ABOUT CONSTANTINOPLE.

THE PRIZE OF THE NEXT GREAT WAR IN EASTERN EUROPE.

A City of Mosques and Dirt—Historic Buildings and Ruins—The Walled Door in St. Sophia—Turkish Ideas of Cleaning the Streets.

If Constantinople were under the control of any civilized nation, it would be one of the most noted show places on the earth. The beauty of its natural situation is unequaled anywhere else on the planet. "See Naples and die" was the way in which tourists of a former age extolled the charms of the famous bay, with Ischia on one hand, Capri on the other; beneath, the dark blue sea; above, the bright blue heavens and between the two, the city and the volcano, which is of equal importance as an attraction. But the glory of Naples, even crowned by that of its volcano, pales before that of the famous peninsula, whose charms dwelt in the mind of Constantine so persistently that after his wars were over and the imperial crown firmly settled on his brow, he came from the ends of the Roman Empire to build a city which should be called by his name. 0

There was a city here 1,000 years before he was born; in fact the whole region, from the entrance to the Dardanelles to the outlet of the Bosporus, was dotted with sturdy little Greek cities that had walls strong enough to keep out the barbarians, and commerce large enough to keep the merchants alive, and when Constantine announced his imperial intention of calling a new capital into being, which should rival Rome itself, no doubt there was lively competition among the Greek towns in the Marmora district, and meetings were held and subscriptions were opened and windy orators told what ought to be done to secure the capital, and delegations of representative men were posted off

IN HOT HASTE

to meet the Emperor, and present the claims of their respective locations, and tell him how much the citizens would contribute towards building the palaces and Government offices and churches, and most important of all the great circus, without which life in a Roman city was impossible.

No doubt all these things were done for there are allusions to some of them, and, as human nature is pretty much the same in all ages, we are justified in guessing at the rest. And no doubt, too, after Byzantium had been selected by the Emperor the disappointed delegates returned home, telling each other how much better some other place would have answered the purpose, while the Byzantium delegation was met at the city gates by a crowd of enthusiastic residents and escorted to the forum with the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer and all other kinds of music in general use at the time.

And Constantine knew what he was about when he selected Byzantium. Situated on a triangular peninsula, with the Sea of Marmora on the one side and the world renowned Golden Horn on the other, the city is equally accessible and equally commanding by land or sea. Like Rome it rises on seven hills, and also like Rome, it for ages ruled the world. The time may come when it will do so again, at least so far as supremacy in Europe and Western Asia is concerned, for its natural position is such that, in the hands of a strong and aggressive State, it would dominate Eastern and Southern Europe, Western Asia and the whole of the Mediterranean region.

The best impressions of the great city whose fate is, perhaps, now trembling in the balance, are to be gained from a distance, for, like all Turkish cities, the distant view is the most favorable. As soon as the streets are entered, particularly if the traveler's nose is fitted out with a conscience,

ALL ROMANCE FLIES

before the number, variety and odiousness of the smells by which his olfactories are assailed. The city was builded before the days of scientific sewerage and the Turk's only idea of disposing of the garbage, offal and other refuses of his house is to dump it all in the street in front of his door or in the alley behind his house. There it stays and as all his neighbors do exactly the same thing, the whole city in summer time, is a reeking mass of corruption. When the smell gets too bad even for a Turk, he goes to his mosque and prays for rain to wash off the streets and then patiently waits for Allah to answer. If the rain comes, well and good, it is an evidence of Allah's kindness to his people; if not the garbage stays just where it was before, for if Allah had wanted it taken away, he would have sent a rain. "Allah Bismillah! Who is man that he should fight against God?"

