

## WAR CLOUD LOOMS UP IN THE EAST.



Authentic snapshot of a company of Turkish infantry who may be ordered to the front at any moment in view of the situation in the Balkans, which threatens to develop into a crisis. Bulgaria protests against the mobilization of Turkish troops. Meanwhile warlike preparations are going on among the various European powers and a heavy warcloud hangs over Europe with a likelihood of bursting at any moment.

LONDON, Feb. 28.—The long-expected crisis in Turkish affairs now really seems to be imminent. The puppets who are to be made responsible for the coming combat between such of the powers as may be drawn into it have been so carefully rehearsed by the Muscovite stage managers that the successful enactment of another tragedy in the career of the "sick man of Europe" should not possibly fail—unless, perchance, instead of tragedy the situation develops into a farce comedy and the shadow of the bear has once more to skulk back from the coveted Balkans.

One thing is certain, that before Turkey will give up another slice of territory she will fight any armies that may be allied against her to the bitter end. She has lost so much during the past century that her diminishing greatness is one of the bitterest shocks that Mohammedan pride has ever sustained.

Early in the century just closed Greece attained its independence. This was followed by the autonomy of Roumania, Bulgaria and Crete. Bessarabia and Batoum fell to Russia as spoils of her last war, while Egypt and Cyprus have fallen to England and Syria is under the protection of France and other powers.

The ostensible cause of the present contemplated rising in the Balkans is the inhuman treatment of Macedonians by Turks. Whatever else the Macedonian committee, which foments most of these troubles, may be, it certainly is in collusion with Russia and is one of the most potent tools of her Balkan policy.

Although the Bulgarians themselves are apparently endeavoring to suppress the Macedonian uprising they have mobilized a large army to menace Turkey, which will if an outbreak occurs be the main reason of the conflagration.

The reforms which Austria and Russia have asked Turkey to make for the benefit of Macedonians seem to be a secondary matter, as irrespective of her compliance or non-compliance huge

armies are preparing to pour south ostensibly to right the wrongs of Macedonians and Albanians but really to establish the claim of Russia to rule the Bosphorus and Austria's to such territory as she may have considered necessary to the establishment of another good port on the Adriatic and other advantages long sought in that direction.

Of course Montenegro and Albania and Servia, all pet dogs of the northern bear, will be ready to pounce upon the sick man when Russia gives the word, so that really there would seem little chance for the "disgrace" of Europe.

Italy, however, has dreams in the direction of Dalmatia, and her old-time feud with Austria may be relied on to stop any move that Austria may make to obtain Turkish territory in case such aim on the part of Austria becomes a demonstrated fact as the result of her pact with Russia.

As I wrote you some months ago a treaty exists between Servia and Russia by means of which the army of the former will co-operate with that of Russia as soon as she sets her battalions marching in the direction of the Balkans.

Britain has been called upon by Turkey to carry out her part of a very old and well understood bargain—in other words asked to help out her old ally. For the nonce England is nonplussed; the situation has developed so suddenly that she has not had time through the jingo press to lash the public into a fury about it.

France sits and smacks her lips at the thought of having Austria for a co-ally, but she would rather have Italy in her place for several reasons.

And what will France do under the circumstances?

Have we so soon forgotten what that astute analyst Tolstoi has told us. Here is a digest of his opinion on this eternal question: France needs the cohorts of the Muscovite. In pay, she is more than

willing that the Cossack shall displace the Briton in India, China, Polynesia—save rectification. When the day comes—which is as certain as the succession of the seasons—that she holds the pinchbeck German empire under the heel of her ready hosts, then she will have a recrudescence of the spirit which holds the Russian a Tartar and is destructive to the "interests" of western civilization. Napoleon III. joined England in the Crimean campaign, not because France had forgotten Waterloo or the dolts who had won that half fought contest, but because it was essential to his purpose to delude the Pharisees who fancied themselves arbiters of the destinies of Europe.

France, to recapitulate the reasoning of her diplomatists, for the moment needs the semi-barbarous millions who aspire to the empire of Alexander. When the die is cast and the battle won France will oppose an iron wall to Russian aggression upon Constantinople with a firmer front and a nobler purpose than the land-grabbing Briton, who simply wants everything in sight and pledges what would be his immortal soul—if he had a soul—to secure it. When the die is cast and the battle ranged, France will have five million Muscovites to confront the shambling German hosts. The result will be what Napoleon brought about at Tilsit, at Austerlitz, at Friedland, and the map of Europe will be reconstructed philosophically and rationally. Twenty millions of Poles will form a great nation. Prussia will be reduced to its original duchy of Brandenburg, Austria will be obliterated, and the republic of Europe will be made up of France, Spain, Italy, Germany and Poland. Prussia will disappear from the cognizance of men.

This is the meaning of the Franco-Russian alliance. And if Christianity still means what it has always stood for, this must be the outcome.

For, as a matter of fact, the endurance

of the Hohenzollern travesty of administration is simply the reduction of mankind to the conditions in vogue three centuries ago. The kaiser is an irresponsible mountebank, believing himself born by a special interposition of Providence, free to make war, to maintain peace at his own idiotic will irrespective of the will or prayer of fifty millions of reasoning beings pledged to his vagaries.

Empires have seen, known and endured imbeciles in the past; they have suffered madmen's manias. But no empire ever bent before such a pranking figure as the present emperor of the Germans. George the Third was a madman, Napoleon I. was half demon, half democrat; but no ruler of a great people was ever more irresponsible than the opera bouffe monarch of the finest people in Christendom. Hence, declares the Gaul, when the republic is ready to move, the German house of cards will tumble with a swiftness that has no precedent in history, and the end of the twentieth century will find it difficult to realize what its beginning was.

British pride, suspicion, rivalry denied Napoleon III. the compensation France thought the due of her soldiers' valor in the Crimea. When Sebastopol fell before the furious onslaught of MacMahon's division at the Malakoff, Napoleon hinted to the British Cabinet that the time was ripe for effacing the Captain Kidd treaties of 1815, by which France had been robbed of her natural boundaries. But the British cabinet turned a deaf ear to diplomatic hints and hastened to come to terms with Russia lest Napoleon might audaciously imitate his uncle's methods and occupy the stolen states.

Now, however, France sees her way to more dazzling results. England, involved in upholding Turkish misrule, will oppose Christendom. Then France's time will be at hand. She, too, has scores to settle with several who balked French designs in the past quarter century, who lent themselves to the British interfer-