's fears were quieted and we arrived at the hotel peacefully at nine o'clock, and each ate an enormous dinner. It had been a hard day for my little stallion and I was overjoyed to see him dig in to a large measure of oats with an appetite that bespoke a perfect con-

stitution. Donkeys are always supposed to stand anything, and the pack-horse always looked as if he would die the next minute anyhow.

That night I was the only guest in the hotel, but at breakfast the next morning an insignificant little man was ushered into my room—parties considered of the "quality" or likely to pay their bills were always given a private dining-room—and explained himself in broken English that he had once been in America, a ticket-seller in Chicago, where he had an uncle. I was far from interested in his travels in my country; but when he went on to say that he was managing a farm some three miles beyond Kutchuk-Chekmendje the situation changed. I had him sit down to breakfast and it turned out that he was a Roumanian, and had a carriage that he had left in the village, and that he was going back to his farm that morning and thought that if I went with him they would surely let me through. Roberto drew me aside and

announced in a stage whisper that the man was a villain, and that once he got me inside the lines he would surely rob me. He was told to go out and saddle the horses and to try to learn never to speak unless spoken to. Willy was the name of the farmer, and he turned out to be a very nice little man. I told him I was not as yet an actual correspondent but that I hoped to be one. He had heard of Harvard College while in America and admitted that he, too, was something of a literary man, and wished that he had more education than he had. At the bridge I got into Willy's wagon and his man rode my little horse, and we passed with flying colours. I saw nothing of my friend of the night before, and on hearing the story Willy said that it was probable that he thought it more tactful to stay in his tent.

Kutchuk-Chekmendje — meaning "little lake"—is at the mouth of a long inlet to the sea. It is about ten miles from Biuk-Chek-

mendje—"big lake"—and this latter is at the Sea of Marmora end of the Tchatalja lines. A good road connects the two Chekmendjes and is part of the main highway of the peninsula, going north and south. This main road was filled, as far as eye could reach, with a slow-moving line of peasant carts. The women rode in the wagons, the children drove the flocks and the men urged on the bullocks. No sound came from the caravan but the creaking of yokes and wheels. Occasional soldiers—evidently wounded—or stragglers trudged along the side of the road. Some of them rode pitiful looking horses, perched up on the great Oriental packsaddles which completely cover a horse's back. The whole procession plodded along in deadly silence. Many dead horses and bullocks were lying along the side of the road, pointing the way that other refugees had taken. Heavy, sullen birds and odious, red-mouthed slinking dogs, hung around the outskirts. Even Willy's chatter was stilled

as we met this stoic exodus from the fields of the war ahead of us.

His farm proved to be an attractive place on the sea, with the customary rolling hills. Three wounded officers were quartered there and one of them spoke French. He told me about the battle of Lule Burgas, and the retreat after it. He did not think that any fighting would take place for a week; but then he thought that there would be a general assault on the Tchatalja lines. And the outcome of that, none might tell. People said the new troops from Asia Minor were like lions, but no troops would be like lions long, under a heavy fire, without ammunition and without food. His own troops had held out in this condition for twenty-four hours, but perhaps now there would be more organisation. The Turks had their honour to save and it must be done somehow. He said that there was a bridge at Biuk-Chekmendje that the Bulgarians might try to cross. The Turks had mined it and there were war-ships

in the harbour; but the fortifications of that end of the line were held by weak troops and were destitute of artillery. Perhaps the break would come there. "Dehli" Fouart Pasha was in command of some of the Asiatic troops and he had made a speech to his men, commanding them to turn their rifles on him if he was seen to hesitate or turn from the forefront of the battle. This pasha was very old and a friend of Abdul Hamid, also a member of a very powerful family.

It was half-past three in the afternoon before I left the farm and started on, Roberto on the brink of mutiny and grumbling continually to himself, like a kettle boiling slowly.

After riding across the fields for an hour we struck the high-road again. The line of peasant wagons had disappeared and only a few straggling soldiers were to be seen. The road wound about in the hills so that it was hard to see ahead, and we came suddenly upon a small troop of cavalry water-

ing their horses at a fountain. In Turkey fountains are placed apparently haphazard along the road. There were no buildings within sight of this one. Before I could realise what he was about, Robert had ridden up and began talking to an officer. By the grace of God the man knew French or I don't know what would have happened; surely I would have been sent back to San Stefano again. Roberto had asked, evidently with malice prepense, the way to Tchatalja. I explained that I was visiting my bosom friend at his farm and had no intentions of going any farther, and claimed to be afraid that I might have got close enough to the front to be in danger and turned about as if going back. Roberto was told that if he ever dared to open his lips again under any conditions whatever, that he would be treated far worse by me than any Bulgarian would ever bother to, even if he was taken for a spy. He instantly and garrulously replied with a hideous description of the poverty of

his old mother and beautiful young innocent sister, both dependent upon him. This lasted until the troop left the fountain and then on we went, more cautiously. The sun set at half-past five, just as we began to wind up a long, steep hill, almost a mountain. We soon ran into the end of a long line of commissariat wagons, water wagons and ammunition carts, struggling up the grade amidst a pandemonium of hoarse cries, cracking whips and creaking wheels and the horses struggling and stumbling desperately. Officers on foaming horses cheered them all on and bawled directions. Their progress was fearfully slow, and they halted about every hundred yards. I drew my pistol and showed it to Roberto, and swore with frightful oaths that I would murder him in his sleep if he once opened his mouth for any purpose whatever, until I had given him permission. I also promised to give him all the duzico he could drink when we stopped for the night. The troops took up all the road but we got

along on the soft ground beside it without any one paying any attention to us. The footing was bad and it soon became quite dark, except for the pale shimmer of light of the little crescent moon. The road took a turn and the top of the hill came into view. It apparently was a narrow ridge with the road along the middle of it. Against the sky-line I could make out troops moving along at the same slow pace, and thought I could discern eight guns; but of this I was not by any means sure. From where we were, the rise to the ridge was very steep and the road wound away to the left, following a less steep grade, and was lost in the darkness. While I stood there a horseman loomed up, coming at a trot down the hill. It turned out to be an Austrian correspondent riding a magnificent big bay horse, and followed by a servant. He told me that the correspondents were going to be sent back from the front, but that if I stayed where I was I should probably not be bothered that

night as long as I did not light a fire. He also said nothing would ever be done to me more serious than being arrested for the night and possibly sent back to Constantinople under an escort. He thought that very doubtful, as long as I appeared always to be, wherever I was, on business. He said he himself was going to San Stefano to get a good dinner. This was cheering news and I decided to camp where I was for the night. Roberto was given a huge meal of bread and salami and sardines and copious duzico which cheered him enormously. He once again became as brave as a lion—a very mellow lion—and promised never to be naughty again and assured me many times that I was always quite safe while he was about. Nothing could happen to me while he yet drew breath. Some of the troops bivouacked for the night about half a mile below us on the hill, but the great part of them kept on toiling upwards all night. By two o'clock the sky-line was free of their silhouettes and deep silence reigned,

It was cold and the stars shone brightly from a black sky.

I was up with the first light and under way by sunrise. The roads were deserted and we pushed ahead fast, that is about six miles per hour. After crossing the ridge, the road went up the middle of a wide field, rising gently, with the top of the rise in view some two miles ahead. A great number of dead buffalo and horses lay about and a big, gaunt, grey horse with his whole back one awful sore wandered miserably about, picking at the thin, beaten-down grass. Some vultures flew about, but nothing made any noise, and the sun shone out bright and hot.

As we came out over the top of the rise it was like popping into another world. Far down below lay the lake and valley of Biuk-Chekmendje; and to the right, huddled on the crest of the hill, was the Turkish camp, a horde of low, brown tents all pitched in together and swarming with slow-moving,

brown-uniformed men, and sending up smoke from four or five large fires. Below was the sea and in the harbour seven war-ships were lying quietly at anchor, their flags fluttering lazily in the breeze. A point of land jutted out, making the mouth of the lake, and a long white bridge crossed over to another point. The lake ran inland some five miles and was about a mile broad; at the end of the lake was a marsh and then the valley broadened out and ran up in an easterly direction. I knew it went up to Derkos on the Black Sea which formed the other end of the Tchatalja lines. Across the valley a range of hills, steep and high, ran parallel to the range I was on, and somewhere behind these hills, the Bulgarians were lurking, and nobody knew when or where the assault would begin.

For a long time Roberto and I sat on our horses and looked at the wonderful panorama, gradually taking in the details. At the Turkish end of the bridge was a village of some

two hundred houses with two white minarets. And on the far side of the lake, snuggled in among the hills, was a smaller village, and far to the right still another one. A long way up the valley, and almost in the middle of it, I could just make out a large camp and see the smoke from its fires. We could see large birds whirling over the lake below us and it was very still. It was a Sunday morning and I remember thinking that only church bells were needed to point the feeling of calm and security which prevailed on that balmy morning. The troops that were hurrying on so desperately the night before had vanished utterly and everybody seemed to be basking in the peaceful scene. To the left the hills ran down gradually to the sea, broken up into all manner of miniature shapes, and some five hundred yards below a man was ploughing in a little valley. While I was mooning over the view, my eye was startled by a flash and a puff of white smoke from the largest boat, and with an ear-split-

ting crack, a shell went screaming through the air. Very faintly we could hear it bursting somewhere behind the opposing hills. The echoes rolled away and everything was as still as before.

DRIFTING ALONG THE LINES

CHAPTER IV

DRIFTING ALONG THE LINES

It was evident that I had reached the "front"; in fact, it suddenly came to me that I was actually on the firing line. It was a pleasant thought in itself; but one that opened the way to an endless vista of dilemmas and new problems. Now that I had arrived, I felt it incumbent on me to do something about it; but what was to be done? The distances were enormous; the enemy was not even located. I felt very shy about being seen, as I was in terror of being sent back—and most shocking of all was the quiet calm and peace of the scene. I sat on my horse and lit a cigarette and waited for inspiration and tried to think what was the best thing to do. After ten minutes the ship fired again, but nobody seemed to pay any

attention to this. In order to do something I began to look about for a secure place to make a camp. I soon was fixed in a little valley, where I could not be seen from the Turkish encampment, and could get a good view of the harbour and valley. Everything was arranged by nine o'clock. The ship kept on firing every ten minutes and I sat and watched it for an hour, and felt excessively inefficient and lonely.

The hour seemed very long and at the end of it I rehearsed to Roberto the grim fate that waited him if he should neglect to bridle his tongue, and took him with me to reconnoitre the camp. Most of the men had gone away somewhere, and a long double line of pack-horses was winding over the steep road going to and from the village. They were apparently taking out stores kept there. The road was steep and zigzagged down the hill. About half-way down was a fountain, with a cluster of soldiers about it, watering themselves and their animals. Everybody

moved with exasperating slowness, and seemed unaccountably listless. Nobody paid any attention to me and I rode in and about the camp to my heart's content. The men, I found, had been sent down to some trenches. These had been laid out on both sides of the road in such a way that an enemy, coming across the bridge, would have a double downward fire directed upon them. The trenches were some four feet deep and three feet wide. The men sat and squatted inside of them and smoked and chatted together. One of the men in the line of pack-animals turned out to be a friend of Roberto's and he told him that it was thought that there would be a fight any time, and that they were clearing out the village in order to be able to burn it, if it became necessary, after they had blown up the bridge.

