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BALKAN WAR. WHEN war is threatened through conflict of national interests, or through international misunderstandings, there is always hope of averting it by resorting to diplomacy or friendly intervention. When war is threatened through international, racial or "religious" hatred, diplomacy can do little. Few wars are really due to the ostensible reasons. Nations fight because they want to fight, and fight when they feel ready to fight or think they see opportunity to take each other at a disadvantage. The present outbreak in the Balkans has created anxiety in western Europe altogether out of proportion to the sympathy for the belligerents now involved because danger is recognised of the more civilised powers being drawn into the turbulent vortex. Probably most of the great powers would have preferred peace for the present, but the people of the Balkan states and Turkey having rushed precipitately into war to prevent intervention in the interests of peace, there is no knowing how soon some of them may feel impelled by self-interest or through mutual distrust to take action that may provoke a general European conflagration. Just as war has been hastened by mutual suspicions and anticipation of war between Turkey and the Balkan states, so war may be brought about between the Great Powers by similar distrust and fears. Cats and dogs appear to fight less because they want to fight than because they suspect each other's intentions. The danger symptoms now are that Austrian troops have crossed the Austro-Hungarian frontier "to prevent war"; that Russia has undertaken to look after the interests of Balkan subjects in Turkey, and Germany has assumed similar responsibilities for Turkish subjects in the Balkans. The usually well-informed Paris Journal des Debats warns France against weakening the army at home by sending troops to Morocco, and in Berlin fears of a general European conflagration are freely expressed. If Montenegro were left to fight alone the war it has commenced, the Montenegrins would within a short time become a historical expression. That the victors in the struggle as it stands will be content to forego the territorial fruits of victory at the dictation of the great Powers is absurd to imagine. The war promises to be one of the most ferocious and atrocious ever fought. The peoples now engaged on either side are not the kind to show much mercy to men, women or children. Left alone the Turks would probably exterminate their present enemies. That they will be permitted to carry out their programme

is inconceivable. The map of the Balkan peninsula will once more be re-drawn and the re-drawing is fraught with danger to the peace of all Europe. The western nations are ready for war and in recent years they have been talking war so much that they have become dangerously accustomed to the idea. The money markets show little signs of panic as yet and that is a good indication so far as it goes.

PRESIDENT TAFT ON ARMY RESERVES.

AT the unveiling of the memorial at Montpelier, Vt., to Vermont's soldiers in the Civil War, President Taft made a strong plea for a larger trained army reserve. "I want to urge upon the people," said the President, "that as long as war is possible, as long as we are making preparation for war in many directions, certainly the most reasonable preparation that we can make is to arrange a reserve of partially trained soldiers who can be called to the colors when exigency requires, and who can be rapidly whipped into a formidable military force."

We have no doubt that these words coming from the President of the United States, a civilian, will be approved by those patriots who abused veteran soldiers like Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener for giving the same kind of advice to the British people. As the President pointed out, in the next war there will not be four years in which to drill recruits, and training such as that suggested, would possibly be of service in the British Overseas Dominions. The training need not be upon a scale to interfere with the avocations of civil life; and a moderate amount of training would help to equip our men for civil as well as military life. The President added: "We ought also to keep the number of our officers much larger than is needed for the actual command of the men in the army to-day, because officers cannot be trained as quickly as men. We do have more cavalry and artillery in proportion than we have infantry, because cavalry and artillerymen need so much longer to be trained than infantry, and in that respect we have a skeleton army, arranged with some sense according to the necessity in the exigency of war." With a Canadian reserve organized and to some extent trained upon this principle, Canada would never be caught totally unprepared for effective self-defence.