

While this is being penned, word comes to us of a well-founded report which is being given credence in London, affirming that a Russo-Turkish alliance has been formed, the significance and far-reaching effect of which must be obvious to everybody.

Where will this all end? What may we expect the outcome of this enmity toward England to be?

In regard to the latest phase of the case; if *an understanding* has been arrived at between autocratic Russia and Mohammedan Turkey which relegates to the former special privileges denied other European powers, the war cloud would seem to hang ominously low.

For many years it has been a cardinal principal with British statesmen, and a policy laid down and strictly adhered to by Conservative and Liberal governments alike, that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire is imperative to the safety of British possessions in the East.

Time and again has Great Britain insisted on the policy of non-interference by Russia in Turkish affairs. Repeatedly has the Russian Government been notified that the occupation of territory not belonging to it would prove a *casus belli*.

That doctrine must be adhered to still. England cannot back down at this late day, even though Russia should imagine her isolated and alone. To recognize such a treaty would be to disregard the principles which British statesmen in the past have been prepared to uphold to the end.

It is essential to the safety of Her Majesty's Indian possessions that a policy of non-interference be followed.

Russian domination at Constantinople and Russian control of the Dardanelles and Black Sea would mean that the Government of the Czars had obtained that for which it has been striving since the days of Peter the Great,—a Mediterranean seaboard.

This, the British have been taught to believe, would be a menace to the Empire.

From an impregnable position at the Dardanelles, Russia could, at will, harass British trade and interests in the Mediterranean while holding in perfect secu-

urity, by the command of the Strait of the Bosphorus, her own seaports on the Black Sea. The absorption of Turkey would rapidly follow and Russian aspirations having been realized in Europe, the Czar could then turn his undivided attention to the subjugation of India, which country was part of the great continental empire planned by the ambitious shipbuilding Peter.

It may be that Russia is acting in this with the concurrence of the other powers of Europe, in which event it would seem to require the most skilful diplomacy on the part of England to checkmate the play.

The existence of such a treaty is a possibility but hardly a probability, nevertheless, taken in conjunction with the many other threatenings and forebodings the rumor is an uncanny one.

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At this *fin de siècle* time the thought comes to us that with the rapidly advancing and near at hand twentieth century, the telegraph and telephone systems are likely to supercede the postal-mail service of the present day. This brings up the question as to whether these systems should not be under Governmental control. Every civilized country, with the exception of ours, has long since made the telegraph a part of the postal service; and in all it has worked satisfactory. The rates in Great Britain and Ireland are, like postage, uniform for all distances, and are two cents per word. In France and Belgium the rate is under ten cents for ten words between any two points. In Germany the rate is a trifle less than two cents per word, and in Austria one cent per word. No department of the Post-Office in any of these countries pays better than the telegraph. And in some countries the telephone, too, has been added. It is very certain that the telegraph and telephone as parts of our postal service would wonderfully improve the means of intercourse. A very cheap uniform rate—say five cents per message, should be made. This would pay a handsome revenue to the Government. Is it not time Canada made a move in this direction?