Towards the middle of the day it really became quite hot in the sun. There had seemed to be nothing to be seen in the camp and I retired and made Roberto hunt up some

firewood and boil some rice. We both ate largely of this for our lunch, and afterwards, ingloriously, I slept on the grass in a little sheltered nook that was like a hothouse. When I woke up I was very thirsty and had a slight headache, so I decided to go down to the fountain and get a good drink and water the horse. I left Roberto to keep his eye on things at my camp. The soldiers were still toiling up and down and to and from the village, and, having got started, I decided to go down to the town and have a look at it—vague hopes of finding a pleasant café under some shady trees being influential in the decision. Before I arrived within a hundred yards of any houses, I felt a peculiar oppression; there was something actually sinister about that still, deserted village. All the houses were empty, and the soldiers all seemed to be coming and going from one central spot in the direction of the bridge. There was a big, handsome fountain in a little square I went through, but only a very

few were loitering about it. I passed on like the rest and soon came to a large open space with many well-grown trees. This was nearly filled with stretchers laid out in rows and the rest of the space was filled with men lying in abandoned attitudes, apparently just as they had fallen. On the edge of the road some thirty dead men were neatly stretched out in their uniforms but not covered over with anything. Their features were emaciated and hollow to a ghastly degree, and their horribly sunken eyes stared wide open. Their shoes were taken off and also their fezzes, showing the thin hair and bald heads which the constant wearing of the fez brings on. They were about the first dead men I had ever seen; but somehow I did not feel particularly shocked or awestruck in their presence, only the vague feeling of oppression became more apparent. On looking more closely I saw that many of the men I had thought merely lying down were also dead. I thought that it must be a field hospital

and that it was strange no bloody wounds were in evidence. There was a little café across the street and, tying my horse outside, I went in. It was filled with soldiers, all pale and worn, who sat in silence, leaning their heads on their arms, and staring vacantly at nothing. Not one of them paid the least attention to me. A small, harassed little man was acting as waiter. I ordered tea and when it came gave him a piaster and he mechanically returned half. A very little soldier lurched in and sat gasping at my table. He took a cigarette I offered him and started to light it, but suddenly arose and stumbled out. Just outside the door he vomited and collapsed in the road, where he lay, writhing and retching. It was pitiful and horrid to see. I went out to look around some more. At the far end of the square some naval officers were standing, and a line of soldiers walked slowly past them. To many they gave a glass of something out of a very large bottle. After passing on a short

way most of them let themselves fall and lay still, gasping. A big automobile was there, and in front of it a large European, dressed in corduroy and wearing a revolver in a cartridge belt. On one arm he wore a Turkish pass, and on the other, in large black letters, was the powerful word "Reuters." I asked him what it all meant, and he replied that it was an outbreak of cholera. Everybody in the village had it, and the navy was about to move the more likely cases to San Stefano, where they could be put into hospitals.

I went back slowly, up the hill, to my camp, and now that my eyes were opened, I could see cholera hanging the sullen cloud over the Turkish forces. It explained the lassitude that pervaded the men, their extraordinary lack of energy or any vitality, or at any rate I thought it did. I felt at first I should take steps of some kind to prevent my getting it; but then reflected that I must already have suffered the worst possible

exposure, so it would be useless in the future to take much bother about infection. If I was going to have it, I did not see that I could do anything about it at that date; and if it did not develop—which I never imagined it would—it seemed as though nothing else would be liable to bring it on.

When I got back to Roberto I found him peacefully entertaining a soldier friend. Most of the men at Biuk-Chekmendje were recruits from Constantinople; this particular one was a cab-driver by profession. He had filled Roberto up with stories of how dreadful the Bulgarian cannon were, and how incessantly, day and night, they had been shelled at Lule Burgas. This was true enough as regarded the men under fire; but Roberto got it into his head that he, personally, was about to be shelled in this way at any moment. Strange to say this cowardly youth was not even interested in what the soldier told him about the presence of cholera in

the ranks. His mind was entirely taken up with two things; the fear of being hit by a stray bullet, and the possibility of being forced to enlist as a soldier. I could plainly see that trouble was coming between us; but for the time he was obedient and busied himself about getting firewood and took the donkey and pack-horse down to the fountain and filled my water-bottles.

A short while before sunset the fleet began a light bombardment—of what we could not see. No reply was made, but for an hour they fired briskly and the echoes rolled about like incessant thunder, and a light cloud of smoke hung about the ships, tinged red by the setting sun. From what I had seen of it, I was in love with war. There was a frost that night, and the sky became overcast. Some half dozen times the donkey made off and had to be chased and re-hobbled. Roberto grumbled about the cold and made himself thoroughly objectionable. By morning it got a bit warmer, but a fine rain

started to fall and we were both well on edge by the time a cold breakfast had been eaten. I decided I had seen enough of Biuk-Chekmendje and planned to ride along up the line towards Tchatalja. We got started very early, and about eight o'clock heard a few shots from that direction which urged me on. We passed boldly through the Turkish camp—the men were silently stumping down to their trenches and the line of pack-animals was headed toward the village.

I kept along the top of the hills and within sight of the lake, going about due east, and went for two miles, after leaving the camp, without seeing a soul. Suddenly I heard hoof-beats and a small troop of officers with their orderlies behind them came at a slow pace up a little gully which crossed our path. They looked very curiously at me but said nothing. Before anything could be done, Roberto, with the face of a scared rabbit, coughed nervously and called out something

in Turkish. A very well-dressed, middle-aged man, in a fascinating blue cloak was riding ahead. He turned in his saddle and made a gruff, commanding reply, and they passed on. Roberto, all wreathed in smiles, then announced that it was forbidden to go on, and that I must go back to San Stefano. The cavalcade passed on and we were alone. Yielding to the impulse of the moment, I jumped off my horse and pulled Roberto from his donkey and hit him, all bewildered, in the face, and knocked him down. I then kicked him savagely, and belaboured him with a switch I had, and yelled at him that if he ever said anything again I would cut his tongue out. He was too frightened by my apparent brain-storm to offer any resistance; but when it was over, he announced with a desperate hunted look that he was going back, even if he had to walk to San Stefano. I owed him three or four pounds and flung it in his face with insults of the grossest sort, and he picked it up and set

off on his fifteen-mile walk with as brisk a gait as if he were leaving the infernal regions behind him.

After he got out of sight I cooled down, and felt extremely lonely; but there was no use going after him and bribing him to stay. It was evidently impossible to go about with a man who was bent on getting turned back, so there was nothing to do about it but wish that I had taken old Mustafa in spite of linguistic difficulties.

I did not feel able to go on to unknown districts hampered by a donkey and a pack-horse which I would have to feed and guard, all alone; so I returned to my former camp, and spent a long time trying to fix a sort of barricade at the bottom of the little valley in which it was situated. I thought that if I could stop up the mouth of it they would probably stay inside, as there was a little water-hole, some grass and very steep sides. I slept there that night, and early in the morning set off on my little horse with no

definite object in view except to see things.

I was gone five days and four nights. At the time I often had little idea of where I was. That I was at the front somewhere was evident enough, and like a Wandering Jew I passed along, speaking to nobody; and looking, without understanding, at what I saw; always moving on all day, and sleeping where best I could when the darkness set in; and always I saw nothing but a countryside deserted by the people, roads all cut with fantastic ruts from the passage of artillery and supply trains; and everywhere the soldiers, dull, slow-moving, stricken with cholera and dysentery, sitting in rifle trenches, swarming about camps, marching to unknown destinations, sometimes slowly, sometimes fatigued and hurried, never in step and always silent.

The first day I went east along the tops of the range, always overlooking the valley, forever going down the steep sides of a gully, and climbing up again. I met bodies of cav-

alry and several times little groups of officers riding together and orderlies behind them, going along roads—I was doing cross-country work. And often they seemed to be coming directly from the south. In the afternoon I came to a hideous, terrible village where carts stood abandoned in the middle of the road, where the doors of the houses were left open, and dead men lay as they had died in the streets, at the doors of their houses. Dogs were slinking about, as loathsome as snakes. Not a living soul appeared in the village; but outside were some groups of soldiers sitting all huddled together, none speaking and each waiting calmly for death. There was a Gehenna-like field of charred rags and bits of uniforms, showing where clothing had been burnt, and long mounds of earth laid out regularly, where the dead were buried. Spectre-looking peasants seemed busied about the field; but I could not make out what they were doing. It did not take much penetration to see that

this was a cholera camp, and a bad one.* Night began to close down and I was questing about for a place to spend it, following a little country road that ran up towards the head of a valley, when I came upon a stone farm-house with out-houses all dark and deserted. I drew out my pistol and advanced, leading my tired little horse. Right before the door was a corpse in peasant costume, probably the owner of the place. I went around and got into a small, smelly stable, and spent the night there, after going through rites of boiling water and powdering camphor about, given me by a Persian doctor working as a volunteer at the camp in Biuk-Chekmendje. I caught a scrawny, half-wild goose that was waddling about and broiled it for dinner.

In the morning I was glad to find myself feeling well, and to be able to leave that

* This turned out to be Mukakeni, where the mortality was estimated at 80%. The Turks keep no record of their losses.

district, and went south along a much-used road. I met a regiment of fresh recruits, with new uniforms and rifles, and many of them limping in new boots, probably the first they had ever worn. A little red-headed fellow at the head of the column was singing a Turkish song in a high, quavering voice, stopping a long time between verses.

The country was all hills and valleys, and there were many little streams which my brave little pony plunged through without giving me any trouble. Almost every valley had a little village, most of them were Greek, but some showed minarets—a sure sign of Turkish inhabitants. Here, back of the line, were villages all full of men. Everywhere were small clusters of tents ranging in number from six to fifty. Many were cholera camps where everybody seemed sick or dying. Here as everywhere the silence was oppressive. At night I slept at a Greek hamlet, in the khan, or hotel, bar, café and store of the community. I had a dinner of eggs

and rice cooked for me over a charcoal brazier in the only room. There was an earthen floor, and a bench running around the wall. A Greek priest came and sat beside me, old, white-bearded and venerable. I knew about four words of the modern Greek dialect "Romeca" and we established an entente cordiale with these, and drank coffee and duzico after dinner. The room was smoky and smelly, and many peasants and a few soldiers came and sat on stools around us, languidly curious. The owner and bartender was a huge Rabelaisian fellow with a cruel, cunning face, and shining eyes. Two well-groomed and intelligent gendarmes came in and questioned me in Turkish. I replied in English and proffered cigarettes and coffee, and showed my bestamped passport, which seemed to be sufficient for them since they could not read it. I was shown up a narrow stairway to a room without a door, where blankets on the floor were the bed and only furniture. I admit to being extremely suspicious and slept

—when fleas permitted—with my pistol in hand.

