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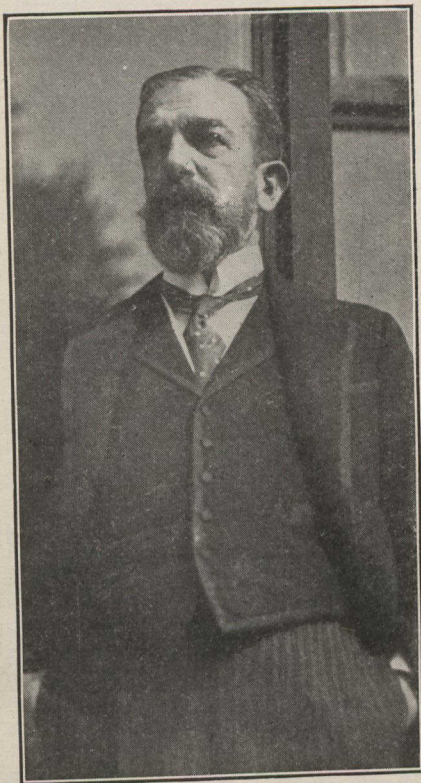


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DELEGATES TO THE PEACE CONFERENCE AT ST. JAMES PALACE, LONDON



Rechid Pasha, Turkish Delegate.



Osman Nizami Pasha.



Tewfik Pasha, Turkish Delegate.



Dmitri Zokow, Bulgarian Delegate.

Men of the Day

THERE is a Peace Conference at St. James Palace, London—to see what can be done during the armistice in the Balko-Turkish war to adjust rival claims. Honorary President of the Conference is Sir Edward Grey, British Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Delegates went from the Turkey and the Balkan States. The Conference is an amiable and at least temporary substitute for what at several times has looked like an Armageddon of the great powers. Europe is much concerned over any settlement of those claims, whether favourable or otherwise. America and Canada are concerned—indirectly. The entire civilized world looks to the Conference, presided over by Sir Edward Grey, as it never looked to The Hague Tribunal, instituted by the Czar of Russia. The Hague is a theory. The Conference is a condition and a fact.

Up till Wednesday of last week there was a two-days deadlock because the Turkish delegates declined to include Greek delegates in the Conference. The Greeks had not signed the armistice. Therefore the Greeks, being still at war with Turkey, could not confer with Turkey. Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro demanded to include the Greeks. The Turkish delegates were compelled to refer to Constantinople for further instructions.

The claims include: cash indemnity, possession of forts, demarcation of boundaries, Turkish representation in territories passing to the allies with Ottoman courts for Mussulman subjects and the possession of numerous islands in the Aegean Sea. In general, the terms formulated by Turkey concede to the allies about four-fifths the territory which formerly made up Turkey in Europe. But behind this there is a long list of disputes and counter-claims, enough to prolong the Conference.

Most conspicuous of all is the desire of Serbia to fortify and occupy Durazzo, an outlet on the Adriatic and eastern port of the coming trans-Balkan railway. This may be taken as the most radical and typical example of what has really caused the war. Serbia has already an outlet at Salonika in foreign territory. Austria, her formidable neighbour, would give her only this. Serbia wants direct access to the Mediterranean through her own territory. Austria is determined that Serbia shall not regain her ancient territory in Albania, which the Emperor wants for an archdukedom. The clash between Serbia and Austria is the direct link between the war and the great powers. Europe is divided between the Triple Alliance, Austria, Germany and Italy, and the Triple Entente, Russia, France and England. Russia aims at the curbing of undue ambition in Austria. France chuckles over the allegation that German war methods as taught to the Turkish army by Von Goltz and his German officers caused the practical defeat of Turkey. One

writer alleges that the real cause was the Christians in the Mahometan ranks. Another scouts the absurdity of the great powers teaching Turkey her duty. He says: "Russia imprisons and kills the flower of her population; England coerces Egypt; Austria robs Turkey of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Italy murders by hundreds the gallant Arabs of Tripoli." Some allege that Turkey has never reformed; some that Europe has no business to teach her. Some Turkish writers admit that Turkey has adhered to the principle, "What business has the foreigner in our house?"

The basic causes of the whole imbroglio affecting the Conference are the impact of modern European ideas on the Slav states, the influx of western commercial travellers into the Balkans, the desire of the Balkans for expansion and consolidation, and the flood of emigration, especially from Turk-ridden Macedonia to America—not excluding Canada.

Historic St. James Palace has been chosen as the seat of conference, betwixt Nelson's monument and Buckingham Palace. Sir Edward Grey, most experienced among all diplomatists in foreign and empire affairs, has been wisely chosen as Honorary President. In his address of welcome, applauded by all the delegates, the Turkish delegates may have detected a slight leaning towards the Balkan interests. But Sir Edward Grey has the acute vision of the experienced statesman who, unmoved by either Oriental mystery or Slavic impetuosity, understands the value of being absolutely judicial.

The latest despatches indicate that Austria and Serbia have settled their disputes at Belgrade. If so, the work of the London Conference will be much easier. The compromise seems to be that Serbia and Austria will give Albania autonomy. Neither will annex it—just now. Serbia gets a commercial port on the Albanian coast connected with Serbia by a neutral railway.

Whatever the truth in this it is quite evident that the strain is lessening in Europe. No power wants war just now. The Balkan States have had pretty nearly enough. Turkey has had more than enough. This Conference will likely be a real peace conference. But will it?



Sir Edward Grey, Honorary President of Conference.