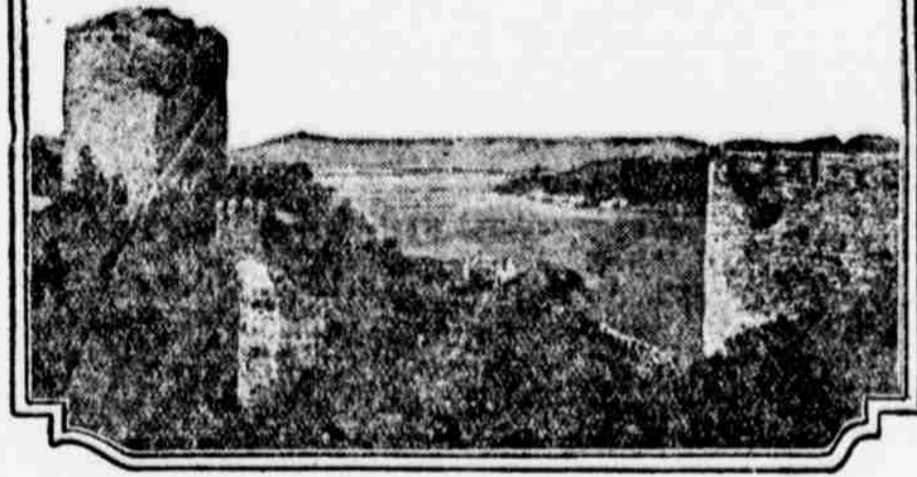


ZONE of the STRAITS



"Cut-throat Castle," Built by Mohammed II.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

An international commission officially rules the destinies of "the Zone of the Straits." Only since the World War has it been a "zone." For centuries it was the heart of Turkey—the Dardanelles, Marmora, the Bosphorus. Over it sat not a commission, but sultans and caliphs, jealous of the demonstrated power of political Islam. And ages earlier Byzantine Greeks, and before them their Ionian and Peloponnesian cousins ruled these same straits. The new commission does not find its rule unquestioned. Descendants of Turk and Greek—Turkish rebels, in open revolt against the commission, and modern Greeks, entirely willing to rule in its stead over the important waterways of their fathers—are fighting it out in the Near East; and the Black sea and its gates are again a field of world events, while Russians, Roumanians and Bulgarians, and the great powers of the West look on, all to be affected whatever the outcome.

This is historic ground and water, from the mouth of the Dardanelles at the tip of the Gallipoli peninsula, to the point nearly 200 miles to the northeastward where the narrower Bosphorus sucks a mighty stream of water from the Black sea. Greek mythology and legend first made them its theater. The legions of the Trojan war, Phryxus and Helle, and Jason and his fellow goldseekers sailed over their waters and around their headlands; and later Greeks, Romans and Genoese built great cities on their shores and established over their waters the world-important trade routes of their days.

Center of the Old World.

It is against the current that flows from the north that civilization as we have known it has worked its way. The first adventure was to enter the Dardanelles or the Hellespont, as the Greeks called it. This is the longer of the two great salt-water rivers that separate Europe from Asia Minor. It winds its way, with two sharp turns and numerous gentler curves, for 40 miles before it expands into the Sea of Marmora, the Grecian Propontis. The strait varies in width from a little over three-fourths of a mile to five miles. On the European side rises the steep ridge of Gallipoli where the ill-fated expedition of Australians and New Zealanders suffered so keenly in the World War. On the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles lies the plain of old Troy and the foot hills of Mount Ida.

The Sea of Marmora from which the Hellespont leads is about 140 miles in length and 40 miles wide at its greatest width, and is thus somewhat smaller than Lake Ontario, the smallest of our Great Lakes. But though relatively small, it has in its time been the center of the world. Probably about no other lake or sea in the world of such a size have so many important cities stood. Of these, Constantinople alone retains importance today; but living and dead cities cover the shores of practically every harbor and headland of the little sea. The settlements that still exist are not even the heirs of the great cities of yesterday, but rather ill-kempt interlopers—squatters—that under Turkish domain occupied their sites.

Colonized by the Greeks.

