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MACEDONIAN VOLUNTEERS IN THE SERBIAN WAR.

BULGARIA

PAST AND PRESENT

Historical, Political, and Descriptive

BY

JAMES SAMUELSON

Of the Middle Temple, Barrister-at-Law

AUTHOR OF "ROUMANIA PAST AND PRESENT," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED WITH A MAP OF UNITED BULGARIA,
COLLOTYPE VIEWS AND PORTRAITS FROM SEVENTEEN PHOTOGRAPHS BY
KARASTOJANOFF OF SOFIA, CAVRA OF PHILIPPOPOLIS,
AND O MARCOLESCO OF TIRNOVA,

And Numerous Woodcuts and Vignettes Engraved from
Original Sketches by the Author

Post Tenebras Lux

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ERRATA.

Page 17, note, "Joreček" should be "Jireček."

" 45, " - "Kaintz" should be "Kanitz."

" 112, line 14, "Biela" should be "Gabrovo."

P R E F A C E.

THIS treatise is intended as a companion and complementary to my former work on Roumania. Whilst, however, very little has been written in our language on that country, the reader will find in one of the Appendices attached hereto a list which includes no less than twenty-four original and translated works on Bulgaria in English alone. He may be disposed to ask, then, on what grounds I have added another to the number; and whilst such an inquiry would be quite pertinent, and I shall no doubt feel the consequences should my treatise be found to contain nothing new worth recording, it must be admitted that the employment of so many pens affords at least a convincing proof of the absorbing interest of the subject.

Many of the works which I have catalogued have, however, been quite fugitive; some purely controversial, and others so completely partisan as to be robbed of much of their value for purposes of information. It has been my endeavour to put the reader in possession of a few of the most important historical events in Bulgaria from the earliest period, and by means of illustrations as much as by verbal description to enable him to judge of its condition at the present time. If he wishes to study the past history and the present state of the country in greater detail, I would recommend him (without prejudice to any of the other valuable works on the subject) to read Jireček's "*Geschichte der Bulgaren*," warning him, however, that in the history of this country, as in that of Roumania, dates, genea-

logies, and precise historical names must not be accepted with implicit confidence. He will also find in Krek's learned treatise, referred to in the text, a valuable guide to the knowledge of Slavonic customs and literature. Following upon these works, he may have in those of Von Huhn (translated into English) interesting details of recent events in Bulgaria; whilst Holland's "European Concert on the Eastern Question" will place him in possession of the text of every treaty bearing upon the subject under consideration. And, finally, if he have the patience to wade through a voluminous blue-book, the dispatches of our representatives at foreign courts relating to Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia (in "Turkey, No. 1, 1887") will give him much original matter for reflection upon the events which occurred in the Balkan Peninsula during the year 1886, a year that was fraught with danger to the liberties of Bulgaria. As regards the geographical and social state of North Bulgaria, there are many useful and interesting works extant; but if the reader desires to traverse every mountain-pass and to study every important locality in that part of the country, to learn how many huts each little hamlet contains, and what is or was the nationality of its occupants, if he would delight his eyes with numerous xylographic illustrations of places and recent events, and, above all, if he desires to preserve a somewhat idealistic in preference to a realistic remembrance of the interesting country, I would recommend for his perusal Kanitz's well-known work, "Donau-Bulgarien und der Balkan."

So far as my own sketch of Bulgarian history is concerned, I have laboured under some disadvantage in having already written that of Roumania; for at various periods the two histories overlap one another, and I have hesitated to repeat here what has already been said elsewhere. The reader will, therefore, I hope, not attribute to egotism occasional references to my earlier work. Whether he will be disposed to deal so leniently with other instances in which my own personality has

been obtruded into these pages, I greatly question; but even for those trespasses on my part there is some justification. Some of my generous critics expressed disappointment that I should not have communicated more freely my own views and experiences in Roumania; and in seeking to remedy what they considered a defect, I shall probably have laid myself open to the charge of egotism—it may be of levity. It was said, too, by the same authorities, that I had been blind to the faults of the Roumanians; that my book contained nothing but praise, and no blame. Well, I have endeavoured to remedy that defect also in the present volume, and I hope that, in seeking to avoid Scylla, I may not be engulfed by Charybdis! However much I may have rallied the Bulgarians, good-naturedly, I trust, upon some of their weaknesses, I have not forgotten, nor must the reader forget, that their national imperfections are largely due to the fact that they have but recently begun to breathe the atmosphere of freedom; that Mussulman rule weighed upon the country for centuries like a nightmare, and that when the Russians tendered them their liberty with one hand, with the other they dealt out humiliation and corruption.

