

CHAPTER LXVI.

Constantinople.—(Concluded.)

Turkish Burying Grounds of Scutari—English Cemetery and Florence Nightingale's Hospital—American Bible House—Portraits of the Sultans—Rise and Fall of the Janizaries—The Turk—Column of the Three Serpents—Fountains—Censorship of the Press—A Translator Perforce—The Sultan and Laborer.

SCUTARI is the largest of the suburbs of Constantinople, and has been for ages the post station for Asiatic couriers, the rendezvous of caravans from Asia, and is the point where travelers going East begin their journey. It, too, has seven hills.

The burying grounds at Scutari are extensive and beautiful. A careful writer says that probably an accurate census of the present Turkish population would not be found to exceed the twentieth part of the tenants of that single cemetery. Every Turk has his own grave.

The tombstones are of Marmora marble, and those which mark the graves of men have carved upon them a representation of the headdress which they wore in life. Sultan Mahmood's favorite horse is interred in this cemetery under a marble canopy resting upon six columns.

The English burying ground is near the hospital, the scene of the labors which made immortal the name of Florence Nightingale. The tombs of many British officers, some of distinction, are here, and beneath mounds are the remains of eight thousand nameless dead. The hospital has been turned into barracks.

We ascended hills whence we commanded a splendid prospect of Stamboul, the Bosphorus, Sea of Marmora, glimpses of the Black Sea and far-off mountains of Asia and Europe.

The renowned Bible House of Constantinople is well adapted to its purpose; marked in all its departments by evidences of

American energy, and also by indications of conservative management.

Looking from an upper window I perceived a long, low block near by, and said to Mr. Bliss, who was conducting us through the establishment:

"Does the Bible House corporation own that block?"

"It does not."

"When that is removed, if buildings of the character of others in the street are erected, your views from these windows will be cut off."

"No," said he, "they cannot do that; we own the *air*."

"What does that mean?"

"There is a custom in Constantinople of selling the air above houses, which makes it impossible for the owner to build above a certain point, and we have taken the precaution to purchase the air between here and the end of the block."

At the Treasury we saw bowls full of rubies and other precious stones, reminding me of the magnificence of Russia. Thence we went to a kiosk, which commands entrancing prospects of the gardens and the Golden Horn.

One of the members of the "great house of Vanderbilt" was present, and the consul general paid special attention to him and to his party. This made another wealthy citizen of the United States so angry that, like the elder brother in the parable of the prodigal son, he "would not go in," because he could not bear to see the "consul general dancing attendance on Vanderbilt;"—another scene in the ceaseless play of human ambition, the chief actors probably alike unconscious.

Among the remarkable things seen that afternoon was a succession of portraits of the Sultans, from the conquest of Constantinople down to the present time. The contrast between the oriental dress and ferocious aspect of the conquerors and the European attire and mild look of the more recent, is suggestive.

Visiting the scene of their massacre, I inquired into the history and examined the relics of the Janizaries. Beginning as new troops, from which the name is derived, after irregular

service of thirty years, they were organized in 1362, and formed the earliest standing army in Europe.

The southern Slavic kingdoms were conquered, and one fifth of the captives, including all the able-bodied youth, were converted to Islamism and trained as soldiers. Three hundred years ago they were the best disciplined body of soldiers in all Europe. Afterward they deteriorated, for instead of being drawn from the Christian prisoners of war, they were recruited from menials and idlers. They often mutinied, and sometimes deposed Sultans or put them to death, and robbed cities over which they were appointed as guards.

An attempt to discipline them caused the abdication and death of Selim, and on November 14, 1808, they committed the most terrible outrages ever perpetrated in Europe. The new Sultan was compelled to pardon them, but secretly planned their destruction. He allured some of their officers and many Mohammedan priests and dervishes to support his views, and published a decree that from each regiment one hundred and fifty Janizaries should be formed into a regular militia. At this they revolted, and on June 14, 1826, were guilty of frightful outrages. Then came the crisis expected by Mahmood II, when he determined upon their destruction. Troops were in readiness, the sacred standard of Mohammed was displayed, and the best citizens supported the troops. Artillery, already in position, was prepared for the conflict. The end was this: "Burned alive in their barracks; cannonaded in the At Meidan (which we visited), where they made their most desperate defense; massacred singly in the streets during three months; the remainder condemned to exile." More than twenty-five thousand were slaughtered, since which time the Janizaries have ceased to exist. The Mamelukes of Egypt were cavalry; the Janizaries infantry.

The present Sultan is Abdul Hamid II. His brother, Murad, was the legitimate successor, but being deposed because of insanity, his uncle, Abdul Aziz, became the Sultan. He was soon deposed and murdered, and is now popularly spoken of as "Abdul as *was*."