Colonists from the Greek cities and islands pushed up through the Hellespont and settled on the Propontic shores at the dawn of European history. Byzantium, on the site of present-day Constantinople, was a member of the Second Athenian league; and the Dardanelles, already a Grecian strait, was the scene of the battle which closed the Peloponnesian wars.

The Marmora really came into its own in the period following the death of Alexander when the kingdom of Bithynia flourished on its shores, and Pontus and Pergamos grew to prosperity on either side. Cyzicus on the peninsula of that name on the southern shore of Marmora was the chief city. It was founded earlier than Rome or Byzantium. It had a long life, possessed at various times by Athens, Sparta, Persia, Macedonia, Pergamos and Rome. It was rated one of the splendid ancient cities, and its gold coins were the standard of their day as Florence's florins became in Renaissance times.

But when Byzantium, in its incomparable position by the Bosphorus,

rose to power, the glories of Cyzicus passed away. Today practically nothing is left of the once great city, for Byzantines and Turks alike used the old buildings in the place of natural quarries as sources of stone with which to build the latest metropolises of the Marmora and the Bosphorus.

Nicomedia, now Ismit, at the extreme eastern end of the Marmora, was another city of world importance. Under the Emperor Diocletian it was for a brief time the capital of Rome—and the world. Nicaea, just to the south of Nicomedia and a short distance inland, has three times been the seat of empire. Twice the Turks, before they reached Constantinople, made it a capital rivaling to a degree old Bagdad; and for more than half the Thirteenth century, between its peaks of Turkish brilliance, while the Franks held Constantinople, it was the capital of the Byzantine empire. There, too, the Nicene creed, a landmark in the crystallization of Christian theology was framed.

Chalcedon, Rodosto, Heracleia Perinthos, Selymoria were other centers, no mean cities in their day, which have disappeared or dwindled to insignificance. Thriving communities in almost each case until the Turk appeared on the scene, they have been since touched with the blight of prosperity and progress that is said ever to follow his steps.

Bosphorus Most Important.

Shorter and narrower than the Dardanelles, the Bosphorus, third link in the chain of historic waters that separates Asia Minor and Europe, is perhaps most important; it is the immediate gate to and from the great Black sea which reaches toward the heart of southwest Europe. To dominate it is to dominate one of the world's great trade routes, a fact which has been put to good account from the days of pre-Byzantine Greeks to those of Seljuk Turks. The strait is about twenty miles long and varies in width from 1,500 feet or a third of a mile to two miles. Darius chose not the narrowest but a point at which the shores are more than a half-mile apart as the site for his famous bridge of boats.

The water in the Bosphorus is over 100 feet deep. A mighty current flows along the surface from the Black sea; but beneath the surface a return current of water flows in the reverse direction. A similar inbound current flows from the Mediterranean to the Sea of Marmora, furnishing for the Black sea at least an answer to the old query: Why is the sea salt?

The Seljuk Turks recognized the strategic importance of the Bosphorus; and crossing it above Constantinople in 1452, built on the European shore the old "Cut-throat Castle," only seven miles above the city. With the Bosphorus in their control, they captured the ancient capital the following year.

Until the conclusion of the World War and the adoption of the treaty of Sevres with defeated Turkey, the Turks had sat for over 500 years as the masters of the Bosphorus.

Many Nations Around Black Sea.

At the northern end of the Bosphorus lies the Black sea—a dark, forbidding ocean to the landsman and well worthy of its name. One wonders that the early Greeks named it Euxinos, signifying "friendly to strangers," unless they did so by way of offering a propitiatory complaint to the angry sea god. Here we are dealing with no small sea comparable in size to our lakes, but with a great expanse of water 750 miles long and from 200 to 400 miles wide, which would cover Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama and South Carolina and a considerable part of Tennessee into the bargain.

Around the Black sea are now grouped more nations than its waters have touched, perhaps, at any other time in history. Just beyond the narrow zone of the straits and the tiny patch to which Turkey-in-Europe has shrunk, Greece, forging northward, now has a strip of the coast. Next comes Bulgaria with a shoreline of about 100 miles; and beyond it lies Roumania, occupying the greater part of the western end of the sea. Across the north stretches Russia, and in the east lie Georgia and Armenia. Stretching along the rocky south shore is Turkey-in-Asia. Hardly less interested in the Black sea are inland Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Jugoslavia, whose commerce reaches its waters over the Danube.