But in spite of the Turks and the swarms of half naked children, and the thousands of ownerless dogs, and the garbage, and the smells, more numerous than those which were counted at Cologne, Constantinople has attractions whose interest is able to overcome the discomforts of a trip taken through the streets to visit them. None of them are of yesterday, because the Turks of yesterday did no building save of the wooden houses in which they live, and which, according to their ideas, it sometimes pleases Allah to burn up from five to ten thousand at a time. All the buildings of Constantinople that are worth seeing at all, date either from the time when the Turks had more industry than they have at present, or from the days of the Greek builders who reared their walls before the unspeakable Turk had gained admission to the city.

Constantinople is a city of mosques. There are mosques, great and small; large mosques capable of holding thousands of the faithful at once; petty mosques into which only two and three dozen can crowd; elegant mosques of marble and alabaster, decorated with precious and semi-precious stones; dingy mosques, with leaky roofs and the outside plaster falling off, as though afflicted with leprosy; mosques containing scores of rooms and hundreds of attendant priests; mosques with one room and no attendants; mosques in the public squares and most fashionable streets; mosques stuck away in holes and corners of the Turkish quarters as though the designers intended to hide them from observation. The most noted of all the 5,000, for this is the number claimed for the city, is of course, the great

CATHEDRAL MOSQUE

of Agia Sophia, or Holy Wisdom. A grand Christian church was built on this site by Constantine the Great, in 325, and the impression is general that this is the building at present in existence, but this is a mistake, for Constantine's church was taken down by Justiniaan in 532, and rebuilt on a larger scale. An age of 1363 years is very respectable for any building, however, and a good many associations will cluster round an edifice as old as this, even in a country whose annals are dull. Entirely apart from its associations however, the great mosque is worthy of attention, for it contains mosaics and basso relievos brought from Athens and Rome to decorate the Church of Constantine, and jasper columns that once upheld the roof of the majestic Temple of Diana at Ephesus. After the Turks captured Constantinople they converted the Cathedral into the principal mosque of the city, and started mosque building on their own account, they could find no better model than Justinian's grand church, and thus it is that a dozen of the largest mosques in the city are, to a greater or less extent, models of Agia Sophia. There is Kutchuk Agia Sophia, a little St. Sophia, also built by Justinian on a smaller scale; there is the Kilisse Jamih, mosque of the churches, where two or three dozen of the Byzantine Emperors are buried; there is the Exi Marmara Jamih, the mosque of the six columns, which was once a temple of Jupiter; there are the Sulimanige, built by Solyman, the Great, the mosque of Mohammed II., where the conqueror of the city sleeps in the midst of his conquest, the Shah Sadi Jamih, with tombs of the Sultans, and Nuri Osmania, which contains the great porphyry sarcophagus that once held the body of the first Christian Emperor. There are points of resemblance between them, however, other than in the architecture, for all, with the exception of St. Sophia, are more or less out of repair, and all are tolerably dirty. The Church of Constantine, however, has one feature that is possessed by none of the others—a walled-up door, before which a sentinel has paced up and down unceasingly for

NEARLY 450 YEARS.

Sultans have come and gone, but that sentinel has stayed, for, shortly after the Turks took the city in 1453, they learned that there was a tradition among the Greeks that one day Constantine would rise from his sarcophagus, gather about him the host with which he conquered the Roman Empire, and march out through the door to overthrow Islam. The story came to the knowledge of the Turks, who solemnly thought it over, and, concluding that there must be something in it or the Greeks would not believe it, they took the body of the great Emperor, buried it secretly in another place, removed his stone coffin to the Nuri Osamni Mosque, and then, to make everything perfectly secure, walled up the door and set a sentinel to watch it. Sentinels have watched the walled door for four and a half centuries, but still the Greeks have not lost hope, and whenever they pass the closed portal they make the sign of the cross.

But the city has many other attractions besides the mosques. The churches and convents of the Greeks and Armenians are numerous and imposing, and the Moslems have soup houses, where thousands of poor are daily fed; hospitals, where the only treatment of the patients is a verse of the Koran dipped in a glass of water; public baths, dating from Byzantine times, and bazars, or great covered markets, where everything under the sun, from a Circassian girl stolen from her parents to a second-hand turban, may be bought.