In the morning I had more eggs for breakfast. In such places they drop half a dozen into a dish with fat and fry it on the coals. I paid and went on. Again the same sort of country, and everywhere little groups of soldiers, and from time to time a sick-camp where apparently the men were left to die or work out a salvation for themselves. They were provided with rice to eat, and clothes to wear, after that the government believed its duty done. At Lule Burgas there had been no rice or even sufficient cartridges. In these two respects they were better off. In the middle of the day, following a railroad track north, I came to Hardemkeni, the headquarters of Nazim Pasha. Here there were forts and the groups of soldiers became crowds. There was a large village and a railroad station which showed some activity as a commissariat train arrived. As usual I wandered aimlessly about, often leading my

horse to save him from dying of overwork.

Late in the afternoon I was arrested by a squad of gendarmes and taken to an officer's tent. I explained truthfully what I was doing and expressed much love and admiration for the Turkish soldiers, so patient, hardy and brave. I slept in his tent, and in the morning bought a dagger from him at an advanced price. He was a big, burly fellow, like my friend at Kutchuk-Chekmendje—and let me go without protest.

I made straight for home—that was Biuk-Chekmendje. There is a road going to Tchatalja in a direct line and there I made a détour of the camp and passed on. I got to my own camp at six in the evening. Everything, bedding, food-sack and all, had disappeared. I must say they were not to be blamed for having been stolen. I went up to the camp to see if I could get some food and buy a blanket. My friend the Persian doctor met me on the outskirts and

coldly announced that "no more foreigners were wanted at the front and that I must go back to San Stefano." This phrase had a familiar sound but I could not understand why this man should get it off to me. I obediently said that I would start at once. I noticed that, in the gathering darkness, flash signals were working all along the Turkish front—for the first time since I had got there.

A cold, damp, cloudy evening is no time to start on a fifteen-mile ride—particularly after travelling all day with no food for horse or man since breakfast—and, with those signal flashes, I should not have left without an escort under any conditions. I thought it far preferable under the circumstances to spend the night in the open somewhere, and if nothing happened in the morning, it would still be time to think of going to San Stefano.

Some thousand yards from the Turkish camp, a little on the right of a line drawn from there to the bridge across the mouth

of the lake, and not more than a quarter of a mile distant from the bridge, was a small butte jutting out from the hills that ran down towards the sea. The top of this was flat and covered with good grass. The sides were very steep, dropping on the right hand side a hundred yards down, to a field. The top was some thirty feet square, and sloped enough to offer some lee against a strong wind coming from the west. From it—in daylight—it was possible to command a good view up the valley as far as the Tchatalja batteries. The summit was plainly visible from the Biuk-Chekmendje camp and the moon was behind it; but I thought the slope sufficient to keep me in a shadow and decided to stay there for the night. Another recommendation was the thought that no thief could steal up to the top without startling my horse and thus giving me the alarm.

I watered my horse at the fountain below the camp, and then ostensibly set out for

San Stefano; but soon turned off and made for the butte. I had a fearful time getting John Henry Newman, my horse's name, up to the top, and had to get behind him and push during the last stages. Once up he began eating ravenously and I sat in a tiny hollow where I hoped there might be less wind, and smoked some third-class cigarettes I had bought at a Greek village the day before.

A stormy little quarter moon appeared, with clouds hurrying by, and gave light enough to define two menacing ranges with the black valley between, and shimmer of the sea and lake, down at my end of it. There were no lights showing from the fleet, but a fire was burning at the far end of the bridge, and for miles up the valley it was possible to see the flickering lights of the night flash signals, showing up against the black of the valley and the crests of the mysterious hills, often some distance back of the line. From the Bulgarian range—

as always so far—not a sign to show their presence. Time passed very slowly, but at length the noise of the steady munching of John Henry had ceased and from time to time he heaved heavy-rending sighs or yawns. The campfires at Biuk-Chekmendje burned out, and one by one the signals stopped flashing from the camps in the hills. I tied John Henry's bridle firmly around his neck and fastened the reins to my wrist, and, rolled up like a ball and half frozen, I prepared to sleep. John Henry stood quite still beside me, his nose almost touching the ground. The moon was almost overhead and the wind died out—it was ten o'clock.

I was wakened by a snort from the horse and grasped my pistol, all ready for anything. Very near I could hear the creaking of a buffalo cart, and even the deliberate footfalls of the beasts and their stertorous breathing. That was all that could be heard, and I could see nothing. The carts seemed to be following a freshly made track, which

I had noticed went by the foot of my buttress and led into a field below it. I think about twenty wagons went by and then I could hear low voices and gritting of shovels from the field. John Henry snorted continually and seemed smelling something that frightened him. It was evident that cholera was gaining in the camp, and that the dead were being buried secretly to prevent possible panic. At length the horse stopped snorting and smelling, and literally threw himself down beside me, heaved one mammoth yawn and his head fell with a thud, stretched out close by mine, and he was asleep. The warmth of his body was very grateful, and I was soon sound asleep myself.

"REAL WAR"

CHAPTER V

"REAL WAR."

I was suddenly awakened by John Henry's springing to his feet, snorting at something. I had only time to grasp that it was still very dark, and the next minute, with a crackling like a mammoth bonfire, the Bulgarians opened a murderous rifle fire from the foothills at the far end of the bridge. The men were spread out in long lines, on the arc of a wide circle with the bridge as the centre, and the volleys came so fast that, in the inky darkness, it looked as well as sounded, like wild fire racing through dry brush. This lasted perhaps two minutes and then cut short off. In the momentary pause was heard the sound of many rushing feet. Then a hideous fire from machine guns came from the Turkish outposts, making a half-circle

of bright, steady light, and filling the air with a thrilling yet monotonous burr. Almost at the same instant the vicious pom, pom, pom, of rapid-fire guns broke out from a Turkish cruiser, and a powerful searchlight swept the hills. I could make out little groups of men, running back towards the main Bulgarian range—very small at that distance—but clearly brought out by the white light. Above every other noise big guns sent out their ear-splitting crack, and shrapnel shells burst like glorious fireworks over the fast-moving groups of men. All this lasted some four or five minutes, and then again absolute silence, intensified by the clamour that preceded it. The searchlight went out, and the flash signals began to twinkle like stars along the Turkish lines. Slowly a heavy smell of powder rolled up from the valley. Not a light or sign of any kind from the Bulgarians.

The significance of all this—told to me some time later—was as follows: The Bul-

garians had made an attempt to seize the bridge so suddenly that the Turks would have no time to blow it up. Under cover of darkness a column of some five hundred men stole up to the Turkish outposts. Behind them were arranged a large number of rifles, in a position to concentrate their fire on the outposts. These men opened the attack, and poured a deluge of lead on the Turks, hoping to drive them back. Under cover of this fire the Bulgarian column advanced, and when very close indeed, gave a signal to their support to stop firing, and, themselves, charged in a long, thin column formation, hoping to rush clear over the Turks. As it turned out the Turks were not rattled by the heavy fire directed upon them, and when the column charged, met it with a river of lead from some ten Maxim guns, closely formed at the very head of the bridge. The impetus and fury of the Bulgarian charge may be judged from the fact that they left nearly three hundred of the

column behind them. If they had gained the bridge, I think the decisive assault would have been delivered right there—instead of further up the line, where they had to face a cruel fire from many batteries of well-equipped guns.

Morning came slowly, still and foggy and rather warm. With the first daylight, a battery of eight guns boomed out in close succession from Tchatalja, and at last, almost like an echo, came the Bulgarian reply. The mist lay so thick in the valley that the shells could be seen exploding, as clearly as though it were night. In half an hour every gun on both sides was in action, the booming was absolutely incessant. From where I was I could see the flashes from some Bulgarian batteries on the tops of the little foothills on their side of the valley. The fleet, three cruisers and four torpedo boats, split up. The cruisers drew up in line, right under the land on my side of the harbour, and began firing broadsides, each one taking its turn.

The torpedo boats silently steamed off somewhere and were swallowed up in the fog. From the top of my hill, I could see clearly the Turks at Biuk-Chekmendje. They were trooping off to their trenches just as they always did, without any hurry, and with the usual apparent leisurely confusion. The smell of powder became very pronounced; and the spectacle was—as I kept telling myself—probably the finest I should ever see, for the Bulgarian shells bursting continually on the hills and in the valleys, coupled with the Turkish batteries firing so steadily, made an ideal picture for "War."

In spite of this my mind was taken up with remembering that I had eaten nothing since the morning before, and thinking how I could get some food in the shortest possible time. I knew of a village about three miles to the left, on the end of a little point of land which ran out into the sea, and, regretfully I made for this, determining, once well-fed, to do something desperate in the

way of getting right into the actual fighting.

The village, a Greek one, Arsu by name, was crowded with terribly frightened Greeks. All that could had pushed into the khan and sat cowering. I managed to get hold of an Albanian who was well armed and seemed to be a sort of sheriff or special policeman or something, and to make him understand that my horse was to be given some oats, and not stolen, and that he would be paid for it. He seemed like a nice, honest fellow—he pointed with great derision to the Greeks crowded into the khan—so I entrusted John Henry to him and pushed my way into the room and began repeating "Yekmek!" ("Bread") and "Pilaf!" ("Rice") and "Chapuk!" ("Quickly"). This finally took effect and a brazier was brought up to me, and I was seated on a stool and a little space cleared around me. Soon my Albanian friend came in, pushing before him a spindly little Greek who spoke French. The Albanian turned out to be a notable hunter and had some

ducks he had shot the evening before. These were produced and preparations made for a real feast. The same fellow was something of a tippler it appeared, for with many smirks he disappeared and returned with the largest bottle I have ever seen of home-made wine. And so, while the windows rattled terribly with the concussion of the cannon from the fleet and that fighting which I had come so far to see was at length in full force, I spent some two hours and a half eating delicious black ducks broiled on the brazier which served for a table and drinking strong country wine with this Albanian reprobate, who openly said that he did not care whether Mohammed forbade it or not. The said two hours and a half saw the end of the bottle and of four of the ducks. I let out my belt two holes and became once more ambitious to get into the thick of it. Little John Henry seemed all bursting with food too, and also quite ready for anything. I paid the Albanian and we shook hands many times.

Of his own accord John Henry left at a canter, and the Albanian fired off a shotgun he carried, by way of salute.

I got around behind the camp of Biuk-Chekmendje without any trouble and three miles on towards Tchatalja I saw on a headland which juts out into the valley, a small group of Europeans, seated on horses. They turned out to be German correspondents. One of them, a plump Austrian, who represented a Frankfurt newspaper, was the man I had seen on the night previous to my arrival at Biuk-Chekmendje. He recognised me and was good enough to deliver a lecture to me on what was going on around us. He explained the fight I had seen the night before at the bridge and then turned to the battle actually in progress. By this time it was noon, the sun had burned away the fog; but in the lifeless air the powder still floated like mist in the valley. Two villages on the Bulgarian side were in flames and sent up clouds of smoke. He said that the biggest assault

was going on far up the line, beyond Hardemkeni and out of our sight. It was useless to try to get up there—even with all possible passes. About two miles beyond the end of the lake, at the Turkish lines of Papas Burgas, he claimed that an assault was likely to be given. The place had been steadily shelled all the morning, and just now, lending me his field-glasses, a division of Bulgarians had appeared and seemed to be advancing. Sure enough, with the naked eye, it was easy to see that some four or five thousand men, much spread out, were moving forward slowly. The Turkish battery at Papas Burgas was shielded from our sight by a little hill; but it was easy to locate it from the flash of bursting shells which hovered over it. I did not see how men could live in such a fire; but the Austrian damped my idea of heroics by coldly pointing that shrapnel bursting at that height was never very effective and that it was quite possible also that the guns were screened in some way.