But when Byzantium, in its incomparable position by the Bosphorus,

HARD TO EXPLAIN

Happenings in Life Stranger Than Fiction.

Odd Coincidences of Wrecks, and in the Careers of the Ex-Kaiser and Emperor Napoleon.

Coincidences in life are stranger than anything in fiction.

There used to be two steamers called the *Romulus* and the *Remus*. A few years back the former was lost in the English channel. Within three weeks the *Remus* was wrecked a thousand miles away from the scene of her sister ship's disaster.

Many reliable authorities regard the following as the most amazing coincidence on record, says London Answers. More than 200 years ago, Dec. 5, 1684, a boat crossing the Menai straits with eighty-one passengers encountered a terrible gale and foundered. The only man to escape death was a Hugh Williams.

More than 100 years later, Dec. 5, 1780, another vessel, with a large number of passengers, sank in the same circumstances, and in the same spot. All the passengers were drowned except one. His name was Hugh Williams.

Again, Dec. 5, 1820, a boat carrying thirty people, sank in the same spot. The sole survivor was a Hugh Williams. The figure 9 has a peculiar connection with the career of the ex-kaiser. He was born in the fifty-ninth year of the century, entered the army in 1808, and completed his university career in 1819. The dates of his birth and marriage—Jan. 27 and Feb. 27—both make nine, if two and seven are added together. And the same number figures in his defeat and exile. That occurred in 1918, which contains one figure "9" and two figures that added together make "9." Also, he was 59 years old when his career as ruler ended.

It has often been pointed out that the letter M, for better or worse, dogged the footsteps both of Napoleon the Great and Napoleon the Little. In the case of Napoleon I, it was Marmont who first recognized his genius at the military college, Marengo was his first great victory, Mordor was his best general, Moreau betrayed him, Murat died for him, Marie Louise shared his fortunes, Moscow marked the turn in those fortunes, Metternich beat him in diplomacy.

His first battle was Montenotte, his last Mont St. Jean. He stormed Montmartre, took Milan; Marmont deserted him. His right-hand man was Montesquieu, his last resting place in France, Malmaison. He surrendered to Captain Maitland, and his companions at St. Helena were Montholon and Marchand. His marshals were Massena, Mortier, Marmont, MacDonald, Murat and Moutney, and no fewer than twenty-six of his generals had names beginning with M.

Napoleon III, married the countess of Montijo, and his most intimate friend was Morny, and his tutor Morelle of Montellmar. His greatest military successes were the capture of the Malakoff and the Mauseul tower. His biggest battle was Montebello, and MacMahon won Magenta for him.

He drove the Austrians out of Mantua, and made his triumphal entry into Milan. He was repulsed before Mantua, in his last war driven back to the Moselle and his fate settled by Moltke at Metz.

Octogenarian Pedestrian.

Viscount Bryce, at eighty-two, is giving Americans in the Berkshire hills an object lesson in pedestrianism which our auto-bound and front-porch-loving race would do well to heed, a writer stated recently in the Cincinnati Times-Star. The distinguished visitor seldom uses a motor car unless the distance to be covered is too far to negotiate on foot, or unless speed is a necessity. Viscount Bryce prefers to hoof it. He is covering the hills and dales of the Berkshires with a stride so robust as to out distance most of his companions. His health is excellent and his appetite perfect. For these blessings Lord Bryce gives walking, constant, daily walking, the credit. He is a living example of the virtues of using one's legs for the purpose which nature intended.

The English are great pedestrians. Even in the larger cities, where transportation is frequent and comfortable, they flock along the pavements from the sheer delight they find in using nature's first means of locomotion. In America we go in a great deal for sports, and find much pleasure and health in these diversions. But we are not a walking race. We are passing up one of the simplest, easiest and cheapest forms of exercise known, and our digestions and tempers are paying the price of our pedal laziness.