Then there are the aqueducts, most of them in ruins, but two, one built by Constantine, the other by Hadrian, still supply the city with water, and the cisterns or reservoirs for a reserve supply are also in use. How extensive they are no one can say, for in many places the roofs have fallen and the ruins prevent exploration. The seraglio or palace, of the Sultan is a city in itself, containing a population of over 6,000 including the imperial guards and the inmates of the harem. So long as it was closed to the public

MARVELOUS STORIES

were told of its magnificence, but in recent years the observations of numerous visitors have shown that it combines barbaric splendor with discomfort and dirt, and that many a petty prince of Christendom lives in far more comfort than does the Commander of the Faithful.

The walls of the city still stand, the same that long held Mohammed II. and his host at bay, though nothing in the way of repair has been done to them since the Turks took the city. They saw many stormy scenes before that event, for repeatedly during the Middle Ages the city was attacked by Saracens, Bulgarians and the savage tribes that came from North Europe, to say nothing of the Crusaders and Moslems. The introduction of powder and cannon made walls useless, and Turkish laziness prevented the present occupants from either repairing or removing them. Even the breach at the Top Kapoussi, of Cannon Gate at which Mohammed entered and where Constantine fell, is in the same condition now, save for the lapse of 442 years, that it was when the Sultan rode over it sword in hand and entered the city.

The environs of the metropolis are, in some respects, almost as interesting and quite as picturesque as the capital itself, but Pera and Shutari, Galata and Kasem Pasha borrow their importance from the city, and without it would be only manufacturing and commercial towns. Constantinople had made a great noise in the world since its adoption by Constantine as the seat of Roman empire, but there is reason to believe that its past history is a trifle compared to the future that lies before it. Who will get it? is the question that must be solved in the next few years. That the Turk will be long allowed to impede the march of progress in that quarter of the world nobody believes. The prize may fall to Russia, and the giant empire of the north will thus be provided with more capitals than even imperial Rome. It may constitute the seat of government of the Balkan States under the protection of all Western Europe; it may become a free city like Venice; it may fall to England; but one thing is certain, whatever Power wins it when the Turks are driven out will exercise a controlling influence in the affairs of Eastern Europe and Western Asia.

TONGUE FOR ALL NATIONS.

What a Russian Savant Hopes to Accomplish in Unifying the Race.

Some ten years ago a Russian gentleman named Zamenhoff, disappointed at the failure of Volapuk to accomplish its purpose, invented a new language, to which he gave the name of Esperanto. It is a universal language; its grammar may be learned in an hour, and all its vocabulary of words in a few days. Max Muller and Tolstoi write it, and it has been learned by many persons in Germany, England, France, Scandinavia, Italy, Spain, and parts of Africa. It is not wholly unknown in this country. Verses may be written in it, and translations of the Iliad and Hamlet have been published.

The roots of the new language have been taken from English, French, and German. Thus the root or all words pertaining to love is "am." The substantive—love—is formed on adding "o," the adjective by adding "a," the verb by adding "as," which changes to "is" for the past and "os" for the future. A similar root is adopted for other words in general use, and is converted into verb, noun, or adjective by a similar addition of one or two letters. The grammar is simplicity itself. It is reckoned that one-fourth of the 4,000 words which an ordinary Englishman uses in conversation or correspondence will suffice to express common thoughts.

The inventors of Esperanto are not discouraged by the decline in the enthusiasm with which Volapuk was at first received. It in not true, as someone humorously remarked, that Volapuk became a dead language before it ever was a living one. Though the schools for teaching Volapuk have been closed, and one never runs across a volume written in that language, it has by no means passed out of use. It is

CONSTANTLY EMPLOYED

by corresponding clerks in mercantile Houses who address their correspondents in Asia, South America, and Africa in that tongue. In some cities which have a large foreign trade an applicant for the post of corresponding clerk is required to be able to write Volapuk. As the development of commercial intercourse with Asia increases it may gain ground.