Wherever I went among the Turks I listened and observed; for they differ from any race with which I have been brought in contact.

The term Mohammedan refers to religion; Turk to race. The true name for Mohammedanism is Islam, a religion of Semitic origin; the Turks are of a different descent. There are not more than seven millions of Turks in the world, while there are more than a hundred and fifty millions of Mohammedans. "The Turks had their home in the steppes of Central Asia, and are of the same race as the Tartars of the Crimea, the Kisil-Bash of Armenia, the Kalmucks of the Caucasus, and the Turkomans of Khiva."

The Turkish power originated in a band of Turkish slaves, made the bodyguard of a Caliph of Bagdad. Soon they became masters. A hundred years afterward they embraced Mohammedanism. Their Sultan—which name really means ruler—they called "Protector of the Father of the Faithful." In 1072 the Sultan, Alp Arslan, defeated the Byzantine Emperor, and ruled all Asia Minor. I quote the most condensed statement of their history: "To suppose that such an empire as that of the Turks could have been founded and maintained by simple force, under such strangely exceptional circumstances, is to contradict the plainest facts of human nature. They ruled their empire with a moderation and wisdom long unknown in western Asia, and they treated those of other creeds with a clemency which contrasted favorably with the Christian nations of Europe in that age."

Their recent history is known to students. At present those of Turkish blood are a small minority in the Turkish empire. A particular aspect is common to them;—dreamy, serious, self-contained, grave; a countenance that does not promptly respond, and kindles no enthusiasm. Ideal descriptions of them have been given which would lead one to suppose that they had no thirst for knowledge, desire for gain, or wish to travel; no love, and no ambition. Yet he who sees them transacting business will observe indications of interest, and one who watches closely will find evidences of all the passions of human nature. Indolence, consciousness of superiority, belief in destiny, low views of women, and in the case of the more

bigoted continual doubt and suspicion of all other races, are marked traits.

All that I could gather leads to the conclusion that the name of Turk, like that of Jew, has more odium to carry than it deserves. Hospitality is universal, their system of etiquette elaborately designed to make guests comfortable, and a larger proportion of them than of oriental Christians are true to their religious views. Protestants in Turkey receive better treatment than they would if Russia were in command of the country.

The Turks are not without wit. One specimen which I heard was this: "Said a dervish to a camel: 'What makes your lip so crooked?' to which the camel replied: 'What is there straight about me that you should take exception to my lip?'"

Another was a story of a man who called upon a Turk to borrow his donkey. The owner declared that he was not at home. While the conversation was progressing the donkey from within brayed. Said the applicant: "There, he is here. Let me have him." Said the Turk: "I will lend no man anything who will believe a donkey's voice against mine."

The bronze Column of the Three Serpents, about fifteen feet high, with the tails of the serpents downward and the bodies twisted spirally as far as the necks, is a curiosity. The heads of these serpents formerly spread outward, and supported the golden tripod of the priest of Apollo at Delphi.

An obelisk of Egyptian granite, fifty feet high, stands in the center of the hippodrome. Constantine was obliged to leave the hippodrome unfinished on receiving information that the Gauls threatened to attack Rome.

Another column, nearly one hundred feet in height, formed of pieces of porphyry, joined together with copper rings, is called the Burnt Column, on account of the blackness resulting from fires to which the city has been exposed. Once it was surmounted by a statue of Apollo, the work of Phidias.

Seven Towers, which stand at the southwest angle of Constantinople, where the walls join the Sea of Marmora, remind one of the Tower of London. The Janizaries used this as a

prison for the Sultans whom they had dethroned, or assassinated them there. No less than seven Sultans have been put to death in that way. In this place, in old times, whenever men were thus killed, their heads were hung from the battlements.

The city abounds in fountains, carved with representations of vases filled with flowers and artistic arrangements of fruit. Some are very large, culminating in a series of domes. In the beautiful suburbs of Constantinople are the Sweet Waters of Asia and the Sweet Waters of Europe: these are the parks to which multitudes go. There are fine carriage roads, and to the Sweet Waters of Asia the drive is six miles.

Slavery still exists, but the slave market described by travelers of a few years ago is abolished. The natives of Georgia and Circassia are still brought to Constantinople. These are white slaves: I saw two supposed to have recently arrived. The Circassian women who come to Constantinople from homes of poverty and hardship, on their arrival are not attractive in appearance; but after being subjected to a daily Turkish bath, being protected from the sun, and having the benefit of wholesome food, they become really beautiful in appearance. Turkish wives are not kept in a state of slavery. Those who have opportunity to know say that they have more liberty than European women, being allowed to roam at will through the bazaars and to drive in disguise through the streets. The wives of men of rank are always accompanied by eunuchs, but others are unattended; it was a surprise to me to see them going about the streets with apparent freedom.

