

able to make their protest against the Turks chiefly as bandits.

"But the Bulgarians at that time seemed to have had every particle of national feeling stamped out of them, and were of little more consequence than so many cattle.

"After the subjugation of the Balkan peninsula the Turks continued their aggressive and conquering career in Europe for over two centuries, Hungary becoming a part of the Turkish empire, as well as portions of what were then southern Poland, some of which are now Austrian and some Russian. As a result of the Turks' final repulse from Vienna, however, the Turkish tide began to recede, although not without many returns.

"In the nineteenth century the old nations of the Balkans began to reappear once more. Greece became independent. Serbia and Roumania by successive stages gradually became independent also. One little end of Serbia had always remained independent. This was Montenegro, whose inhabitants are simply mountain Serbs, who, in their rugged fastnesses preserved their liberty when all the rest of their nation went under the yoke of the conqueror.

"By constant warfare the Montenegrins finally became what were probably the most formidable fighters in all the world; and no state has ever had a more heroic history.

"Albania has gradually become practically independent of the Turks. But the Albanians have had no kinship of feeling with the other Balkan peoples, and no such sense of unity among themselves as the other Balkan peoples have had. They are predominantly Moslem, but some of the tribes are orthodox, belonging to the Greek church, and some are Catholics. They have fought a great deal among themselves. They have been willing and eager to furnish the Turks with formidable soldiers to keep down the other Balkan peoples, but they have not rendered much more than a nominal obedience themselves to the Turks, and at times and in certain places have oppressed the Turks of a given region as horribly as the Turks have oppressed any of the Christian races.

"The last nation to emerge was the Bulgarian. This was after the close of the Russo-Turkish war in 1878. In that war the Montenegrins fought, and the Servians fought. The

Roumanian army came to the help of the Russian, and by its strikingly gallant feat of arms in taking the Grivitzka redoubt struck the decisive blow at Plevna. But the Bulgarians did no fighting of any moment.

"The Turks committed the most horrible cruelties in Bulgaria, outrages so dreadful that all Europe rang with them. But the Bulgarians did not appear as among the formidable foes of the Turks. Their country was given its freedom only by the Russian army.

"Every one, friend and foe alike, regarded the Bulgarian peasant—and the peasant was the typical and almost the only Bulgarian—as a dull, patient ox of a man, an object of rather contemptuous pity, and never of respect or fear. Such was his condition when peace was made; the cause of civilization being set back because the western powers, in their jealousy of Russia, refused to allow some of the Russian conquests to be freed from Turkish misgovernment.

"There was a good deal of speculation as to what the different new nationalities would do, but nobody dreamed that the Bulgarians would play a leading or important part. The Roumanians, the descendants of Trajan's colonists in Dacia, had won their spurs. The Servians had a history and a literature. The Greeks were in every way striving to connect their new kingdom with the glorious traditions of classical time. But the Bulgarians had disappeared as a nation long before the Turks came into Europe. For centuries they had been nothing but the patient, hard-working, tortured serfs of one master after another. Nobody thought that they could rise

"But it soon became evident to keen observers that the furnace of centuries had toughened the Bulgarian into a man of marked and forceful type. No other nation has traveled so far and so fast as Bulgaria has traveled in the last third of a century.

"Americans have just cause to feel proud that Robert College gave to many of the leading Bulgarian citizens their education, so that it has played a peculiar part in the making of the Bulgarian nation.

"The dreadful experiences through which the Bulgarians had passed for more than twenty generations seemed to have purged the dross from their natures and to have left nothing but tempered steel behind. They possessed great sobriety and steadfastness of character, and in an unfortunate little war with Servia early showed that they were also of an unexpectedly good military type. They were very patriotic. Every Bulgarian, even the poorest, felt the keenest devotion to his country.

"Moreover, it must be remembered that patriotism with the Bulgarian did not mean a mere emotion to be appealed to by a Fourth of July oration, nor even the emotion of a higher type which makes good men and good women try to do their civic duty. To the Bulgarian patriotism meant a fierce intensity of conviction, a passionate clinging to independence and national success as the one alternative to the most frightful slavery.

"For many centuries the Bulgarian had crouched helplessly under the Turkish whips. Anything he earned beyond a bare living was usually taken from him by his oppressors. And when at long intervals a few of his number, like mad-dened slaves, rose in aimless revolt, the vengeance wreaked on the whole nation was terrible, and that vengeance fell with appalling cruelty upon women and children quite as much as upon men.

"It is but thirty-five years since the Bulgarians submitted to atrocities such as in America have never

been endured except by victims of Indian outbreaks. Every Bulgarian, rich or poor, became a soldier, carefully drilled, well trained, commanded by men who made military science a study of the most practical kind.

"Every Bulgarian was prepared at any moment to fight the Turks, and toward the Turks he felt a personal hatred such as the member of no civilized nation feels for that of another. He knew that war might come at any time, and he knew that, if beaten, it would probably mean that his home would be destroyed, his parents butchered before his eyes, his wife or sister or daughter dragged off to infamy and outrage, his younger brother or his son put to death with dreadful torture.

"If he were a man of middle age, he had as a child seen things like this done to his own family or to the families of his neighbors; if he were a young man, he had heard about them from the older men and women.

"Under these circumstances the

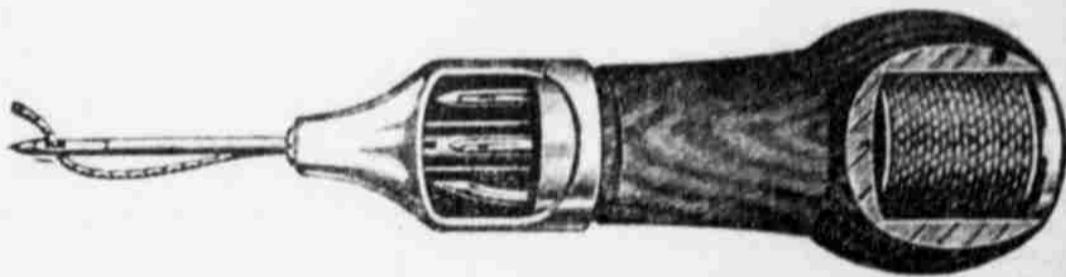
whole Bulgarian nation was an army, and an army of the most formidable kind. There were in the national character both a toughness and a sobriety that rendered the people willing to take a long look ahead, and carefully and laboriously prepare as their foresight demanded. Patient, self-reliant, possessing prudent caution in preparation, great speed and decision in action, and iron resolution—no wonder that the Bulgarian people has borne itself so wonderfully, that the Bulgarian army has shown such extraordinary qualities.

"Not the rise of Japan itself has been more striking and unexpected than the rise of Bulgaria.

"Whatever may be the decision of the European powers regarding the Balkan war—a decision which is too much to be feared will probably be governed largely by selfish political considerations—the sympathy of the people of both Europe and America ought to be wholly with the people of the Balkans in their heroic struggle for liberty."

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