The idea of Dr. Zamenhoff and his friends is that Esperanto will supercede Volapuk, because it is simpler and more readily acquired. They look for its widest extension in Asia and among the nations which do business with Asia. It is evident that the monosyllabic tongues are doomed to extinction. It is almost impossible to adjust them to the usages of the telegraph. Again, in such nations as China the prevalence of a number of dialects must sooner or later dictate the necessity of the adoption of a language which shall be uniform throughout the Empire. As it is, the official at Pekin cannot converse with the merchant of Quantung without the aid of an interpreter, and both are unintelligible to the peasant of Szechuen. Without travelling as far as China the tourist who descends the Danube from Passau and Luitz to Belgrade finds a different language spoken on every day of his journey. Business would be greatly simplified if the riverside races all spoke the same tongue.

Reforms of this kind are very slow to make their way. Brittany has been part of France for many centuries, but there are to this day old Breton towns in which only educated people understand French. So in Scotland, one finds villages where a knowledge of English will hardly enable a traveller to order a dinner. People cling to the tongue which they learned in their cradle. Intelligence will have to be more widely diffused than it is before Esperanto or any other universal language is accepted by the masses.

One Little Word.

One little word may pierce the heart
With sorrow keener than a knife,
And best of friends may quickly part
With feelings of such bitter strife.

One little word may kindness show
When all the world seems dark and drear,
And tears of deepest anguish flow,
One little word may often cheer.

One little word may help so much,
The weary with a heavy load;
A pleasant smile, a gentle touch,
Smooth places in the roughest road.

One little word may tempests calm,
When raging fierce within the breast,
A kindly word may fall like balm
And angry feelings soothe to rest.

One little word may be too late
Before fond hopes are buried low,
And often it may seal the fate
Of many lives for weal or woe.

Looking Forward.

Lady Lawyer—What are those papers you wish me to examine?

New Woman—They are the breach of promise cases I expect to have served on me this leap year.

An Omission

He sent her a box of roses,
But forgot to write her name,
And the office boy delivered them
To another, earlier flame.

And when his employer scolded,
He said in accents coy:
Please, sir, when you change your sweetheart
Don't forget to tell the boy.

DAYS OF STRANGE COLORS

MEN IN TERROR OF SKIES YELLOW, RED, GREEN, AND BLACK.

The Red Terror of the Fourteenth Century, the Green Day of the Columbian Year, Several Yellow Portents, and the Dark Day of the Revolution—The Black Day.

On Jan. 27, 1306, from sunrise until midnight, the churches of Europe were crowded with kneeling suppliants, while solemn chants and the smoke of the censers arose uninterruptedly. Thousands of terrified people lay prone upon their faces in the streets and squares. Women clutching their infants to their breasts ran, half naked, shrieking along the highways. Creditors forgave debts; usurers pressed upon their ruined clients their illgotten gains; rich men distributed their wealth in the name of charity to all who would consent to accept. Criminals voluntarily confessed their misdeeds and besought the extremity of human justice. Kings and princes threw off their ermine, donned the rags of beggary, and vowed new crusades for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre from the Turk. Men went mad. Anchorites and hermits issued from their cells, wild-eyed, clad in goat skins or sackcloth and, stalking through the streets, cried aloud:

"Woe! woe! The hour of judgment is at hand!"

It was the day of the Red Terror, described by the ancient chroniclers. The dawn broke clear and mild as in midsummer, we are told, and "not a cloud of a handbreadths' bigness was to be seen in all the sky." But just before the sun rose

A STRANGE RED HAZE

or mist overspread the heavens, deepening in hue and density, until at 9 o'clock the firmament was a crimson pall which obscured the sun and cast a dull, ominous glare upon the earth like the reflection from a tremendous conflagration at a distance. Despite the unnatural illumination the gloom was so profound, even at mid-day, "that one man knew not another, though he were his own brother. Toward 3 of the afternoon there came a great splendor of crimson, like blood, and some cried that now, indeed, 'the heavens were departing as a scroll when it is rolled together;' others that they beheld the angels battling against the hosts of the Apollyon in the upper air, and yet others that blood rained upon the earth." At about midnight the fiery pall disappeared, seeming to be dissipated as a light mist is driven before a strong wind; the stars came forth in their tranquil beauty, and the panic-stricken world grew calm again.