In my former work I spoke of the folly of prophesying on the Eastern Question; and although I have not attempted here to predict what will be the combination revealed by the next turn of the political kaleidoscope, I have considered it safe and consistent with the objects of the present treatise to scan cursorily the present aspect of the question, and to afford such of my readers as are precluded by their occupations from making it a special study some assistance in following the future course of events in the East. As regards our own policy, I have nothing to add to what I have already said elsewhere, and repeat in the present chapter on the subject. If it be considered undesirable that the Turk should remain in Europe (and I do not by any means assert that to be the case), surely no person who has studied history, or who knows anything about the present con-

dition of Russia, will venture to affirm that his place should be filled by the Muscovite !

Whether the rampart of freedom in South-Eastern Europe is to be a Danubian Confederation, or a Garibaldi or a Bismarck is to arise and unite the scattered and incoherent territories as they now exist there, or, finally, whether each individual State is to grow in strength and influence as a counterpoise to the overbearing military empires of our Continent, no one can prognosticate; and yet our course is, under any circumstances, sufficiently plain. That should not be guided by selfishness nor by timidity (I will not use a stronger expression), nor should it be governed by considerations of expediency alone; but in the future, as in the past, our policy should be to further the cause of justice, of liberty, and of civilisation.

JAMES SAMUELSON.

CLAUGHTON, BIRKENHEAD,
December 6 1887.

NOTE TO PREFACE.

WHILST the following pages have been passing through the Press, I have had the advantage of reading the work just published on "The Present Position of European Politics," by the author of "Greater Britain," and its important bearing upon the subjects here treated must serve as my excuse for making a very brief reference to some of the views of the talented statesman from whose pen it emanates, with which I am not in complete agreement. As to Russia, he seems to me greatly to over-estimate the power of numbers. Hitherto she has fought on her own soil; or with an unbroken line of communication in friendly states supported by the population; or against poorly-equipped Turkoman hordes. And yet in the Crimea, fighting in her own territory and in her own defence, her numbers availed her little. More recently, at Plevna, although she took the credit of the final victory, it was the Roumanians who made the breach and held the fort, whilst time after time her vast masses of troops served only to fill the trenches with tens of thousands of her slain, and to satiate the thirst for blood of her Skobelevs! As regards Roumania, the author rates her, in such a short war as he believes wars will be in future, as the sixth military power in Europe (p. 208), placing this country below her in the scale. Here too I think his estimate ranks her too highly, and I hope his undoubtedly authoritative opinion may not inspire the Roumanians with too great confidence. At the same time I am rejoiced to find the reasons given in my last chapter, "Why Russia does not occupy Bulgaria," receiving such valuable support; and if the recent semi-official utterances of Russia are

worth anything, the cause of her present "moderation" is not far to seek. My further views, which must be taken for what they are worth, will be found in the last chapter. As to the work above referred to, I should like to add that, although recent events on the Continent must necessarily modify some of the author's conclusions, I think that in throwing over the traditions of diplomacy and giving the world the benefit of his experience in foreign affairs, he has rendered great service to his country (and to others also if they would but see their true interests), and he has produced the most valuable contribution to contemporary history that has yet appeared.

January 2, 1888.

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APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

ESTIMATED BUDGET OF UNITED BULGARIA FOR 1887.

