

the Japanese War, and then to some extent in a state of collapse, witnessed a fresh burst of Austrian activity in the Balkans. In January 1908 Aehrenthal announced that the Turkish Government had given Austria a concession to construct a railway in the Sandjak from Uvaes to Mitrovitza; this would have linked up the Austrian railway system in Bosnia to the Turkish main line to Salonika, and threatened to put the commercial supremacy of the Balkans in her hands. Servia at once protested, and proposed to make a line from the Danube to the Adriatic, thus turning the stream of trade from East to West, not to mention military considerations. Italy, it is worth noticing, supported the Servian alternative, and the Banca d'Italia promised £1,600,000 to the undertaking. But in July came the outbreak of the Turkish Revolution and the first breath of the great tempest that has destroyed so many Balkan landmarks. In the autumn the German Powers determined to test the situation. On October 7 an imperial rescript of the Emperor Francis Joseph declared the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and restored the Sandjak to Turkey; Bulgaria, by previous arrangement, at the same time declared its complete independence of the Porte. The annexation did not please Italy, and the small crumb of comfort that Austria gave her by abrogating Article 29 of the Treaty of Berlin and allowing Montenegro more freedom of action in her own ports was not looked upon as adequate compensation, rather as an act of tardy recompense. Tittoni's handling of the situation was considered weak, and if the Slav States had risen to the opportunity, it is possible that Italy would have ranged herself on their sides. But when Servia appealed to Russia for support, she found no response. Russia was not yet sufficiently recovered from