In April of the year in which Columbus set out upon his memorable voyage to the Indies, incidentally discovering America, occurred the wonderful Green Day. During the forenoon there had been a succession of light showers, but at 12 o'clock the sky cleared, and the sun shone brightly. At an hour past noon the sun grew pale, and lost its brilliancy, as if obscured by a winter fog, though there was no trace of vapor in the atmosphere. At the same time the azure hue of the sky changed to a livid green, deepening gradually to a rich emerald tint. The sun became wholly invisible, and there was a sort of preternatural twilight upon the earth. The green hue was so intense that "all objects took the color of oak leaves, and men stared in affright at each other's faces," for they, too, were of the prevailing livid green. The populace poured into the streets to gaze in terror at the emerald sky, and to ask each other what had become of the sun, and if the end of the world were at hand. Bells were tolled, services were held in all the churches. In one French town several persons

EXPIRED FROM FRIGHT.

At about 8 o'clock in the evening the sky resumed its normal aspect.

There are several Yellow Days on record, the most remarkable being that which occurred in the reign of Charles IX. of France, and was regarded by the Huguenots as a manifestation of the Divine wrath against the authors of the massacre of St. Bartholomew. "All the previous night such a tempest of wind blew as not the oldest man had seen. Steeples fell with a horrible crash. Strong houses and palaces fell down flat upon the earth. Whole forests were levelled, and thousands of deer destroyed, so that there was no hunting in all the realm for the space of six years. Some heard loud and terrible voices crying in the air, denouncing punishment upon the blood-guilty. Some heard the shattering blasts of vast trumpets, so that the soul fainted at the sound."

At sunrise the storm died down to a breathless calm. It became so intensely hot that cattle died in the fields, men fell down in the streets, steam rose from standing pools, and hayricks took fire. Yet there was no visible sun. The sky was a brilliant yellow, like that sometimes seen in the west at early twilight, deepening toward noon to a splendid orange, and later, to an ugly muddy brown. So frightful was the omen "that men, not daring to go forth for the dreadful heat, confessed themselves to each other, forgave debts and old feuds. Those that ventured out of door drenched their clothing with water, which turned to vapor in a hundred paces. Many died in their houses, whether of the heat or fear, and half the world was overcome."

Yellow Day appears to have been very similar to the one described above, though it was not accompanied by the preternatural rise of temperature. It appears, also, to have been much more circumscribed in area, at least the accounts we have, strangely meagre for so startling a phenomenon, embrace but three colonies.

The Dark Day has been frequently described, to many yet living, by ancient people who were eyewitnesses.

"The sky was clear until near noon, when the sun began to fade, as if its light were withdrawn, until it needed very keen eyes to mark its position in the heavens. At first there was a sort of greenish twilight, then everything became as dark as midnight. The stars came out. The fowls went to roost. People looked at their clocks, sure that they must somehow have mistaken the time. The churches and meeting houses were open. The bells tolled mournfully. Some men stood upon the corners preaching that this was the Last Day foretold by the Evangelist. Some people wrapped themselves in white sheets and sat at open windows or on roofs, singing hymns. But just before sunset the sky cleared. I remember that my mother and father embraced each other, then kissed me, and seemed overjoyed, and the street was full of people running to and fro and shouting that the world was safe."

The Black Day of the thirteenth century must have been yet more dire and terrifying, according to two fragmentary accounts which have come down. "During the whole day the sun was a disc of ebony in a funeral firmament, and the whole earth was full of weeping. The beasts crept into men's houses for comfort."