REVENUE.		EXPENDITURE.	
<i>Direct Taxes.</i>		Ministries of—	Francs.
1. Dimes (tithes on agricultural products, commuted) . . .	16,200,000	1. War . . .	18,207,349
2. Land and house tax . . .	4,500,000	2. Public Instruction . . .	2,314,335
3. Licenses . . .	2,000,000	3. Foreign Affairs (including Public Worship, Post and Telegraphs) . . .	3,768,862
4. Taxes on sheep and goats . . .	4,800,000	4. Justice . . .	3,486,742
5. Taxes on pigs . . .	250,000	5. Interior . . .	6,742,480
6. Taxes on rents of houses and buildings . . .	200,000	6. Finance and Public Works . . .	9,148,676
7. Road-tax . . .	1,857,508	7. Interest on public debt . . .	2,239,898
<i>Total direct, . . .</i>	<u>29,807,508</u>	8. Crown and National Representatives . . .	1,529,092
<i>Indirect Taxes.</i>			
1. Tobacco, excise and import . . .	3,298,000		
2. Spirits . . .	900,000		
3. Customs duties on imports . . .	4,900,000		
4. Customs duties on exports . . .	530,000		
5. Customs, sundries . . .	1,078,000		
6. Revenue from woods and forests . . .	680,000		
7. Government buildings (stores, &c.) . . .	113,000		
8. Lignite mines . . .	45,000		
9. Fisheries, &c. . .	300,000		
10. Government printing-offices . . .	396,000		
11. Revenue from law tribunals . . .	977,980		
12. Post and telegraphs . . .	1,087,400		
13. Salt monopoly . . .	1,500,000		
14. Sundries . . .	360,018		
15. Occasional revenue . . .	1,245,360		
<i>Total revenue, . . .</i>	<u>47,218,266</u>		
<i>Deficit balance, . . .</i>	<u>219,168</u>		
	47,437,434		
or, roughly estimated, . . .	<u>£1,890,000</u>		
		<i>Total expenditure, . . .</i>	<u>47,437,434</u>
			P

APPENDIX II.

THE MOST IMPORTANT DECREES OF THE CONSTITUTION OF BULGARIA.

Concerning the Principality: that its boundaries shall only be changed by the Great Sobranje (National Assembly); that it shall be divided into Prefectures, Sub-Prefectures, and Communes, of which the last named shall be autonomous (cap. i.).

Concerning the Prince: he shall be hereditary in the male line; his person is sacred and inviolate; in him vests the legislative power, conjointly with the National Assembly, the command of the national forces, the sanction and, jointly with the Ministers, the promulgation of the laws, the executive power, the right to pardon and commute the sentences of criminals (except Ministers violating the Constitution), the representation of the nation with Foreign Powers (cap. ii.). It fixes his salary (Civil List) at 600,000 francs (cap. viii.); recites the oath to be taken by him to preserve the Constitution (cap. vii.); decrees that every Prince after the first must belong to the State Church, which is the Oriental Church subject to the Synod (cap. ix.); and it provides for a Regency in case the Prince is a minor (cap. vi.).¹

Concerning freedom of Worship: every religious denomination may be professed without disabilities (cap. ix.).

Concerning the Laws: decrees that all laws must be voted by the Assembly, or, should emergency necessitate the promulgation of a law by the Council of Ministers, then its confirmation by the Assembly.

Concerning Citizenship, Naturalisation, &c.: defines the conditions of both; abolishes class distinctions, titles of nobility, &c.; forbids slavery in any form, torture, domiciliary visits; makes military service compulsory; declares letters to be inviolate, primary education gratuitous, the press free, press offences subject to the courts, the right of assembly and association unrestricted, if in conformity with law and order; gives the right of petition (cap. xii.).

Concerning the National Representation: decrees two National Assemblies (Sobranjes), the Ordinary, and the Great or Extraordinary Parliament. The *Ordinary Assembly* consists of deputies of thirty years and over, able to read and write, one to be chosen from every 10,000 inhabitants of both sexes, for a term of three years, by citizens of twenty-one years and over, possessing civil rights. It is presided over by a President and Vice-Presidents, who, along with Ministers, may participate in its deliberations. Contains instructions as to convocation, procedure, powers and privileges of members, the Budget, State loans, &c. (cap. xiii.-xix.). The *Great or Extraordinary Assembly*² must be convoked to consider questions of territorial changes, revision of the Constitution, election of Regents, or of a new Prince, in case the reigning one dies without issue. It is composed of deputies, two for every 10,000 inhabitants, and may not consider the ordinary affairs of State (cap. xx.).