The guests of wealthy Turks are treated with hospitality, and all the finery belonging to the women is displayed. Ladies only can obtain admittance to the harems, and one has written an account of what she saw. Speaking of the clothes, she says: "The visitor must express admiration, but not astonishment; for in the latter case she would then be classed as poor, having no fine clothes of her own, and treated during the rest of her visit accordingly." This lady also makes an observation which can be applied in other parts of the world: "Though Turkish ladies will pass over any display of coarseness or rudeness, they are quite able to distin-

guish between any practice which arises from a difference of manners and that which springs from a want of breeding in a woman."

In the streets of Constantinople eunuchs are seen riding with the wives of their owners, or leading children, and are distinguishable by their dress, height, beardless faces, and effeminate manners. They are usually very black.

Dogs run wild, not one in five hundred having an owner; they have a perfect police system, being divided into districts, and if any dog crosses the boundary line by the length of his body all the dogs of that department try to kill him.

Having heard much of the censorship of the press, and having had the opportunity of seeing its workings in Russia, I was interested to ascertain to what supervision literary men are obliged to submit under the present press regulations of Turkey. The editor of a paper in Constantinople must constantly have on hand a certain amount of matter, to serve as harmless padding, to fill the spaces left blank by the censor's pen. Sometimes when the form is ready for the press, and no trouble is anticipated, unexpectedly there arrives an official sheet from the censor, without whose "imprimatur" nothing can be published, and the luckless editor sees, it may be, from a column to a whole page crossed out. One of the most frequent offenders used to fill the spaces with stars and daggers, or other printer's missiles, which when taken with the context would suggest to a shrewd reader what had been omitted. A law was then made that the spaces must be so filled as to give no hint of what had been left out.

Not a great while ago an editorial acquaintance of our informant found that the pen of disapprobation had been drawn through a strictly scientific article upon the rainbow. In utter bewilderment he sought an interview with the censor and respectfully asked why this was condemned. He was told that an article upon the rainbow could not be allowed to appear on account of a stringent order received at that office to permit the publication of no article connected in any way whatever with the subject of astronomy.

In a recently published series of Scripture biographies, the statement that Ruth's connection with the family of Elimelech

became in the order of Providence the means of liberating her from the heathen traditions of her ancestors "was at once detected and erased." The account of David playing the harp before King Saul, and the outburst of passion indulged in by the latter on that occasion, was also stricken out, making a serious break in the narrative.

The most remarkable story that I heard in Constantinople about the censorship of the press was this, which was vouched for on convincing authority: A certain Christian banker or stockbroker of Constantinople, who spent some years in Paris, and understands French and has an unusual command of the Turkish language, occupied his leisure hours in translating into Turkish a chapter from a French book giving the experiences of a detective in working up noted criminal cases.

He had a few copies printed for circulation among friends. A few days after an officer appeared at the office of the author with a copy of this publication and asked if he were the writer. He admitted the fact, adding that he hoped he had done nothing wrong. The officer asked if there were any more of the story. The author replied, "Yes," that there was plenty more of the same material. "Very well," replied the officer, "I will call the day after to-morrow, and you will have ready for me in manuscript sufficient to make another pamphlet of the same size as this which you have printed." The frightened author protested that the time was too short, but the officer gave him a look which gave him clearly to understand that refusal meant danger, and naming again the hour at which he would call for the work, took leave.

The literary aspirant, bewildered and anxious, closed his office, went home, and in thirty-six hours of almost continuous labor accomplished the task assigned and returned to his office. At the appointed hour the mysterious visitor reappeared and demanded the manuscript. With a trembling hand it was passed over to him. He glanced at it a moment, then saying, "Yes, that will do," took leave without offering any explanation.

After two days he again appeared, and said: "See here,

there is more of that story." The writer admitted that there was more. "Very well," was the reply; "the day after tomorrow, at the same hour as before, I will come again. Have ready the same amount of manuscript;" and waiting for no remonstrances the man was gone. Again the broker left business and going home applied himself bravely to the task, secretly regretting that he had ever seen the book from which he was translating. The officer appeared at the appointed time, and receiving the roll of manuscript went away without remark.

After two or three days, as the broker was busy in his office, another officer made his appearance, and after asking, "Are you Mr. So-and-so?" said: "You are wanted; you will come immediately with me." The broker turned pale, and began to beg off; but the officer said: "You have nothing to fear, but you must come immediately with me." The broker followed the officer to the street corner, where they entered a carriage which appeared to be waiting for them, and they were driven to the palace, received with honor by the guards, and shown through a side door to a private room. There the broker was left alone for some minutes, when a high official entered, bearing in his hand the two rolls of manuscript which had been prepared under such pressing orders.

"Are these your writings?"