DRUNKENNESS IN ENGLAND.

Figures Which Prove That Drunkenness is Decreasing in That Country.

In an article in the National Review Mr. Arthur Shadwell quotes some interesting figures in proof of the decrease of drunkenness in England. The London police returns for 1833 give the number of "drunks" in the metropolis for the previous year as 29,880 to a population of 1,550,000, or 1 to 50 in round numbers. More than one-third were women. In the two previous years the number was considerably higher. Moreover, according to Mr. Chambers, a police magistrate, these figures did not include 8,560 "disorderly" cases, who were charged separately, bringing the full list up to 38,440, or about 1 to 40. In 1894 the number of drunks" in the Metropilitan Police area and the city was 25,903 to a population of 5,633,806 or 1 to 216 in round numbers. In order to be quite fair, however, it should be mentioned that the figures for 1894 refer only to convictions, while it is not clear whether those of 1833 were all convictions or only arrests. But taking them as arrests only, the relative amount of public drunkenness in 1833 was fully four times greater than in 1894. In 1834 there was one public house to every twenty families throughout the United Kingdom, which would be about equivalent to an average proportion of one public house to every ten inhabited houses, according to the census. In London the proportion was only one to forty, but the average was made up elsewhere. Bristol had one drink-shop to every twenty families, Glasgow one to fourteen, Dumbarton one to eleven and a half, and the rest of Scotland was said to be in very much the same case. Ireland was worse. Clonmel had 150 spirit-shops to 1,700 inhabitants—say one to every three families—and a place was found in County Down, consisting of sixty-one houses, of which twenty-six were spirit-shops. Recent censuses do not give the number of families or of public houses, and therefore it is difficult to make an exact comparison; but Brighton and Hove have 23,552 inhabited houses, of which 374 are hotels and public houses, a proportion of 1 to 63. In London the proportion appears to be about 1 to 70. The number of publicans tells the same tale. In 1831 the number of males over twenty years of age in England and Wales returned under the headings of "publican, hotel, or innkeeper, retailer of beer," and "spirit-shops," and including both employers and employed, was 57,664 in a total population of 13,897,187. In 1891 the numbers were 66,678 in a total of 29,001,018.

Hypnotism in Surgery.

A striking example of the efficacy of hypnotism as an adjunct to surgical science was demonstrated within the past few days at the Johns Hopkins Hospital at Baltimore. This case—a difficult one of long standing and obscure symptoms—was that of a young lady into whose side an incision was made and a diseased kidney was treated. The incision was then sewed up, and she is now recovering, suffering no pain or inconvenience whatever. This difficult and painful as well as dangerous operation was done while the patient was under hypnotic suggestion, being hypnotized by one of the medical staff. The patient was in the hpynotic state for about half an hour, and when seen at the hospital some time after the operation was delighted with the success of the experiment, declaring she felt no pain or consciousness whatever when the operation was in progress, save that she had a confused and not unpleasant impression that some one stood by her side and was cutting paper with a pair of scissors. After consciousness had returned she said she felt the natural pain consequent to any surgical operation done while under ordinary anaesthetics. Hypnosis, in her case, was limited only to the time it required for the operation. It is, however, possible to continue the suggestion until the patient is out of all pain.

The Laughing Plant.

Among curious plants one of the most notable has been discovered recently in Arabia, where it is known by the natives as the "laughing plant." It does not do any laughing itself, as might be inferred from its title, but it causes whosoever eats its seeds to break out into fits of the most uncontrolled and immoderate mirth.

An Obstructionist.

Why have you dressed your hair so high, Maud?

So I can take off my hat at the theater.

Worse

Gussie, why did you refuse Smithett? Did he show the cloven foot?

No, but he showed the cloven breath!

Involuntary Confession.

He—Don't you think Flynn's conversation smacks of egotism?

She (thoughtlessly)—I have noticed the smacks.