The Council of Ministers: its powers, duties, and responsibilities are defined by cap. xxi., and the *Revision of the Constitution* by cap. xxii.

The "Constitution" contains decrees on many other subjects of lesser importance, such as the residence of the Prince; the arms and colours of the Principality; State property; taxes; regulations for the introduction of laws, &c.; and the whole occupies 169 clauses. It was passed at Tirnova on the 16th-28th April 1879, the Assembly of Notables comprising 213 persons, by whose signatures it is attested.

¹ There does not appear to be a provision in any part of the Constitution for a Regency, or for any kind of Government in case of the abdication of the Prince.

² The Ordinary Assembly meets at Sofia, the Great one at Tirnova.

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APPENDIX IV.

Whilst the preceding pages are passing through the press, the author has received from Sir Thomas Sanderson (Foreign Office, to whom he is indebted for several printed reports, &c.),

CONSULAR REPORT No. 237, BULGARIA (1887),

by Mr. O'Connor (Mr. Hardinge, Second Secretary), Sofia, October 15, 1887, the following extracts from which will be interesting to British readers:—

“The accompanying tables, which have been supplied by the Bulgarian Government, showing the imports and exports of the Principality for the years 1885 and 1886, contain information of considerable interest, although, from the manner in which these statistics have of necessity been compiled, owing to the course of late political events, it would be difficult to base upon them with any precision considerations relating to the commercial prosperity of Bulgaria, and her commerce with other countries.”

EXTRACT FROM TABLES.

	1885.	1886.
British imports . . .	{ frs. 11,129,008 or £445,160	{ frs. 15,829,805 or £663,192
Total imports . . .	{ frs. 38,843,517 or £1,553,740	{ frs. 61,687,169 or £2,467,486
Percentage of total . .	28.6	25.6

(The figures for 1886 include both Bulgarias (North and South), and for 1885, North Bulgaria, and South only to November.)

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS FROM AND TO AUSTRIA-HUNGARY AND GREAT BRITAIN.

	1885.		1886.	
	Imports.	Exports.	Imports.	Exports.
Austria . . .	£411,362	£36,614	£659,263	£97,380
Great Britain .	445,160	491,106	663,192	183,427

The most important on the list in 1886 is Turkey, from which country the imports in 1886 amounted to about £516,000; the exports to about £670,000; the exports to Great Britain in that year being exceptionally low. After Turkey, the figures rarely exceed £100,000 for any other country.

“The opening up of the country by the promised railways is one more reason for urging the establishment of depots in the different commercial

centra. British manufactures, of superior quality to the Austrian wares now scattered broadcast throughout the country by Austrian commercial travellers, could then be retailed to purchasers who, by being able to see and handle the goods in the depot, would in a very short time learn to distinguish a good from an inferior article, and to recognise the advantage of buying goods of superior quality, even at slightly higher prices. Such a scheme, if properly carried out, would possess possibilities of immense extension, and might be the means of largely increasing British commerce in the Balkan Peninsula. To secure these results enterprise on a solid basis is necessary, coupled with good management and intelligent watching of the development of the needs of a population which, however backward, is now gradually awakening to Western ideas, and to the need of Western civilisation."

"The principal British imports are metals in the rough, rough copper and tin, iron bars and girders, tin-plates, &c. In proportion as the country becomes opened up by increased facilities of communication, there will no doubt be a gradually increasing demand for articles pertaining to this industry, and especially for all implements and machinery connected with agriculture; this is a subject to which attention should be paid by the iron industry in Great Britain."

The above extracts, as the reader will notice, completely confirm the statements in the text, that little reliance can be placed at present on values and statistics, and the author's advice that wholesale houses in Great Britain should send out pioneers, and that agricultural implement makers and persons in the iron trades should be watchful of the course of events in Bulgaria.

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