There were four guns in this battery—Creusot-Schneider field guns taken from the Serbs before the war broke out—and they fired steadily—one, two, three, four and a short wait of about two minutes and then the same thing again. We could see their shells burst over the Bulgarians; also too high according to the Austrian. Shells from the cruisers from their positions under the hills on the Turk side of the harbour whizzed near enough to us so that we could very plainly hear them coming, and seemed to smash right into the enemy, every volley calling forth grunts of admiration from the Germans—they were all military officers and considered themselves very high authorities on matters of artillery and the use of shrapnel.

We could see the Turks in their trenches, standing up with their rifles resting on the mounds in front of the trenches; but as yet not firing. After nearly half an hour's steady progress, the Bulgarians seemed to close in a little and came on faster. More shells

from the fleet crashed into them, and a battery from Tchatalja opened fire upon them, and the men in the trenches began to shoot, making the same steady crackling that I had heard the night before from the Bulgarians.

It was easily possible to see gaps appear in the ranks of the attackers, but on they came in the same steady, calm, inexorable manner. We all held our breath while the storm of lead swept away more and more of the advancing lines. After some ten minutes of this—a conservative guess of mine—they halted for an instant and then began to retreat, still in the same calm, good order. I could make out men walking and running about in their rear. It was explained that these were Red Cross workers. There came an instant lull in the cannonading about us, but farther up the line it continued with unabated vigour.

About three in the afternoon there came a distinct lull from the Bulgarians, and

we on the mound thought that the heavy Turkish fire had silenced two batteries. Whether this was a fact I never found out. The ships had been firing all day in perfect immunity, but now some shots began to come over the hills and sent up great showers of spray as they plunged into the water. They were regular shells—not shrapnel. I felt a low desire to see one of these big shells hit a boat, and left the mound and made the fastest time possible around the camp of Biuk-Chekmendje, to a point on the shore nearest to the boats. It took an hour to get there; but the firing went steadily on. When I arrived everything was quiet as usual, and not one of them appeared to have been hit.

For an hour and a half I sat on the edge of some low cliffs and waited for some damage to be done. Every five minutes or so, some shells would come whistling through the air and splash into the water—invariably falling a hundred yards short. Towards sunset the

firing died away entirely, only occasionally some Turkish battery far up the line would send out a salvo of four shots. The Bulgarians once more relapsed into perfect quiet. The two burning villages glowed red and the atmosphere was full of mist. The air was saturated with powder and everything seemed tired. The result of it all seemed very clear. The Tchatalja lines were intact, and at last the terrible sweeping on of the Bulgarian invasion had received a check.

I rode up to the camp and this time nobody stopped me. The Colonel himself was there—all wreathed in smiles and cordiality. According to him the Bulgarians had suffered some heavy losses, and farther up the line had been beaten and forced to retire after some hours of hand-to-hand fighting. He said the "Dehli" Fouat Pasha was anxious to advance with his corps of Asiatics; but that Nazim Pasha thought it best to remain defensively within the lines of which the impregnability had been so well proven.

I went back to Arsu and once more dined extensively with the Albanian. The villagers were wonderfully relieved by my report of what the commander at Biuk-Chekmendje had told me. The slim Greek who spoke French explained many times how it was not for themselves that they had been afraid, but for the defenceless women and children. The Albanian got an idea somehow of what the Greek was talking about and winked knowingly over his raised glass. I think he was man enough to terrorise the fifty or sixty Christians of the place single-handed, if he had thought there was anything to be made by so doing. I was put up for the night in the house of a Jew, where I suffered incredibly from fleas. I thought it very probable that these cowardly peasants had stolen my donkey, pack-horse and blankets, and spent an hour the next morning in looking about for some sign of them, determined to take them back with bluster if I should find them. Occasional cannon boomed; but as they were

always from the Turk side, I decided that the battle was definitely over and gave way to a longing for clean clothes and a hot bath —and started for San Stefano before noon.

I got there in time to leave my horse at the stable and catch the six o'clock boat for Constantinople. On the boat was the officer who had once arrested me at Kutchuk-Chekmendje. We conversed amiably—neither understanding the other—all the way to the city, and there at the nearest shop he bought me, with many smiles, a box of cigarettes and we parted affectionately. I got to the Pera Palace about eight, a terribly shabby figure, and my campaign ended with a roast chicken served in my room after a long session at the bath.

BEHIND THE LINES

CHAPTER VI

BEHIND THE LINES

The next morning, shortly after noon, I came downstairs and had the French newspapers which are published in Constantinople, the "Jeune Turc" and another one. Neither of these sheets had had much to say of the battle of Lule Burgas beyond the fact that the commander-in-chief thought it wise for strategical reasons to retreat to the Tchatalja lines—and that some four days after the defeat. Now they were all full of headlines about the victory and, as far as I knew, gave a pretty good account of it. It served to remind me that seeing the fighting was only the beginning of my battle—and I had still a famous article to write. I went up to Tokatlion's restaurant for lunch and afterwards moved into the outside room

or café. This is a huge place of marble tables, looking from plate-glass windows on to the "Grand Rue de Pera" or main street of the European quarter. It is frequented by rich Turks, Greeks, Armenians and the usual crowd of Italian, French and Spanish Levantines, and is especially, in the afternoons, the meeting-place for the singers and actresses of which there are always a goodly number in the town. I called for pen and paper and sat for two hours over the achievement of one word: "Tchatalja." I had modestly taken as my model Tolstoi's "Sebastapol"; but the imitation got no further than the title. If I had only had the sense to write on what I myself had seen and been through, it might have been of some interest to our papers at the time, but when I thought of all that the correspondents with passes, who had been there from the very first, must have already written, it seemed as if everybody in America must know by heart by that time the sort of "local colour" I had to

offer. At length I decided that I should wait for some definite end to the present situation and then write a truly comprehensive article on the whole "Tchatalja." This was a very comforting thought and one that only the devil could have put into my brain.

I walked about the city for some time, drank innumerable cups of coffee in all sorts of cafés and talked with shopkeepers and café loafers. Nobody I met seemed particularly elated over the victory; at no time in fact was the city of Constantinople moved out of its usual level: one of frank and petty selfishness.

Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett has very well said that the ancient Byzantine capital, always famous for villainy and corruption, has never improved in morals since the day of its capture. He states the belief that the city has the lowest moral standard of any in existence, and from what I know of it I can do nothing but agree with him. There seems to be a small element of utterly ignorant

Turks, naturally abstemious, who practise a certain passive goodness imposed upon them by their religion; but among the Christian population, with the exception of rich families who retain their European habits of mind, I never found anything expected of anybody but entirely unprincipled and barefaced self-seeking. Nothing else is ever supposed to be of even passing interest. The shopkeepers in the bazaar were in terror of a Bulgarian invasion because their places might very probably be looted; but the Greeks of Galata and Pera openly wished the invaders success and hoped it would stimulate trade. One druggist all smiling with anticipation explained that if several thousand Bulgarians were quartered in the city there might be lots of sickness among them and among those whom they cast from their homes. That a man should feel this way, during a war time, is not without common precedent; but that he should make it a subject of conversation with a chance cus-

tomer and plume himself on his foresight, and fear that events may not become as bad as possible, really does show an uncommonly low standard.

After a couple of days of rest and good eating, I decided to go to the front once more. From the top of the Pera Hill a low rumble of cannon could be heard, and in the newspapers there was vague talk of a Turkish advance. Many fresh troops had arrived from Asia Minor to replace those dead and debilitated by the cholera, the dysentery, the enteric fever and the Bulgarians, these latter being at this time the least deadly of the Turkish enemies.

I made up my mind to go to the front at noon, so I left by the afternoon boat for San Stefano and arrived there at half-past five. Two troop transports had arrived from Scutari, Asia Minor, earlier in the afternoon, and now the long pier was all glaring with improvised arc-lights. It was a cold drizzly afternoon, and the street which runs along

the water-front, although made of round cobble-stones, had managed to get filled with mud. A line of pack-horses was bringing bags of flour and bales of hay from the transports to the railroad station, and about a hundred of these forlorn creatures were standing idle in front of the hotel. Some thousand soldiers wearing great grey coats with hoods turned up over their grey turbans were standing about, patiently waiting to be told something to do.

Inside, the hotel was brilliantly lighted by two acetelyne lamps. All the doors were open, and the big, bare reception room—at the end of which was the bar—was filled with soldiers. The floor was almost as muddy as the street. Most of the men were cavalry troopers, with huge sabres clanking about their legs, and short carbines strapped across their backs. In a little side room which contained some tables, a stove and a billiard table, were gathered some non-commissioned officers and orderlies of officers. They were all clus-

tered around the stove, smoking and drinking coffee. The owner of the place was running about like a madman and explained that the servants were afraid of the soldiers and had all run away. He said I could have dinner at eight; but that probably I would have to have some officers in the same room. Of course I was delighted to hear this and made him promise to introduce me to all the famous people that came to his hotel.

I went out and found John Henry Newman in fine condition, as much rested and invigorated as myself. I then went out to get a look at the troops. It did not take much looking to see why the hotel servants were afraid of the soldiers. Near the entrance of the town, flanked by the Greek school, a fountain and the Greek Church, was a big open space with grass and a few trees. Clustered around the fountain was a noisy crowd of newly arrived soldiers watering a troop of horses. A hundred yards away in front of the school was a small encampment

of tents, lighted up by an acetylene lamp. Here some fires were burning and about them, in that mournful silence whose awful significance I had seen so many times before, crouched listless, hollow-eyed, stoic soldiers —cholera patients. It seemed like a stupid place to set up a cholera camp, just where fresh troops were landing continually, but the ways of the Ottoman government, though sometimes appearing mad, have a method in them. In this case San Stefano was on the railroad line. They did not like to put cholera cases in very large quantities into Constantinople; they were a distinct menace at the front and had to be fed. They were hard to move as they had to march very slowly. So they were bundled into cars and shipped to San Stefano. I learned that only this morning these men had arrived, without any warning of any sort. There were only a few cases of Asiatic cholera among them, the rest were down with dysentery and enteric fever.