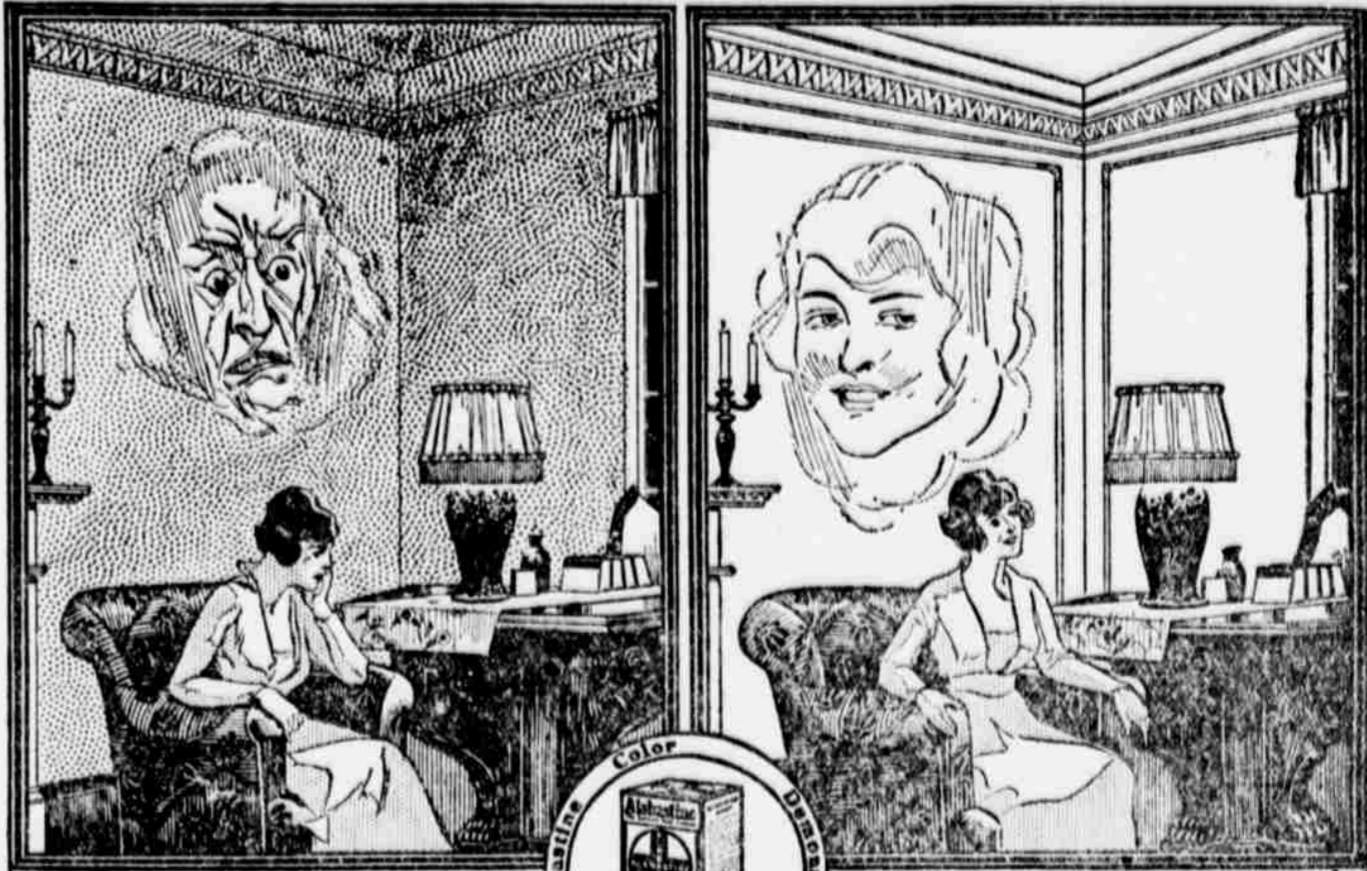
The Oldest Donkey.

A cat is said to have nine lives. How many has a donkey?

According to Sam Weller, "nobody ever saw a dead donkey," but donkeys do die, and the claim of a Camberwell coterie that his donkey, aged forty, is the oldest donkey in the world may be true. Only one centenarian donkey has ever been recorded. He is stated to have lived in Cronarty for 106 years, and then died from a kick of a horse.

There is another story of a man who once expressed a desire to live to two hundred.

"Two hundred?" exclaimed his companion. "You must be an ass!" But that, of course, was a different kind of an ass.—London Answers.



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