

A New Phase of the Eastern Question

WHAT SHALL BE DONE WITH CONSTANTINOPLE?

(The New York Journal of Commerce).

Whatever may happen to Russia, and fortunately things seem to be happening for the best, the new Russia will not come round to the attitude of the old one in regard to Constantinople. There is a substantial agreement among all the Allies that the Turk must go, but it is no longer Russia who is the destined heir of the sick man's inheritance. When Minister of Justice in the Provisional Government M. Kerensky declared in favor of the internationalization of Constantinople, the Provisional Government, in its official declaration of April 9, said that "free Russia does not aim at the domination of other nations, at depriving them of their national patrimony or at occupying by force foreign territories, but its object is to establish a durable peace on the basis of the rights of nations to decide their own destiny. The Russian nation does not lust after the strengthening of its power abroad at the expense of other nations." The declaration was seconded and made more specific by the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates, who said that no conquests of the Straits and no partition of Austria would be tolerated by their representatives either in Petrograd or at the front. Even the organ of the radical commercial class has placed on record its opposition to the policy of conquering Constantinople.

Yet it was chiefly for commercial reasons that Russia desired to control the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. Her chief agricultural districts, the Black Earth Provinces, lie in the south, and thus the bulk of her grain exports are shipped by way of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. The Black Sea-Mediterranean route and the freedom of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles are vital to the economic life of Russia because at these two points Russian trade and industry can be strangled. England had opposed Russia's occupation of Constantinople in the past largely from prejudice to which the First Napoleon and Bismarck equally catered. Austria objected to the Russian acquisition of Constantinople on the ground that a greatly enlarged Russia would combine with the Austrian Slavs—that Austria and Hungary would be swallowed up in the pan-Slavonic flood. But perhaps the real objection on the part of Austria to the Russian acquisition of Constantinople was that the Austrians themselves had cherished the dream of supremacy in the Balkan Peninsula, of dominating Constantinople and Salonica, and of using the Constantinople position as a stepping stone whence to conquer and to dominate Asia Minor and the lands beyond. Briefly, the Eastern question, as hitherto understood, was the question whether Russia, or Austria backed or impelled by Germany, should dominate Constantinople, the point where three continents meet and whence it was believed the three continents might be ruled.

The Constantinople position may be approached from the north only by two ways by land, either by way of Roumania or by way of Serbia. Through Serbia runs the strategic route which connects Paris, Berlin, Vienna and Budapest with Constantinople by way of the Morava Valley, of Belgrade and Nish. Thus Serbia and Roumania may be regarded as the two sentinels that will guard Constantinople, or, looking at the matter from another point of view, that will separate Central Europe and Russia. In presence of the new attitude of the Russian Government and people, when the Turk has gone, the Straits must be controlled by a new administration, which will be supreme in the territory on both shores and as far inland as is necessary to safeguard the strategic position. The boundaries would thus run, on the European side, within a line drawn from near Ereğli on the coast of the Sea of Marmora, to the neighborhood of Ormanlu on the Black Sea; and in Asia west of a line drawn between Deredje and Kilis. The territory would also include the islands of the Sea of Marmora, the peninsula of Artaki, the whole district of the Troad and the Gallipoli peninsula, with sufficient hinterland for protection, and the islands of Imbros and Tenedos. In a survey of the question in his recent book, "Nationality and the War," Arnold Toynbee suggests that the best solution of the international problem, which must be created by the expulsion of the Turk from Constantinople, would be to place the administration of the Straits in the hands of the United States. This plan, which even its author regards as somewhat Utopian, is still held to be the only one possible owing to the dearth of international organization, which is largely responsible for Europe's present pass.

Book Reviews

"Elements of Business Law," with illustrative examples and problems, by Ernest Huffcut, revised by Prof. Geo. Gleason Bogert, of Cornell University College of Law, has just been published by Ginn & Company, 15 Ashburton Place, Boston. Price \$1.12.

It was the good fortune of the reviewer to sit in his class-room when the late Dean Huffcut lectured at Cornell and was at his best and the reviewer would subscribe to Professor Bogert's words in his preface when he says that Dean Huffcut's legal exposition in class-room or in printed text was distinguished by remarkable analytical power and by singular clarity and accuracy of expression.

Although this book deals with American law it will be found of great use in Canada now that we are (and properly so) finding that it would be desirable if we had greater uniformity in the laws of our provinces and also in the laws of different countries, and particularly adjoining countries.

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An attractive and useful booklet has just been issued by National Trust Company, Limited, entitled "How the Law Distributes Property of an Interstate."

While not intended as a text-book it will be found to be of value for reference. Probably most readers will be pleased that completeness of statement has necessarily been sacrificed to conciseness. The schedule with the notes and references which follow it, cover the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, the provinces in which this trust company does business.

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"Thrift, thrift, Horatio! The funeral baked meats. Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables."

HAMLET, Act I, Scene ii.

Bolton Hall, a New York lawyer with a vision, and son of the famous Dr. John Hall, dedicates his book "Thrift" to "All intelligent persons who want to be good, as well as happy and prosperous, and who find it inconvenient to be poor."

The first few lines of the first chapter give an indication of what one need not expect.

"In the dark ages Samuel Smiles wrote a Sunday School book about Thrift; be-good-and-be-happy dope; save a penny a day and you will be rich—if you marry the boss's daughter."

"You will find it in the morgue department of the libraries still. By the aid of strong tobacco I read into it and into many 'success' books for the blind; also I have studied numerous salesmanship works upon how to sell your soul with your goods."

This book is different from the ordinary skimp and stinge sermon and should be read by thousands who would not look at a book on "How to Save on \$6.00 a Week." Anyone who is living even on twice that needs not to save it but to be saved from it.

"Thrift" is published by B. W. Hubsch, 225 Fifth Avenue, New York, at \$1.00.

AGAINST HEREDITARY.

(Toronto Globe).

The unanimity of the Canadian Press against the granting of hereditary titles in Canada is refreshing. Parliament should demand the discontinuance of the practice. The subject is not taboo, as sycophants would have it.

Writing in the "Contemporary Review" for June, Mr. Noel Buxton is quite prepared to accept Mr. Toynbee's suggestion as a practical one. As the matter appears to him, American public opinion would have to be prepared for such a breach with all the past national traditions, but the lessons of this war will, he thinks, have taught America the impossibility of isolation. If she consented to undertake such a responsibility, she would be performing an act of real international generosity; and she would also be furthering her own interests by thus guaranteeing peace in the future. Having no private interests in the Straits, being moreover one of the strongest powers in the world, and having links of friendship with the peoples of the territory through the absorption of immigrants from Eastern Europe, the United States is regarded as exceptionally well fitted for the task. Of course, the solution, whether it is the ideal one or not, would necessarily be of a temporary nature. That is to say, if a common European patriotism should develop, the charge which it is proposed to place in our hands could be safely transferred to a joint body. Perhaps no more striking illustration could be given of the new international relations created by the present war than the serious discussion of such a proposal.

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