I went back to the hotel and in due time

was shown to my dining-room and introduced to the other occupant. It turned out to be a second cousin of the Khedive of Egypt who had come up to see the war and in a way to represent the good feeling which existed between the Khedive and the Sultan. He was a fat young man, with a putty-like face and easy, agreeable manners and took abnormal interest in his food. He was served by a dashing looking Arab in European riding breeches and carrying one of the ornate curved scimitars used by the "Cavasses" or body-guards of foreign diplomats, consuls and bankers in Egypt and Turkey. The Egyptian said he was getting very tired of the war and complained about the living he got at Hardemkeni and had nothing in the way of adventures to relate. On other subjects, however, he was intelligent and proved a very good talker and told me many interesting and amusing things about Egypt, Upper Egypt and the Sudan. He had lived in Paris, like every rich Mohammedan, and

was well versed in European politics, restaurants, etc., etc. We sat up late talking and promised to look each other up on returning to Constantinople after the war.

My bedroom was at the front of the house, overlooking the sea and the pier. When I went to bed the troops had left the streets but the boats were still unloading and made a fracas with their donkey-engines. The rain had stopped and a frost set in. When I awoke about seven, everything was still and on looking out of the window I could see the transports steaming out to sea. In the street below me were lying three dead horses; their throats had been cut and pools of blood were frozen in the gutter. From the refuse about them it was evident that they had been attacked by cholera. Horses suffer almost worse than the men from this disease and often succumb far quicker.

By nine o'clock I was once more under way and soon arrived at Kutchuk-Chekmendje. Here I found that it was really impossible

to pass the bridge under any pretext and I was treated with unaccustomed gruffness.

This made me think that the Turks really meant to advance, so I decided to retreat until out of sight and then branch off across country straight for Tchatalja. After riding across innumerable deserted fields I at length came on to an old deserted road. I think it must have been of Roman origin, for it was made of large white stone slabs, resembling marble. It was a splendid feat of engineering and swept along northward over the rolling hills in majestic curves. I followed this all the morning, twice passing deserted villages made entirely from stones torn from the road. The country all around was wild and desolate. About three in the afternoon I struck the railroad, running up a broad green valley with a little river in its middle. I began to go very cautiously in fear of meeting some troops and being sent back; but soon the road went through a narrow gorge and I found myself right

upon a squad of soldiers. They were watering horses at a fountain, about ten men and fifteen horses. They paid no attention to me, and I saw they were all sick. Their camp numbered some twenty-five tents, pitched too close together, and right on a low, damp bit of ground. They did not seem to have any doctors or Red Crescent workers looking after them, simply a regiment sent to the rear and left to look after itself. There was a deserted farm-house some little distance on and I stopped and made myself at home there for the night.

Next morning I bore to the northwest, deserting the old road, and came about noon into the valley of Biuk-Chekmendje. I could see the end of the lake about five miles to my left. It was very cold indeed and nothing seemed to be going on. I knew that the first time I met any gendarmes I could be arrested, so I cast about for a quiet place to live in and wait for something to turn up. The top of a stone tower showed up from

a valley a couple of miles away and I made for that, expecting to live in comfort. On arrival I found the place overrun with troops who were filling water-carts at a tank in the yard and piling firewood on to buffalo-wagons.

After watching for ten minutes and seeing no gendarmes, I rode into the yard to see if I could get hold of the owner and from him secure a room in the tower. The man was there and turned out to be a fine-looking old Greek. By the use of signs and a pocket Anglo-Turkish dictionary I found out that the tower was already inhabited by some correspondents; but that I might have a large room in the stable, and a place for John Henry right next door to mine.

I had some rice and a duck I had stolen with me and the owner agreed to furnish a brazier and bedding. I was allowed to feed John Henry myself and he was to have all the hay I saw fit to give him. For bedding I was given a filthy straw

mattress and a whole armful of military blankets. As the farm was not more than twelve miles distant from Mukakeni, the first and most deadly cholera camp, I did not let my mind dwell too freely on my creature comforts as exemplified in my bedding.

After spending one afternoon and night at the farm I began to get thoroughly bored. There seemed to be no fighting going on and it got very cold indeed and sometimes snowed for a few minutes, and this made the mud frightful.

I was meditating a change of some sort, the morning after my arrival, when the dragoman of one of the correspondents appeared and formally invited me to dinner in the tower at half-past six that evening. I was delighted to accept, and spent the day reading a novel I had brought with me, and getting rid of soldiers who walked into my room and stood perfectly silent and stared at me. The Greek owner of the place brought me in some coals with which to cook my

lunch and a gift of coffee. I managed to understand from him that the Germans in the tower were very crazy folk and terribly afraid of cholera. It was his opinion that there would be no more fighting, at any rate for a long time, until the weather got warmer and the snow and rain stopped.

At six-thirty I went over to the tower and I was met at the door by two gendarmes. At first I thought I was arrested; but soon found out that they were hired as a body-guard by the Germans. They led me up a flight of stairs and there I was sprayed with disinfectant and made to wash my hands and face in alcohol. I was then turned over to the dragoman who had seen me in the morning, and taken up to the top where the men had their quarters. The room was spotlessly clean, but smelled terribly of formaldehyde, and I noticed a large alcohol lamp burning a bright blue flame. My hosts were very cordial; but insisted on my drinking a glass of raw whiskey to complete the rites of disin-

fection. It appeared that they went through the same performance I had just been subjected to every time they came in. In fact, their whole life seemed taken up with anti-germ ceremonies. All the food, some chickens and rice, was boiled almost to fragments and just before eating it was singed in the alcohol flame. The dishes and table implements were cleaned in alcohol and likewise made almost red-hot in the flame. Of course no ordinary water was allowed inside the place, and the cooking was done in Evian water, brought at great expense and trouble from San Stefano. A little of this was served after dinner as a liqueur. As whiskey, supposed to kill germs in the stomach, was the only other beverage, it was very welcome in my case. During the day, they told me, when out riding they never allowed a soldier to approach them nearer than ten feet, and kept their lips smeared with powdered camphor. Once a Turk had caught hold of the bridle of one of their horses and the dragoman had been

instantly despatched to San Stefano to get a new one. There were four of them living together, all distinctly interesting men, and they gave me a very good time. I was looked on as a sort of innocent fool for not taking more precautions about my health; but the fact of my being an American seemed to offer an explanation.

Only a few days later one of these very men came down with Asiatic cholera. He was taken to San Stefano in a wagon and had medical attendance besides being himself a military doctor, but died shortly after arriving at the hotel. Another of them, the man who had explained the battle of Tchataljа to me, was attacked, but cured himself by a stringent method of his own. While I was dining with them he had openly laughed at their fears and precautions and told hideous tales of the scourge in China during the Japanese war, and announced that if he came down with it, he knew very well how to cure himself in five days. His method

was as follows: he arrived one night at San Stefano, in great pain and so weak that he had himself fastened into his saddle. He rode his horse into the kitchen, and had himself supported to a room. He refused a doctor's care; but began to drink whiskey at a phenomenal rate. For five days he consumed three bottles daily and what wine he could force down besides. He kept himself shut up during "the cure," but at the end of it emerged a well man and to all appearances only a little weakened.

Life at the farm was intolerably dull and the necessary discomforts were very irksome as they brought no excitement in their train. The weather got steadily worse and it either rained or snowed almost all the time. It was during this period of inaction that my admiration of the soldiers grew to the dimensions of that expressed by Pierre Loti and other writers who know the Turkish peasant. Every morning at sunrise, that was about half-past six, huge iron caldrons of rice

were prepared and from these, exactly like cattle, the men were fed. Then they went down to their trenches and stayed there all through the long, wet, freezing day. If there was bread they took some with them, and when there was not they went without. Often they were wet all day long. At sunset they came back to camp and were given more rice and huddled around the fires trying to get warm and dry. At night they were packed sometimes as many as fifteen into tents to sleep. I never heard of any of them murmuring, although thousands died of dysentery, enteric and the terrible Asiatic cholera. All through the war there were more volunteers than could be used. Their pay was infinitesimal and very irregular and they were pitifully under-officered. Very often there would be but one ignorant officer to two hundred men. A great many soldiers came every day to the farm, to bake bread in a furnace there, get water, wood, etc. They were always well behaved and all that

I spoke to in the few words of Turkish I knew seemed innocently delighted to have a foreigner speak their tongue.

One rainy morning after I had spent five nights at the farm, I decided to go back to San Stefano. I got hold of the owner and paid him and set off in a drizzling rain, the mud making it very hard going for John Henry. Instead of going back the way I had come, I went west, towards the Sea of Marmora, until I struck the Biuk-Chekmendje road, about two miles south of the camp. The going was incredibly bad and I could not make more than three or four miles per hour. For this reason I decided to pay a call at Ambarlé, the farm of the Roumanian who had first got me through the bridge at Kutchuk-Chekmendje.

I found him overrun with troops and very much out of sorts with the war; but glad enough to have company for the night. He had an Albanian night watchman who was a terror to the whole countryside. As a rule

he kept him shut up all day and turned him out, well armed, at night. As the other servants had run away this fellow now acted as waiter as well as watchman. After bringing in the coffee at dinner he sat down and began to talk to Willy, the Roumanian, evidently about me. His discourse turned out to be as follows:

He understood from the soldiers that the lines were now closed against foreigners. It must be for that reason that I was going back to San Stefano. For fifty pounds he was to lead me right into the very Tchatalja trenches. I questioned him about his plan, without saying that I had been living without his assistance in the valley of Biuk-Chekmendje for the last few days, in order to find out why he wanted such a large sum. He gravely made it known that there were three cordons of sentries to be passed, and that thus he would have to kill three men in order to get me through. All explanations that there were no three cordons—there

might have been down at Tchatalja for all I knew—and that I did not want to go to the front anyway, he refused to understand. His reply was that I should run no danger. When a sentry stopped me he would be in the bushes behind him, and the man would never make a sound. The only way I got rid of him was to tell him that I did not have five pounds. That made him lose interest very fast.

In the morning I started for San Stefano, and passed the bridge at Kutchuk-Chekmendje with nothing more serious than curious glances and a desultory spraying with some disinfectant. Outside the town of San Stefano I saw many fields covered with charred rags, and many long furrows where men were buried. That prepared me a little for what the town itself was like. Coming in from Kutchuk-Chekmendje, you pass under a railroad embankment to get into San Stefano, and there is an empty area of half a square mile before the houses begin. This

whole place was covered with dead and dying. They lay all together, often indistinguishable, as if mowed down in a terrible battle. A few pitifully sick soldiers seemed to be walking aimlessly about or were sitting together in silence, waiting for death. The horror of that village cannot be exaggerated. The reason for it was this: The night before a huge, long train had drawn into the station. Into the trucks had been bundled all the sick and dying at Hardemkeni and other camps. They were piled in one on top of the other and even tied with ropes on to the tops of freight cars. No warning of their coming had been given, and no measures for their maintenance had been taken. No doctors were sent with them. Many of the men had died during the trip. Those that were strong enough had got out and pulled out the others. The cars were wanted again by the government. The men had to spend the night in the station and out in the open where I now saw them. Many more had died during the

night. I cannot see why, so far as the Ottoman government was concerned, every one of them should not have died. By the grace of God one capable, strong, good man was present to see this horrible condition of affairs. Mr. Fru (I am afraid that I have forgotten his right name, but it was something like that), a Dutch clergyman, stepped into the breach and began organising assistance. Lady Lowther, the wife of the English ambassador, gave him money from her Red Crescent Fund, and men of all sorts and conditions came to help his efforts. In three days the sufferers were fed and protected from the weather, a hospital was started at the Greek school, measures to prevent the spread of the disease were taken and proved effective. In two weeks many of the men were cured, and the percentage of deaths cut down from seventy-five to below thirty. In a month the cholera all through the army was under control and shortly after had been cut down to practically nothing. Such is the

ruggedness of the Turkish, or rather Anatolian, peasant that he will recover from almost anything short of a complete shell, if he is given half a chance. It is chiefly owing to Lady Lowther and this Dutch clergyman that the men were given a chance against the cholera. Except for segregating regiments entirely undermined by the plague in camps where nothing was done to help them, and that inhuman moving of the bad cases to San Stefano, I do not know of any action that the Ottoman government took to preserve their men from cholera.

