

one—only four sixths thereof. The Militia man consequently, in the course of his six years' service in the force, goes through four trainings. I was afforded the opportunity in the vicinity of Constantinople of closely inspecting a Redif brigade. It consisted of two battalions, come the the previous day from Asia Minor, leaving that evening for the Herzegovina—eight companies of 100 men, splendid fellows. Called out in mid-harvest from a district depopulated by famine, for a cause in which they took no interest, discontent might well be expected to prevail. Never, though, was the Padishah more enthusiastically saluted than by those 1600 voices. One could but feel that with such men any difficulty might be surmounted. But who was to lead the way? One officer, of wretched mien, to each of those strong companies. What mechanical force was there to support the physical? Long rifles and scabbardless bayonets in the case of one battalion, short rifles and swords in the case of the other. Uniformity alone in the dirty, utterly unserviceable state of the weapons.

As to the last unit in the Auxiliary Forces—the National Guard or Mustafiz—it is the very embodiment of theory. It boasts neither organisation, no arms, nor officers, nor cadres save in misrepresentation to the greatest autocrat, the most deluded monarch of the civilized world.

Now as to the Imperial navy, twenty six ironclads, embracing every description of battery, but, with, I understood, too thin plating for these days. The officers are *au complet*, the men about half. How far either the former or the latter are fit for sea, I will not presume to opine. Practice in navigation they certainly never have. All the year round this glorious fleet lies in idle state in front of the Imperial palace. The Sultan gazes thereon from the presence room of Dolma Bagtshé, and believes when he is told that he rules the world. There are none in his service who will undecieve him. He knows no foreign language, and the Turkish prints are under the censor. Financial difficulties are unknown; dreams of troubles do come do not disturb the Imperial slumber.

Summing up his opinion of the Turkish forces, Lieut. Colonel Vincent said:—The men are admirable, but the officers very imperfect. The guns are numerous, but there are no horses to drag them. The rifles are of the best type, and enough of them to give one to each Mussulman in Stamboul, but there are no cartridges. Truly the engines are ready, but there is no motive power. The ally of Turkey will have to supply it. Officers, horses, wagons, ammunition, meth od must be provided before the Turkish forces are really fitted for European service.

The Eastern Question, as stated by the lecturer, is this:—Whether Turkey in Europe must be maintained intact? After expressing the opinion that if Russia were to make a sudden dash by sea and land on Stamboul its fate might be a question of days only, he went on to show that Great Britain is especially interested in the preservation of the Turkish Empire. He said:—I think that recent events have materially altered the position of affairs. The Eastern Question is indeed connected with our road to India. But think not that this road is solely one for the conveyance of our troops, for the passage of our ships. I received the other day a letter from a most excellent official in the great empire of the east, which affirms this view: the road to India means, indeed, one for the transit of men and merchandise, and also one to the hearts, to the loyalty, to the submission of the vast Mahommedan population to the

