

# THE CANADIAN WEEKLY STAMP NEWS

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, DEC. 10th, 1896.

No. 16.

(Continued from last week.)

## THE STAMPS OF BULGARIA.

demanding that it should accept their protection. Upon the refusal to accede to this demand, a long war followed, which left Bulgaria in such a weak condition that it fell easily into the hands of the Turks when they made their appearance in Europe.

From 1392 until 1879 it was a province of the Turkish empire, and during that time retrograded lamentably. The "unspeakable" Turk distinguished his rule here, as elsewhere, by mal administration and oppression of the worst kind.

As was the case with Roumania, Bulgaria owed its deliverance from the Turks to Russia. Emperor Alexander II came to the rescue of the Christians of Turkey and tributary states in their struggle for liberty, and the Russia-Turkish War of 1877 resulted. As this ended disastrously for Turkey, the demands of Russia for reforms in the Balkan states were granted to a large extent.

By the treaty of Berlin, Bulgaria was made a tributary principality of the sultan with a Christian government, a national militia and the right to make its own laws. A prince was to be elected by the people and confirmed by the porte with the consent of the powers. That portion of Bulgaria south of the Balkans was to have a Christian governor appointed by the sultan, to serve for a term of ten years, this appointment to be confirmed by the powers.

Alexander of Battenburg, brother of the late Prince Henry of Battenburg, was elected prince in April, 1879, and duly confirmed. Things did not run smoothly in the new state, however. Ministerial crises and internal dissensions of all sorts embarrassed the government. The inhabitants of South Bulgaria, that part under the Turkish governor, were constantly clamoring for union with the principality. The efforts of the national party to bring this about and the repeated interference of Russia in the affairs of the country, caused continual uproar.

The fact that Russians were in possession of positions in the cabinet and

in the civil and military service was a severe blow to the national pride. The national assembly opposed the foreign officials, and as the prince did not support them, the Russians gave up their places and left the country. This resulted in very strained relations between Russia and Bulgaria.

The South Bulgarians revolted, made their governor a prisoner and invited Prince Alexander to rule over them also. He accepted and declared the two portions of the country united. This action was, of course, contrary to the conditions of the Treaty of Berlin, but rather than provoke another war, the porte allowed matters to remain as they were, and while South Bulgaria nominally belongs to Turkey, it is really in the hands of Bulgaria.

The enlargement of Bulgaria was observed by Servia with jealous eyes, and that country declared war against Bulgaria in 1885. The Servians received a good drubbing in the short campaign that followed, but no change was made in the conditions of the countries.

In spite of these successes, Prince Alexander's government did not get on well, and various conspiracies against him were discovered. Finally he was kidnapped by Russian agents and taken to Russia. He returned to Sofia later, and was received by the people with enthusiasm, but as it was impossible for him to obtain the good will of Russia, he resigned his position and left the country.

Prince Waldemar of Denmark was offered the vacant throne, but declined with thanks, for which action he was certainly not to blame. After searching around Europe for a suitable prince, the sobranje elected (1887) Prince Ferdinand of Coburg, the present ruler.

His has not been a bed of roses since that time, as the powers have never confirmed his election, and it can truly be said that "uncasy sits the head that wears the crown" in this case, as the crown has never been very steadily set upon it.

The assassination of the patriotic ex-minister, Stambuloff, some months ago, reflected very badly on the government, as it is believed that the

murder was instigated by it. Stambuloff was the foremost man of the new Bulgaria.

As mentioned above, Prince Ferdinand is now trying to get into the good graces of the St. Petersburg government. Whether he succeeds or meets the same fate as Prince Alexander remains to be seen.

The sobranje is a representative body, being elected by universal manhood suffrage for a term of three years. Each 100,000 inhabitants are represented by one member. The executive power is invested under the prince in a council of six ministers.

The estimated area of Bulgaria proper is 24,860 with a population of over 3,000,000; that of Eastern Roumelia (South Bulgaria) is 13,500, with a population of 960,000. The capital, Sofia, has over 90,000 inhabitants.

—American Philatelic Magazine.

## OTTAWA NOTES.

Without doubt Mr. Mulock is endeavoring to get something more than a cursory idea of the ramifications of his extensive department. He knows that Rome wasn't built in a day, neither can the biggest department in the public service be reformed in a week. One point was settled by Mr. Mulock lately which will commend itself to business people. Some time ago mention was made of some ill-feeling on the part of merchants in Toronto, because they had been forbidden to sell postage stamps, which come to them in the shape of remittances. It appears that the licensees to sell stamps receive their permits on the distinct understanding that they must purchase their supplies from the Government, and no person is allowed to sell stamps unless he has a stamp vendor's license. This is a provision in the Postoffice Act, not a mere arbitrary ruling on the part of the department. The reason for it is that, if the sale of stamps were unlicensed it would leave so many opportunities for boys to steal them, and it was with the specific object of preventing speculation of stamps that the provision was inserted in the Postal Act. To meet the grievance that merchants, who receive stamps as