After looking vacantly at the frightful scenes in San Stefano, I left John Henry with a Turk in the village who had a stable and was a fairly honest man. Then went by boat to Constantinople and went through the usual process of bathing, shaving, putting on my best clothes and dining at the Pera Palace. After dinner I met an American journalist who told me of the efforts of Mr. Fru at San Stefano, then just beginning,

and promised to go up and help the next morning. I was feeling unaccountably tired at the time, and by the next morning I saw that I was in no condition to go to work of any sort. I seemed to have come down with a light case of dysentery and was sufficiently uncomfortable for the next four days to be able to sympathise with the soldiers. At the end of four days, for some entirely unknown reason, I began to crave for bismuth. As a child I had been given bismuth once and had not heard it mentioned for at least ten years. Opium and brandy and Jamaica ginger had all proved of no avail. I managed to get some bismuth at a druggist's and almost immediately felt better. In two more days I was as well as ever and left for the cholera camp.

I found the town cleaned and filled with an entirely new spirit—one of energy, what might be called " The will to live." Fatalism and passive heroism were gone—along with dirt, hunger and corpses. A number of good

doctors were working in the hospital, the men were well protected from the weather in properly set up tents and provided with clean food and sufficient blankets. Lime was scattered around the camps to prevent spreading of the disease, and life was visibly flowing back into the dispirited and forlorn soldiers. There was not much work to be done any more, I carried food to the patients, helped carry away refuse and to carry wounded to and from the hospital. The Turks, as always, were brave, in fact, apparently indifferent to any suffering, and grateful to those that helped them. Owing to their religion it was impossible for a Turkish woman to work among the men; but several European women had been there from the first and worked hard and well.

I remember one more than middle-aged Turk who had been hit in the leg by a lead shrapnel bullet at Lule Burgas. He had walked, supported by his companions, all the way to Tchatalja where he had been put

into a cholera camp. He came to San Stefano as a cholera patient. His leg was a gruesome mass of putrefaction and had to be cut off almost at the hip. Any European would have died some weeks previously from blood poison. After the amputation and big doses of lactic acid and other cholera mediums he got healthy very rapidly and was anxious to be sent in some way once more to the front. I hope this will convey an idea of the stamina and courage of the Turkish rank and file. It is only fair to cap this example with an incident I witnessed at the San Stefano hotel.

A young officer had been staying there two days, living in the lightest possible way and drinking the most expensive wines obtainable. One morning he ordered his horse and clanked down the steps to mount with great ostentation. A Greek boy—a cousin of the owner, who had come to help after the servants left—ran after him holding his bill in his hand. The officer with great calmness

pretended to examine the bill, and suddenly knocked the boy down and rode off. He was an exceptionally polite and agreeable man, from what little I had seen of him, spoke French perfectly and played the piano well.

After two days at the camp I went back to Constantinople. The *pourparlers* for an armistice had begun and the war seemed over.

THE ARMISTICE

CHAPTER VII

THE ARMISTICE

Nazim Pasha, Khiamal Pasha and others went up to Kalikratia, a town just beyond the Tchatalja lines, in a private railroad carriage. A magnificent dinner from Tokatlion's restaurant was sent up on the same train. The Bulgarian generals were handsomely entertained in the car, and the armistice was signed. It seemed as if the war were over; many journalists left, and the Pera Palace, now only half full, took on a dingier hue. The sun very rarely appeared; it was cold, damp and dismal all the time. I began to feel that it was my duty to go home and began thinking of going to Java for a while. As a matter of fact, I hung about Constantinople for three weeks, hoping that something might turn up. Vague rumours floated about

that when the troops came back they would massacre the Greeks in the city, have a revolution, or do something desperate to avenge themselves for all their suffering. None of these excitements seemed to come to a head and everything seemed to be petering out miserably.

I had absolutely nothing to do; but yet the days slipped along with easy rapidity. During the mornings, I walked aimlessly about the town, usually in Stamboul, and paid frequent visits to the bazaar, where I spent ten days haggling over some Turkish swords with a Persian who had a fascinating collection in a tiny little shop in the "old quarter" of the main bazaar. The town is one where the "movie" flourishes. Pathé Frères have a "palace" in a place that looks like a barn made over into a prize-fighting ring and then again made appropriate for moving-pictures. Here they gave serial pieces which drew great crowds on afternoons when the programme changed. Although

Pera is not a very large place there were enough picture theatres to see a different set every afternoon. They all change once a week, and all on different days.

I almost always dined at Tokatlion's, who set up an orchestra in the evening, the walk there from the Pera Palace being one of its chief attractions. You go up the Grand Rue de Pera about a third of mile, past the British Embassy, and suddenly branch off into a thoroughly Oriental market. It is a very dirty and narrow little street full of the vilest smells, yet possessed of beauty and charm. Here very bright acetylene lamps in front of the larger shops give the only light. Even the larger shops are very small, just one room, and carcasses of sheep and cattle are hung up, and piles of vegetables are stacked around. Fat Turks in greasy, bright-coloured costumes with baggy trousers, narrow at the knee, and dirty fezzes wound about with clothes, are usually sitting in front of their possessions, sharpening

knives and smoking cigarettes. Fine-looking, up-standing fishermen with baskets of fish on their heads walk up and down, calling out in strong, guttural voices, or squat in the road and bargain with buyers and cut up the fish with sharp curved knives. One little Armenian is always frying fish on a brazier, hoping to tempt the passers-by. Most Europeans prefer to stick to the Grand Rue de Pera, which makes a curve about and meets the other end of this market street almost at Tokatlion's door. As a rule there are only poor folk and Turks to be seen here.

The Parisiana cabaret was about the only evening place of entertainment. Here a cosmopolitan crowd of singers and dancers gave mediocre performances in the languages and after the manner of every European nation. It was the custom of many of the correspondents to spend frequent evenings here, and coming in one evening I found the Austrian (of whose recovery from cholera I have al-

ready told) seated alone. In the course of conversation, I told him I was thinking of going to Java for the winter, assuming the war to be over. To my surprise he claimed that it was not over and gave as his reasons the fact that the Turks as a people did not yet consider themselves beaten and hence, would never allow a Cabinet willing to grant the concessions which the allies had won the right to demand, to remain in power. As soon as the weather got warmer, or even earlier, he thought the fighting would begin anew. This time it would be a war to the finish, until one side was thoroughly beaten, and the whole nation felt that their last effort had been made.

On a cold, rainy Sunday afternoon, after a hair-raising gallop down Galata hill, I caught the Russian steamer for Alexandria. Getting on to one of these boats is like leaving Turkey behind you and arriving instantly in Russia, the Russia of solid comforts and enormous meals that Gogol pictures. They

are small, lazy little ships that take eight days to do that which the Roumanian steamers accomplish in four; neither are they so up to date. Yet the indefinable "charm Slav" seems to make itself widely felt among those who travel frequently in these regions, and the Russians carry more passengers than any other line. We left the Bosporus at four in the afternoon, and in the morning found ourselves at the western end of the Dardanelles. It was still very cold; but on arriving at Smyrna the next morning, the sun came out and it was as warm as summer. There were many war-ships in the harbour, all representative of European power, and a large American cruiser. The Gulf of Smyrna is very beautiful, with mountains and valleys all dotted with villages hidden by groves of cypress. There is something in the landscape and in the very atmosphere suggestive of forgotten people and ancient civilisations.

I went ashore at the request of a guide to take a drive around the city. It proved a

very pleasant one and I was sorry to have to come back to the steamer. When I did get back, however, I saw nothing but the vanishing hull, already well down on the horizon. For reasons best known to themselves they had decided to sail at eleven instead of three as they had stated that morning. Then followed a stormy scene and much profanity and perjury at the Russian office, and that in turn was followed by a much worse scene at the American Consulate. Thanks to the stern stand made by the American Consul-General an arrangement was finally made whereby I should eventually get my money back. In the meantime I had to wait three days for the Egyptian steamer which arrived at Alexandria at the same time as my lost Russian.

The warmth which had greeted my arrival disappeared that night, and the weather became equal to Constantinople. Being without an overcoat as I was, I shall never forget the cold of Smyrna. Nevertheless I enjoyed

my visit. The Bazaar there is fascinating, a maze of tiny streets filled with tiny shops where everything from old clothes to the finest Turkish rugs can be bought. Caravans of camels are always silently threading their way among the crowd, bearing huge loads which brush the shops on both sides of the narrow passages.

Like most Turkish cities, the Greek population outnumbers the Turkish by a proportion of three to one. Yet at this time, the Greeks were in mortal terror of a Mohammedan uprising, and all the foreign Consulates were besieged by the cowardly Christians who were trying to prove that they were American or European subjects and entitled to the protection of the war-ships in the harbour.

The main street of the town is raised some three feet above sea level and forms the waterfront. Some half dozen ships of various nationalities were tied up right under the windows of the hotel, the Grand Kraemer Palace,

thus making the street resemble the docks at Antwerp.

Here, as everywhere, as far as I know, were many moving-picture theatres, and they form the only entertainment there is, with the exception of a stupid Turkish theatre where Armenians perform. On the last afternoon of my stay the Philharmonic Society of Smyrna met and played one of Haydn's symphonies and Von Weber's overture to "Der Freischütz," in a manner that gave pleasure to their audience as well as themselves.

On Friday morning the Egyptian boat arrived and at one o'clock I sailed once more for Alexandria, arriving this time without mishap and in time to rescue my luggage from the Russian, before she started on her return trip.

In Egypt all is brighter and more sunny than with the sombre and ill-starred Turks. The fezzes are worn at more debonair angles and wound with brighter coloured cloths. There are more children in the streets, and

they are all more noisy and seem more happy and care-free. On the warm nights it is not uncommon to see two or three young men, in very gay-coloured robes, holding each others' hands and dancing down the street and laughing together. A street of even asphalt pavement, well lit, and well patrolled by smartly dressed Egyptian gendarmes. Here the English have brought, except in limited Arab quarters, cleanliness and order, and with this background the Arabs strut about like wonderful birds, and sometimes seem to exist only to be picturesque.