Supreme Power. This loyalty, this submission, depends much—those who have been in India know how much—on the alliance of the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty with the Caliph of the Prophet, the Sultan of Turkey. Nor are the new rights so patriotically acquired over the Suez Canal, any positive assurance that the material road to India will be for ever secure. So narrow, so shifting, so difficult is the passage that even in time of peace the speed of four knots an hour must not be exceeded. Often and often a vessel runs aground. The treacherous sand is here to-day and there to-morrow. The buoys which yesterday marked the course have now to be moved. I am credibly informed that a single boat in a single night is capable of stopping all safe navigation through the Canal, and will not the able and renewed officer, who, if report runs aright, is entrusted, by leave of his Czar, with the portfolio of war at Cairo, see that land defences guard the water way? In short, to be surprised, if, on some future day, the existence of a Treaty, that you now little dream of, is brought to light. The preservation of Turkey is closely connected with our own highest interests. How do we, then, stand as regards the question in a military aspect? As matters are, I very much doubt if any active interference would have such a reasonable chance of success as to justify its being attempted. The Army which is available for continental operations is too small to render any vast assistance, unless everything be prepared, everything favourable, to the execution of a fixed and definite plan. It might be otherwise, were the Militia liable for foreign service in time of war; a practicable scheme I mentioned here last summer. But we can only take things as they exist. On any attempted rupture of the present *status quo*, it is probable that our Mediterranean fleet would be despatched to the Dardanelles. A large portion of the garrisons of Malta and Gibraltar would be moved at once eastwards. Within ten days forty thousand regular troops would be despatched from our shores, and ten days later might disembark on Turkish soil, *i.e.*, at least three weeks after the declaration of war. Remember that, until that declaration, we could not move a man, for such movement would assuredly constitute a *casus belli* of itself. Three weeks in this age is a long time, and, as you will have gathered, my deliberate opinion is that the Turks do not at this hour possess the means of resisting any skillfully planned and energetically conducted invasion. They will not submit quietly—a St. Bartholomew's day might recur—but I do not think that any firm stand could be made, reasonable chances favouring both sides. Nor is this all. Any British army sent to assist Turkey, to uphold our policy of ages, and from which it would be fatal to depart, would meet with every obstacle long before it came face to face with the aggressor. Nearly everything would have to be furnished from the fleet, for in such a state is the country, that it is almost deprived of the usual means of sustenance. The entire transport would have to be provided. At home, even the service is defective. How, then, would it be possible for us to establish it, within the required time, ready for an arduous campaign, thousands of miles away? Horses, again, we should have to send. Have we them here? Can we have them there? Then, also, engines and pontoon trains, to say nothing of ammunition. This is now the state of affairs. If, say a million sterling were spent in fortifying the Bosphorus, Bourgas, Varna, and the line of the Danube; in organising transport; in providing horses;

it might save many millions hereafter. If officers be sent, or at least encouraged, to go and learn Turkish, to instruct the troops, to stimulate the navy, then British arms will be able successfully to co operate with Turkish battalions. One other thing, too, is all important—the completion of the strategical railway from Adrianople to Shumla. Without that line, I do not see how troops could be moved up to the Danube—how they could be supplied with field equipment.

The lecturer then showed that Austria was in a position to defend Turkey with the immediate aid of 300,000 on the Danube, and trusted that she would, by co operating with England, summarily prevent any attempt to dismember the Turkish Empire.

A few words with reference to France and Germany concluded the lecture, for which a cordial vote of thanks was passed.

CAUSE OF THE TROUBLE—STRENGTH OF THE CONTENTING FORCES.

The following brief review of the causes which have brought about this new conflict will be read with interest in view of the declaration of war by Servia against Turkey: The cause of the quarrel which now arrays the soldiers of the Servian Prince against those of his Suzerain the Sultan was developed towards the close of last year by the attempt of the Turks to collect the taxes payable to the Porte by the inhabitants of Herzegovina and Bosnia, two dependencies of the Turkish Empire, situated on the western side of Turkey in Europe. This imposition of tribute has always been regarded by the Christian subjects of the Sultan as oppressive, and they have never failed, when an opportunity presented itself, to protest against it, either by representations of the great powers or by an appeal to arms. The overpowering force of the Turkish battalions which supported the tax gatherers of the Padishah in their annual visitations to the tributary provinces had up to recently suppressed every attempt at resistance, and the most terrible cruelties are charged against the Turks during the times of this forced collection of taxes. This state of things could possibly have no other termination than in an armed revolt of the oppressed people of Herzegovina and Bosnia, which took place, as we have stated, during the summer of 1875, and has progressed, with varying fortunes for the insurgents, during the past ten months. By a series of onslaughts on detachments of Turkish troops Herzegovinians and Bosnians have inflicted great losses on their ancient enemy, forcing him to organize large armies against them, and often to retreat before their daring attacks. The enterprise of the Herzegovinians and the vigor of their resistance to their enemy is illustrated by the several ineffectual attempts of Muhktar Pacha, with a powerful force, to revictual the fortress of Niesic—a strong position on the northern frontier of Montenegro—until a temporary armistice was declared between the belligerents, and in violation of which the Turkish general threw some supplies into the town. This feat, which was proved to be impossible in the presence of Herzegovinian resistance, enraged the insurgents beyond all hope of peaceful settlement of the quarrel, for they saw in it the evidence of Turkish duplicity and bad faith, and prepared to fight the war to the bitter end.

Any event which in the remotest degree tended to re-open the only half settled Eastern question has been invested with extraordinary gravity by the European Powers, and the highest offices of diplomacy have been invoked to settle the apparently most