"Yes, your excellency."

"How much more is there of that book?"

"It is a large volume, your excellency."

"Where is it?"

"At your servant's house, your excellency?"

"You will go along with my officer to your house and fetch that book here to me."

The man accompanied by the officer went home, and in a short time returned bearing the French work from which the extracts had been made. He was asked to point out how far he had translated.

"Very well," said the high official, in a quiet tone, "you will begin there. In the next room you will find an abundance of writing material; also a French-Turkish Dictionary. You will set to work immediately and complete the volume before

leaving the place. There are servants in attendance who have orders to supply all your wants."

"And so," said my informant, "at the time I received the information the lucky or unlucky fellow was still hard at work upon his great literary undertaking. No restrictions were placed upon his communications to his family, but no respite from work was allowed. His business, of course, was suffering, but the possibilities of a brilliant literary career were opening before him."

It is well known that in Turkey a hymnal for the use of Protestants was expurgated, and among other things the piece, "Hold the fort, for I am coming," was stricken out. On literary grounds few would be disposed to condemn the censor for that, but the reason he assigned was that it is adapted to stir up an insurrection.

The story of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, except in its supernatural elements, has been paralleled over and over again in the history of Constantinople. One of the Sultans not so very long ago was in the habit of going about in disguise like the famous Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid. On one occasion, passing a place where a man was excavating a cesspool, he heard him say to himself in a loud voice: "Persevere, my soul, or I will plunge thee into deeper filth than this!"

A few hours afterward an officer approached the unfortunate man, and said to him: "Come with me." Horror took possession of the laborer, who, when found by the officer, was dressed like a gentleman, and was taking his ease in a café. He tried to ascertain why he was wanted; for some went into the secret place under the control of the government, and never came out; but no satisfactory answer could be given. After being detained for a long time in fear and suspense, he was at last brought before a high official, and examined. Finally, he was taken into the presence of the Sultan, who was astonished to see the man, who had been covered with filth a short time before, so well dressed and intelligent in appearance. He said to him: "Are you the man whom I saw at work in a cesspool?"

"I am."

"How is it that I find you dressed in this way?"

"I am well paid for my work, which is very filthy and disagreeable, and afterward I cleanse myself and take mine ease."

"But what did you mean when you said: 'Persevere, my soul, or I will plunge thee into deeper filth than this?'"

The man trembled, knowing that at a word his head might be smitten from his shoulders.

"Speak!" said the Sultan. He answered that a man often says in anger what his heart will not acknowledge.

"But what dost thou mean?"

He hesitated, and the Sultan reiterated his command: "What dost thou mean? What deeper filth is there than that in which thou dost work?"

He still hesitated. The Sultan assured him that no harm should come to him, and the man then replied:

"My work is disagreeable, and I was almost tempted to leave it when I thought, 'I am still free; I am obliged to flatter no one; if I give up this work I may be compelled to take service under the government, to live by flattery and falsehood, and so I said to my soul, 'Persevere, or I will plunge thee into deeper filth than this.'"

The Sultan, according to the story, was so pleased with this answer that he gave him a handsome present and allowed him to go away unmolested.

CHAPTER LXVII.

Flight through Eastern Roumelia, Bulgaria, Servia, Hungary, and Vienna, to Paris and New York.

Adrianople—Philippopolis—Government of Eastern Roumelia—Convention of Protestant Mission Workers—Sofia—Bulgarian Church—Picturesque Costumes—Buda-Pesth—The National Museum—Vienna—Emperor Franz Josef—Paris Exposition.

Soon after leaving Constantinople we entered a charming country of undulating ridges, already covered with the vegetation of early spring. Previous to the treaty of Berlin, Eastern Roumelia was under the direct authority of the Sultan of Turkey. Since that time it has been removed therefrom, and is a tributary principality, enjoying the right of self-government. It is formed of the old provinces of Slivno and Philippopolis, with part of that of Adrianople, and occupies the upper basin of the Maritza River, which is navigable as far as Philippopolis. The view as we rode along was wonderfully beautiful. Villages and towns are far apart, and one might easily have fancied himself traveling through a succession of parks connected with some ancestral estate, his only perplexity that he saw no house or castle, and few persons. Sheep and cattle were grazing, and we saw some fine horses.

Adrianople, one hundred and thirty-seven miles to the northwest of Constantinople, was the first important city through which we passed; next to Constantinople its rank was the highest in European Turkey. For nearly a hundred years, and until they gained possession of Constantinople, the Turks made it the seat of government.

Higher up, on both banks of the Maritza, is Philippopolis, now the capital. This region was part of ancient Thrace, and Philippopolis was founded by Philip, the father of Alexander the Great. Since 1360 the Turks have held it. Immense masses of granite surround and underlie the city; at the base