It is of Alexandria I speak, for here I settled down to wait for the reopening of the war. It is cheaper in Alexandria than at Cairo, chiefly for the reason that one is not so much tempted to spend money, and at this juncture my finances became really very low. Indeed, after a few pleasant days at the Hotel Savoy, it became evident that they would dwindle entirely out of sight unless a new order of economy should set

in. Very fortunately for myself I had by that time collected a satellite in the form of a burly dragoman who appeared utterly devoted to my interests. Under his direction I secured a room in a pension on the Rue de la Poste, the poor Italian quarter, almost on the site of the erstwhile palace of Cleopatra. Here I stayed almost two months, quarrelling steadily with my landlady, and cared for like a child by the faithful Arab, Ramadan by name.

I think to the average visitor to Egypt, a two months' stay in a low boarding-house in Alexandria would seem to be little inviting. But I think any one, of the few who really have the gift of amusing themselves without an occupation of any sort, who tried it would find it an interesting experience and on the whole a pleasant one.

After the first few days of my rather splurgy arrival, after taking up my abode in the Hotel Pension Metropole in fact, I hardly ever entered the best quarters of the

town. I became one of the two or three thousand sitters in the cafés on the Place Mahomet Ali, and a diner at the restaurants on the Rue de l'Ancienne Bourse. There is something in the gentle climate of Alexandria that makes one forget all energy, and enables a life of utter lazy calm to be a happy and contented affair.

I had always been an admirer of Richard Burton's " Arabian Nights " and during this period they were often in my mind. In the mornings, I nearly always walked by the sea-wall, where naked fishermen cast their nets, surrounded by a crowd of little naked boys who plunge into the water and swim about like fish while the nets are being hauled. A two-mile walk brings you to a beach, almost deserted except for occasional lonely Arab fishermen, and here I often used to swim in the afternoons. In the evenings I never grew tired of walking about the Arab quarter and of smoking a water-pipe at cafés where poor people, very often boatmen,

danced *pas seuls* for the pleasure of it, and where the ability to gain applause in the knife dance was considered the height of happiness. I even took pleasure in becoming an expert at finding my way about the labyrinth of evil little streets that surround the lower part of the Rue des Sœurs. These streets are really unmentionably wicked. It is through little dark doorways that form the end of unlighted blind alleys that one penetrates to the hashish smokers who squat in feebly lighted rooms in a circle about the brazier and pass the "bamboo" from one to the other. Each one tries to inhale as much as possible of the drug and swell with pride after sending out a cloud of blue aromatic smoke.

These streets are narrow, crooked and ill lit. Sometimes brilliant lights in front of tiny cafés take the place of street lamps. The air is filled with the monotonous droning of reed flutes and the stirring rhythms of tom-toms. Arabs in white robes or gaudy

colours flit by silently, and sometimes the pungent smell of a hashish cigarette floats out from a passer-by. As you walk along you come abruptly on a ragged night watchman, clothed in brown burlap, leaning on his knotted cudgel and gazing inquiringly at you from a dark shadow. Overhead the sky is black and soft like our summer heavens.

By half-past ten most of the Arabs disappear and this quarter gets dark and silent, but until two in the morning the Place Mahomet Ali is wide awake. The Greeks play dominos and give free vent to their unending desire to talk. Better class Arabs, often gorgeously dressed in silks, drink coffee and play chess or backgammon. This latter game they play with astonishing quickness and make a loud clatter by banging down the pieces on the wooden boards. Bedraggled looking old men and young girls come up and silently thrust lottery tickets under your nose, and little Nubian boys laughingly tap your feet in hopes that you will let them shine your

shoes. On the sea-wall all is quiet and dark; but at every two hundred yards is an Arab coast-guard watching lest some hashish smugglers should land their forbidden drug. These men generally stand quite still and face the moon when there is one. As you approach them, you often find them humming very softly to themselves, endless, beginningless tunes, monotonous, yet always changing and running into variations. I once sat on the wall and listened to a fellow keep this up for an hour without a moment's stop. I suppose they keep it up all night.

My unhappy finances ran into worse and worse difficulties. My landlady became unbearable and only the fear of Ramadan, whom she called my "bravo," ever got me my breakfast in the mornings. Ramadan's wages were stopped and he was no longer officially my dragoman, but he still came twice a day, did my washing, went to the bank for mail, and on one glorious occasion to cash a third prize lottery ticket. When he had some rich visitor

to show over the city, he always took delight in driving them down to my lodging and then mysteriously asking them to wait for a minute, while he dashed up to my room to see if there was anything I wanted.

He was a gay sort of person and always made jokes when he came in in the morning. One day he appeared all smiles (he was truly a very psychic man) saying that he brought me a hundred pounds. As a matter of fact he brought far better than that, namely a notice from Baring Bros. that a new letter of credit had been placed at my command. Diligent use of the cable wires brought money from the Bank of Egypt on the following morning, and Ramadan and myself left for Cairo on the next train.

I had long been anxious to make a camel expedition to Fyoum, about a day and a half's travel into the desert, for the duck-shooting there. Ramadan got hold of two camels and two guns and with the meagrest possible outfit we set out, neither knowing

the way, with only a dim trail over the sands to guide us. At Fyoum there is a magnificent lake, and a good-sized Arab town. The shooting is almost too easy to be the best sport. At the time I was there the lake had not been shot over for almost a month and with hard work and good shooting, I think a bag of one hundred and fifty birds in a day would be possible. Snipe abound in the fields near the water.

I was away five nights and when I got back Reuter's telegrams were all full of more war news. The next day came the breaking off of the negotiations in London, and I dashed back to Alexandria to await the first boat for Turkey. It proved to be a Russian which sailed on a Monday afternoon.

"RESUME FIRING"

CHAPTER VIII

"RESUME FIRING"

THERE were only a dozen cabin passengers and it was evident that most of them were returning to the war in one capacity or another. An Italian officer, wearing the glorious red jacket of the Garibaldi Corps and a brand-new pair of spurs, was on his way to join the Greek army at Pisani. He had been wounded at Janina and had been to Egypt for his convalescence. He was an intensely disagreeable man.

Just as the gangplank was going up an American strolled down to the wharf and succeeded in persuading the men to lower the plank again for his convenience. A glance at his baggage, partly composed of weather-stained canvas bags suitable for pack-horse work, made it evident that he was a cor-

respondent. Three or four Greeks, a Frenchman who spoke Russian most of the time, one Turk and a charming young Russian nobleman made up the passenger list.

The boat sailed at four, and was supposed to take two days to get to Piræus. Yet on waking next morning, I saw that we were very near to land. On arriving on deck I found out, that for reasons known to himself, the captain had decided to put in a day at Crete. He had, in fact, some mail to deliver there, but why he should spend a whole day in doing this, when nine-tenths of his passengers were cursing every minute that kept them from the reopening of the war, is a mystery. There are really mysteries in Russia even in these days. Crete is an interesting place and the climate is beautiful at that time of the year. We were in the harbour of Candia, with green hills about us, warm sun overhead and snow-covered mountains in the distance. Ruins could be seen on some of the hills, near the town, and vague

reminiscences of the "Sea Kings of Crete" moved me to go ashore and see them. But I found that the authorities, Turkish authorities, would not let us land without medical inspection, and as the only doctor had gone inland to visit a friend, there was nobody to inspect us. We had to spend the time on board as best we could. The crew put fresh paint on all the railings, the Italian took off his boots and put on some villainous slippers and walked about in them, the American and myself sat and grumbled in the smoking-room and tried to fix our minds on piquet, the Russian giggled delightedly over Willy's "Jeu de Princes," and all the others seemed to be asleep in their rooms.

As might be expected there was a British man-of-war in the harbour and they spent the whole day in signalling—there was nobody in sight to signal—and wigwagging with fury.

One small Turk rowed about the harbour in a large rowboat displaying Turkish

colours. I imagine he represented the Turkish control of the island,—and from the land the occasional cracking of rifles came to our ears. Nobody paid any attention to it. We left at sunset and it was very beautiful running close in to shore, where the snow-capped mountains seemed to rise abruptly from the sea all red with sunset lights. I then made a vow to some time take horse and travel among those mountains and wide fertile valleys where olive trees are the chief crop.

In due time we arrived at Piræus, after long windings about behind a Greek pilot boat on account of mines in the channel. Here most of the passengers left, the American among them, and I went up to Athens with the little Russian. He was one of the most naïvely debonair and charming persons I have ever met. We went together to the Acropolis, first time for both of us, and then lunched at the Hotel du Bretagne. After this we were forced to split forces, for he felt an uncontrollable desire to buy himself

some caviar, while I was anxious to see the city and the soldiers quartered there.

Like Bucharest many of the houses are white and in the glare of light that bright sun brings under such conditions the crowds of brown-uniformed soldiers looked particularly dingy. They had evidently seen rough service on their former campaigns, for the uniforms looked weather-stained and hard used. The men were, to my prejudiced eyes, not nearly as good-looking soldiers as the Turks. I am very fond of Turks and have always detested Greeks. It is more than possible that this accounts for the difference I saw in the physique and bearing of the two armies.

Of course the whole town was excited over the war and great hopes were being expressed of gaining Pisani by one heroic, old-time charge. Considering that the Italian officer who had been wounded in fighting around there had already told me that though the Turks had some advantage of position, their

guns were too scarce and placed in such positions that at any time the place could be taken by an impetuous attack and the loss of some five or seven thousand men, I did not get over-excited by the popular enthusiasm.

I had determined to get off at Smyrna and go on by rail from there to Constantinople. So, on arrival at Smyrna, I went as quickly as possible to the railroad station to see if this could be done. The dragoman who took me up there, a Greek or Jew, was really in deadly terror of a Mohammedan uprising. He said that all the Turks were crazy with rage at all Christians. There was some tiny foundation to these stories at this time, in Smyrna particularly, as I found out at the station. Here they said that no European would be allowed to go on the train which went to Constantinople. It made a long détour into the interior to pick up volunteers, as the government was afraid that "complications might arise." At

this time there were more volunteers than the government wanted. I heard of one cab-driver who gave his horse to the government and then demanded to be sent to the front because he had no longer anything to live on. Every day there were Mohammedan meetings, where they howled to Allah and cursed the Christians. Khiamil Pasha, after the murder of Nazim Pasha and his own dismissal from power, had stopped at Smyrna on his way to Egypt and had not dared to land or even show himself on board. The war spirit was at its height here and the very air was exciting.

I had been surprised by meeting the Turkish passenger at the railroad station, and was even more surprised by seeing him come back to the boat shortly after myself. Up to that time he had spoken to nobody; now he began talking to me in a very good French. He turned out to be a Turk who had lived twenty years in Java. He was, of course, professedly a Mohammedan, but in

fact, the religion was much more one of hatred of the Christian nations. He spoke with gleaming eyes of their recent bomb-throwings in India and Ceylon. The word "boycott" was one of his favourites; he wanted Mohammedans to boycott all Christians and all Christian goods and manufactures. This would drive the Christians out of the Mohammedan countries and, something new in this sort of talk, drive the Mohammedans to work and to make their own articles of manufacture and be no longer dependent on Europe for them. Of course, he was an ardent admirer of Enver Bey and was confident that now the Turks would take the aggressive and really go forth to war with the old spirit. He told me the price that the allies had paid for every one of their victories and for every town they had captured. He seemed sincere, and I believe many Turks who could not imagine that a coalition of upstart Balkan nations could really beat the army of their Sultan, of the

Grand Caliph of all the followers of Allah, really believed these stories, maliciously set going by the political opponents of the Khiamil and Nazim government.

We moved on as far as the entrance of the Dardanelles that night and early in the morning picked up the Turkish pilot boat and began making the passage, arriving by noon at Dardanelles, a large town on the Asia Minor side of the straits, and situated at a spot where the narrow passage broadens out to the size of a good-sized lake. Here some Turkish officers came on board and we got the first actual news of the big war, the Bulgarian one. Like everybody else, except the Kurdish regiments at Tchatalja, these men were all enthusiasm about Enver Bey and his change of government. Turkish advances and victories were reported from Derkos where Fetti Bey Pasha was in command, and it was rumoured that he would soon sweep down on to the rear of the Bulgarians cooped up in the peninsula of Gallipoli. A

battle was said to be going on at that very time at this last-named place. At three we left Dardanelles and went on, in the teeth of a howling gale, up the straits. By five it was possibe to smell powder in the air; but as the wind veered a little to the south no guns could be heard. The little Turk and myself paced the deck, sniffing the air and waiting for the sound of guns which never came. We began to think the battle must be over. The little man cared so terribly about the Mohammedan honour that it seemed as if he could not wait to find out in some way if the Turks had won the battle, a battle which one whiff of powder in the air had made seem an historic affair to him. We were due to pass Gallipoli at eight in the evening, but the Turk was too excited to go down to dinner first—they dine at six-thirty on these boats, but dinner lasts a long time.

I came up on deck at seven-thirty; it was now pitch dark, but there was no smell any

longer nor yet any noise. Suddenly we rounded a curve and very plainly the constant flashes of guns and shells could be seen. For an hour we could see the guns, from the hills and from boats, which we knew must be Turkish, stationed close in by the land. Sometimes long streaks of flame showed rifle fire. But nothing at all could be made out as to the outcome of the fighting, and not a sound could be heard—the wind was blowing a gale—from us to them. The little Turk was like a crazy man and raced up and down the deck, leaning over the rails, now at one place and now at another, always hoping to seize upon a clue as to which way the tide was turning and talking always to himself. The Russian, who was an army officer in spite of his tender years, and should have taken a greater interest in the fight, sat obstinately in the smoking-room and read his "Jeu de Princes."

By nine o'clock the battle was lost to sight behind us and shortly after we were out in

the Sea of Marmora and the straits were passed. We were to arrive at Constantinople early in the morning. Already it was cold enough to give some idea of what weather was ahead of us.

NO ADMITTANCE

CHAPTER IX

NO ADMITTANCE

It took only half a day in Constantinople for one to see that for once the government meant what it said, when it said that no foreigners were wanted at the front under any excuse. Even the Red Crescent workers were kept far in the rear and not allowed to see anything. All the Germans were taken out of the army. The Turks meant to fight it out alone, and if they did not waste money on the wounded, they at least meant not to be criticised for it by foreign journalists. It seems to me only a natural course for them to have taken.

In the meantime, the city was much the same except that now martial law, or at any rate that part of it which makes you go to bed at one (in Pera) or nine (in Stam-

boul) was no longer enforced. There was no longer any one to enforce it—now the firemen as well as the gendarmes had been made into a regiment and sent to the front. Old Mustafa, the horse-dealer, I discovered, had begged so hard at the recruiting office to be allowed to fight that in spite of his body, all bent with age, he had gone to Gallipoli.

Strange to say in these days of reopening war, when fires burned themselves out and when policemen were nearly all sent to join the army, the Turkish theatres, closed all through the armistice, opened again, and the Parisiana cabaret in Pera went back to its old-time habits of closing at three-thirty rather than one. Yet in spite of all these signs of prosperity race feeling was higher than ever before, and riots were more likely to have occurred then than when the foreign sailors from the battleships in the harbour, patrolled the city with bayonets at the muzzles of their loaded rifles. An almost

drolatique example of the tension in the air occurred at the Parisiana, in the early hours of a Sunday morning. A Turkish reprobate who was known to all as "Sammy," had by some miracle got credit for himself with the manager. On the night in question he was using his credit by giving a fine entertainment to some three or four English officers who had previously entertained him. As it grew late Sammy felt moved to become a little desperate and ordered a case of champagne, meaning to enlarge the number of his guests and thus peacefully drink it all up. When, instead of the desired wine, his long unpaid bill was presented, the chagrin and rage of Sammy knew no bounds. Rising in his wrath, he knocked the Greek waiter to the floor and then made boastful generalities on this purely personal victory. In a second the Greeks had got together to avenge the insult and a lively racial brawl had started. The Englishmen, swayed by feelings of gratitude (which has indeed been

defined as "a lively hope of benefits to come") sided with their host, and turned the scale. The manager saw that things were against him, begged pardon for what he claimed was a waiter's mistake and promised to have the case brought immediately. All was again as calm as a minute before the brawl started, and apparently differences of religion and race were the last things thought of.

There was something so dramatic in this second, and now purely popular war, being fought out by the Turks alone and unwitnessed by any foreigners, that I was prepared to go to any length to get into it somehow. Naturally the first expedient was to enlist with the army as a volunteer, as a sharpshooter working on my own hook, because I did not know the language of the soldiers. The idea seemed so romantically fascinating to me that I never thought that the authorities could doubt my motives; added to this I was sincerely a partisan of

the Turks and really willing to do my little best for their cause.

I turned up one morning, in a fez, at the recruiting station in Stamboul, with an interpreter, whom I previously harangued at some length on the necessity of repeating what I said and nothing more. I was at first greeted by polite smiles and taken for an innocent enthusiast who did not know what he was talking about; and I saw that to gain proper attention, I should have to think of some really serviceable lie. I gave out that I was a noted game-shooter, in fact, I had been killing gorillas during the armistice and having found little excitement in these dumb animals, I was anxious to come up against foemen really worthy of me. What more dangerous game would there be than Bulgarians? This point of view appealed strongly to the recruiting officer and he truly thought it a shame that such spirit should not be allowed to find its expression, and with many sardonic smiles he had it explained

to me that the Ottoman government was not keeping a closed season on Bulgarians. However, I should have to have a pass from Mahmout Chefket Pasha, the new Minister of War, before anything could be done.

Mahmout Chefket was a very hard man with whom to gain an interview. I could never get to see him myself without powerful assistance. The American minister would give me a letter of introduction to him as a journalist, but only on that pretext. My "biggest of big game" theory left him cold and satirical.

I knew that troops were being sent off from San Stefano to Gallipoli, so I went up there, in the vain hope of insinuating my way into a regiment by bribing a colonel or any other means, to be thought of on the scene of action. When I arrived at San Stefano it was late in the afternoon of a cold, snowy day. Sure enough I found the pier a blaze of arc lights, and a large body of infantry and a regiment of cavalry troop-

ers were being put slowly on to three transports. The hotel proprietor remembered me and anxiously asked what he could do for me. I told him to get hold of the officer who was shipping the troops and tell him that a young American wished to speak to him about going with these very men as a volunteer. The man replied he would see the officer when he came into dinner and would give him my message.

That meant that I had at least an hour to wait, so I drew a chair to a window overlooking the street and the harbour and sat down to wait. The embarkation of the men went slowly along; they stood about, muffled in their big grey coats and hoods, with their rifles slung across their backs, and patiently beat one foot against the other to keep from freezing. There was no hum of conversation or bustle of departure for the front; as they stood there with the strong light in their faces, with snow falling slowly about them, I found myself strongly re-

minded of "Tin Soldier" of Hans Christian Andersen.

I was startled out of this melancholy reverie by a pleasant, well-educated voice, speaking French, saying, "They go softly, for they know it is Death they are going to." It was the officer in charge of despatching them, a young Somebody Bey, of good family and powerful connections. He readily sympathised with my scheme, and was sufficiently broad-minded to see its charm. Unfortunately his orders were strict and he could not allow me to go with the men; but he did give me a letter to one of the secretaries of Mahmout Chefket and assured me that I should be able at least to get an audience.

Next morning I presented my letter at the Sublime Porte and was granted an interview. The aged minister was polite and appeared interested, and pleased by the protestations of my love for the Turks; but nothing that I could think of would move him. It was impossible to get to the fighting

under any pretext. Even conversion to Mohammedanism would do no good.

In the meantime it was impossible to find out how the war was going on. The Turkish newspapers gave out nothing except imaginary exploits of the famous Hamidick and the vaguest sort of rumours that the Turks were winning at Gallipoli and that the railroad to Rodosto would shortly be open. All this amounted to nothing at all and curiosity as to the outcome of the fighting with nothing to appease it waxed and waxed.

One day I heard that a party of journalists and adventurers were going to hire a launch at Dardanelles and run over to the peninsula of Gallipoli and try to get some idea of what was going on. I received a place in the boat and we went down to the Dardanelles on one of the Russian steamers, arriving early in the morning. The launch had already been chartered and we started off immediately and passed several Turkish forts without hindrance.

We had something like forty miles to go, and as we got nearer and nearer our destination and nobody stopped us, we began to consider seriously of landing and making a camp somewhere on a hill which overlooked the peninsula. By three in the afternoon we were in sight of the Turkish fleet. For some time we had heard desultory firing, and now we made out that the shots came from the boats and from a battery about two miles inland, whether Turk or Bulgarian was never known.

We turned out of the regular channel and put on full speed, heading directly for the fleet, a fleet of three small cruisers and six smaller torpedo boats and destroyers. No attention seemed to be paid to us until we got within half a mile of the fleet. Then suddenly a puff of smoke blew out on our side of one of the cruisers, and a second later a shell went smack into the water, not more than a hundred yards ahead of us. A Turk whom I had considered slow and stupid

was steering for us; but that man had his engine reversed and had begun to turn, I think, before the shell hit the water. We all hated to go without really finding out something. We had not seen a man on shore and were far from certain whose battery we had seen, but there really seemed to be nothing else to do. We got back about nine that night. Anybody who has been in the Straits of Dardanelles in winter can imagine how pleasant our trip had proved. Although the town was filled with peasant refugees, the hotel was empty and comfortable. A Roumanian boat came by next morning and we got back to Constantinople that night.

The wretched trip to Dardanelles was my last effort to kick against the government. I had been maturing plans to get to the farm of my Roumanian friend at Amberlé, and from there to work my way forward to the square tower where the German correspondents had lived; but these plans were all shattered by the shell from the cruiser, and

some of the zest of adventure seemed to have been frozen out of me by the howling, icy wind of the straits. On my return to the city I found myself heartily sick of the small part of it that I inhabited.

Now that the cold, dingy city held no more the golden possibility of witnessing the death throes of a once strong nation, I began to long immeasurably for the refinement and luxury of Europe and my own country. Home-sickness came on very fast and I took a boat for Constanza within two days.